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BLACKPOOL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 3 March 2015

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, 11 March 2015 commencing at 6.00 pm for the transaction of the business specified below.

Director of Governance and Regulatory Services

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; 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 27 FEBRUARY 2015 (Pages 1 - 6)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 27 February 2015 as a true and correct record.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive official announcements from the Mayor.

4 RETIRING MEMBERS

The three Political Party Leaders or nominees, will be asked to pay tribute to Members who will be retiring at this year's election.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(Pages 7 - 8)

To receive a representation from a representative from Blackpool Youth Voice, in accordance with Procedure Rule 9 and a response from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

6 EXECUTIVE REPORTS AND OUTSIDE BODY REPORTS

(Pages 9 - 58)

To receive reports from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members and Outside Body representatives and consider matters arising from councillors.

- a) Leader of the Council - Councillor Blackburn
- b) Cabinet Member for Urban Regeneration - Councillor Jackson
- c) Cabinet Member for Housing, Public Safety and Enforcement - Councillor Campbell
- d) Cabinet Member for Children's Services – Councillor Taylor
- e) Cabinet Member for Tourism and Leisure - Councillor Cain
- f) Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care - Councillor Rowson
- g) Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Equality and Diversity - Councillor Jones
- h) Cabinet Member for Public Health - Councillor Collett
- i) Cabinet Member for Street Scene and the Environment – Councillor Cross
- j) Cabinet Member for Culture and Heritage – Councillor Wright
- k) Combined Fire Authority Representatives - Councillors Jackson, Mrs Taylor and Mrs Delves.

7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECLARATION ON TOBACCO CONTROL

(Pages 59 - 72)

To consider the Executive's recommendation that the Council signs up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

8 COUNCIL'S PAY POLICY STATEMENT

(Pages 73 - 86)

To consider recommendations from the Chief Officers Employment Committee regarding the Council's Pay Policy Statement and the scale of fees for elections.

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

Copies of agendas and minutes of Council and committee meetings are available on the Council's website at www.blackpool.gov.uk.

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Present:

Councillor Haynes (in the Chair)

Councillors

Benson	I Coleman	Hutton	Ryan
Blackburn	Collett	Jackson	Smith
Brown	Cross	Mrs Jackson	Stansfield
Cain	Doherty	Matthews	I Taylor
Callow	Elmes	M Mitchell	Mrs Taylor
Mrs Callow JP	Galley	O'Hara	Williams
Campbell	Green	Owen	Wright
Clapham	Mrs Henderson MBE	Robertson BEM	
G Coleman	Hunter	Rowson	

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

Carmel McKeogh, Deputy Chief Executive

John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Alan Cavill, Director of Place

Delyth Curtis, Director of People

Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health

Karen Smith Deputy Director of People (Adult Services)

Steve Thompson, Director of Resources

Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services/ Monitoring Officer

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Chris Williams, Democratic Governance Adviser

Jenny Bollington, Media Manager

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Hutton, Stansfield and Wright declared personal interests in agenda item 5 'Proposed Rent Review 2015/16' as Council appointed directors of Blackpool Coastal Housing Ltd.

Councillor Doherty declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 'Proposed Rent Review 2015/16' as a Council Tenant.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2015

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council held on 21 January 2015 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

3 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/2016, 2016/2017 AND 2017/ 2018

The Council considered the recommendations of the Executive in relation to the Capital Programme for 2015/16. In doing so, it noted that the programme ran concurrently with the 2015/16 revenue budget, with schemes usually extending over a number of years,

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2015

and for that reason, the programme projected forward indicative spending for a period of three years. Members also noted that the 2016/17 and 2017/18 programmes had been drawn up based upon individual allocations and current proposals and would be reviewed as part of the budget processes for those years.

Motion: Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Jackson seconded):

- '1. To approve the recommendations of the Executive to Council from its meeting held on 9 February 2015, namely:
 - (i) To approve the Capital Programme for 2015/2016 as set out at Appendices A and B, in the report to the Executive, including the contingency of £762,000.
 - (ii) To agree to continue the Single Capital Pot approach as outlined in Section 4 of the report to the Executive and to approve a top slice of 12.5%, to allow for investment in key priority areas and overspends that are not otherwise fundable.
2. To note the following decisions of the Executive in relation to the Capital Programme from its meeting in 9 February 2015, namely:
 - (iii) To agree that individual Executive approvals will continue to be required for all Prudential borrowing schemes.
 - (iv) To agree the Capital Prudential Indicators as identified in Appendix C of the report to the Executive.'

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

4 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015/ 2016

Members considered the recommendations of the Executive in relation to the proposed Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 which set out treasury management activities for the year.

Motion: Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Jackson seconded):

- '1. To approve the recommendations of the Executive to Council from its meeting held on 9 February 2015, namely:
 - (v) To adopt all the Elements of the Treasury Management Strategy 2015/ 2016 and to approve the Prudential Indicators and limits for 2015/2016 – 2017/2018 as set in Annex B to the report to the Executive.
 - (vi) To approve the Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2015/ 2016 – 2017/ 2018 as set out in Annex C to the report to the Executive.
 - (vii) To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2015/ 2016 as set out in Annex D to the report to the Executive.'

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

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2015

5 PROPOSED RENT REVIEW 2015/ 2016

Members considered the recommendations of the Executive from its meeting on 23 February 2015, regarding the Housing Revenue Account budget and the levels of rents and service charges for Council housing dwellings to be applied to the 2015/16 financial year, as well as new charges for Housing Revenue Account Services and related Non-Housing Revenue Account properties.

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

1. That a rent freeze is implemented in 2015/2016.
2. That as previously agreed, the level of Housing Revenue Account balances remain protected at £1 million.
3. That de-pooled services (as detailed in Appendix C to the Executive report) and that other service charges (as detailed in Appendix D and E to the Executive report) are charged as recommended.
4. That the Leaseholder Management Charge is amended in line with the cost of managing the service.'

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

6 COUNCIL TAX 2015/ 2016

Members considered the recommendations of the Executive at its meeting on 9 February and 23 February 2015 in relation to the draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2015/16, following consultation with the trade unions, business ratepayers and the Council's Scrutiny Committee and Finance and Audit Committee and open access public consultation that been held over a period of weeks from January. Members noted the precepts set by the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire.

Motion: Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Jackson seconded):

'The Council to agree the proposed recommendations outlined in Appendix 6(c) of the Council report, bringing together the recommendations from the Executive meetings on 9 February 2015 and 23 February 2015 into a summary document, set out in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. The recommendations being subject to the proposed saving for the ARC (Review of terms and conditions) in the sum of £70,000 (as set out in Appendix 2 of the General Fund Revenue report to the Executive on 9 February) being replaced with a saving of equal value being found by the statutory Director of Adult Services from the Adult Services budget and are as follows:

1. To agree the level of net expenditure for the General Fund Revenue Budget 2015/2016 of £128,073,000 (ref. Paragraph 2.3 and 5.2 of the report to the Executive on 23 February 2015)

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2015

2. To agree a level of budget savings of £25.2m (ref. paragraph 7.1 and 7.2 of the report and Appendix 2 of the report to the Executive on 9 February 2015).
3. To agree that the Chief Executive be authorised to take any necessary steps to ensure all staffing savings are achieved (ref. paragraph 8.1 of the report to the Executive on 9 February 2015).
4. To agree that the target level of working balances remains at £6m (ref. paragraph 11.4 of the report to the Executive on 9 February 2015).
5. To note the position regarding support to the voluntary sector (ref. paragraph 9.1 of the report to the Executive on 9 February 2015).
6. To note the comments of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee and the meetings of the Finance and Audit Committee with the Trade Unions and the non-domestic Ratepayers, as reported to the Executive and the responses given.
7. To adopt the formal Council Tax Resolutions set out at Appendix 6 (c), in so doing agree a Council Tax Requirement of £45,535,000 and a Council Tax Base of 34,866.
8. To note the calculation of Aggregate Amounts as directed by Section 31A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as set out at Appendix 6 (c).
9. To approve an unchanged level of Council Tax for the financial year 2015/2016 of £1,306.00 at valuation band D equivalent (excluding the precepts for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority).
10. To note that the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority precept for the financial year 2015/16 is £64.86 for a Band D Tax equivalent and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire's precept for the financial year 2015/2016 is £159.06 for a Band D Tax equivalent.
11. To confirm the aggregate levels of Council Tax for Valuation Bands A to H as follows:

VALUATION BAND	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
BLACKPOOL	870.67	1,015.78	1,160.89	1,306.00	1,596.22	1,886.44	2,176.67	2,612.00
POLICE	106.04	123.71	141.39	159.06	194.41	229.75	265.10	318.12
FIRE	43.24	50.45	57.65	64.86	79.27	93.69	108.10	129.72
COUNCIL TAX 2015/16	1,019.95	1,189.94	1,359.93	1,529.92	1,869.90	2,209.88	2,549.87	3,059.84

Recorded vote: The Council noted that legislation was now in place that required a recorded vote on the Council's budget. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors Benson, Blackburn, Cain, Campbell, G Coleman, I Coleman, Collett, Cross, Doherty, Elmes, Green, Hunter, Hutton, Jackson, Mrs Jackson, Matthews, M Mitchell, O'Hara, Owen, Rowson, Ryan, Taylor, Mrs Taylor, Wright - **Total 25.**

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2015

Against the motion: Councillors Brown, Mrs Callow, Callow, Clapham, Galley, Mrs Henderson, Robertson, Stansfield, Williams – **Total 9.**

Abstentions: Councillor Mrs Haynes – **Total 1.**

Motion carried: The motion was therefore carried.

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 12.45 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Tel: 01253 477127

E-mail: lorraine.hurst@blackpool.gov.uk

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Council:
11 March 2015

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

NAME	SUBJECT
1. Blackpool Youth Voice	- A representative from Blackpool Youth Voice, a group open to Blackpool young people aged between 14 – 25 years, wishes to address the Council to raise awareness of their group, their campaigns and their achievements.

Response to be given by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Councillor Ivan Taylor

NOTE: The representative will be able to speak for up to a maximum of five minutes.

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LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR BLACKBURN

Financial Management

The latest financial performance report for 2014/2015 was reported to the Executive on 9th February 2015. As at month 9 in-year pressures in Children's Services, Community and Environmental Services, Parking Services, Adult Services and Strategic Leisure Assets have been mitigated in part by some improvements in Treasury Management. The Council's forecast working balances are now at a forecast year-end level of £5.2m.

The Department for Communities and Local Government on 3 February 2015 announced Blackpool Council's Final Settlement Funding Assessment 2015 / 2016. The impact of this was an increase in Blackpool's funding allocation of £361,000 in 2015/ 2016 to address local welfare assistance. In order to maintain a freeze in Council Tax in 2015/ 2016, a revised General Fund Estimate of £128,073,000 was recommended to the Executive on 23 February 2015 with the £361,000 increase in funding being added to Contingencies to provide some further cushion against any non-delivery of/or slippage within the 2015/ 2016 Budget savings programme of £25.2m, as £400,000 growth funding had already been included in next year's Budget to support local welfare assistance.

Council Efficiency Programme

The Budget for 2014/ 2015 required total savings to be found of £15.8million. As at 31 December 2014 (month 9) 88% of the 2014/ 2015 savings target had already been delivered. The full –year forecast predicts the same will be achieved by the year-end, which takes into account new in-year pressures and savings, but work is ongoing to close this gap further with alternative savings plans.

Revenues, Benefits, Invoices and Payments

The cumulative average time to process new benefit claims and changes has increased by the end of the last quarter to 37 days. This increase is due to a combination of processing old changes in circumstances and a backlog of new claims. Work is well underway to automate the download of claims into the back office processing system, which should help to improve performance figures over time.

The Universal Credit housing pilot, where the local authority verifies tenancy information supplied to the Department for Work and Pensions, went live on 26 January 2015. The pilot is likely to continue into 2015/ 2016 and is already providing useful data by allowing the Council to identify customers who need to claim Local Council Tax support, without the pilot the Council would not have been aware of these cases. Rollout of Universal Credit will include families in Blackpool with effect from 2 March 2015.

The Blackpool Council Advice team secured a total of £47,500 additional benefits for customer during the third quarter of 2014 with 100% positive customer feedback for the period.

Council Tax collection at the end of January was 86.85%, which is 0.8% less than the same period last year. The Business Rates collection figure at the end of January was 84.31%, which is 6.26% less than the same period in the previous financial year. Larger payments are expected during February and March than in previous years as businesses have had the right to pay over 12 monthly instalments this financial year, rather than 10 monthly payments in previous years. This prevents a direct comparison with the previous year.

Customer First

Changes to the telephony system have recently been implemented giving options for directing calls straight to other services where appropriate. If the lines are busy, the system now provides an estimated waiting time for calls to be answered.

Officers in Customer First are liaising with the relevant service areas to prepare for the increased demands expected due to the annual billing and benefit notifications process, as well as preparing for any enquiries for the elections that are anticipated due to the new Individual Electoral Registration.

Asset Management

The demolition of the former Progress House building has been completed and site investigation works are currently underway on behalf of Lancashire Constabulary.

The new Council offices at Number One Bickerstaffe Square have recently won a national energy award as “Energy Efficient Building of the Year” and are also nominated for a Civic Trust Award to be announced at the end of the month.

Initial design works have commenced for the Central Business District phase two hotel development and a planning application is due to be submitted in late February.

Risk Services

The Civil Contingencies Team has been involved in co-ordinating the Council’s response to a number of severe weather incidents over the winter months. On 15 January 2015 in particular, although there were no major single incidents, the combination of a significant amount of small ones did stretch responding officers and equipment available resulting in the Council coming close to declaring a major incident as a direct result of demand exceeding our response capability.

A Corporate Business Continuity Exercise was facilitated for members of the Corporate Leadership Team and Senior Leadership Team on 5 February 2015. The outcome of this was a number of lessons that will be fed into the revised Corporate Business Continuity Plan and will also inform the changes required to ensure that the Critical Activity List is up to date and fit for purpose.

The service has been closely involved in the investigation into a former employee of the Rideability Service who has recently been found guilty of stealing £46,000 from the Council and the Rideability charity. This case has now been referred to Crown Court for sentencing.

As of 1 March 2015, all new referrals for Benefit Fraud investigations will be sent to the Department for Work and Pensions who will lead on the investigations. Steps are being taken to ensure that this message is effectively communicated to staff and the public so that there is clarity in the reporting process.

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matches for 2015 have now been received with 4,324 matches in total and 1,064 of these flagged as “high risk” to be prioritised for investigation. Risk Services are co-ordinating the Council’s response to dealing with the matches, which cover a wide range of services and data sets.

Contracts and Purchasing

Contracts awarded since the last meeting are listed below:

CONTRACT	PROVIDER (Location)	ESTIMATED CONTRACT VALUE
Marton Mere Ground Investigation	Mott MacDonald (Croydon)	£12,000

CONTRACT	PROVIDER (Location)	ESTIMATED CONTRACT VALUE
Maraton Mere Spillway	Bethell Construction (Kearsley, Gtr Manchester)	£128,000
Maraton Mere Pumping Station	Wm Pye Ltd (Longridge)	£200,000
Provision of Bread and Morning Goods	Partnership between Morris Quality Bakers and Food Service Options (Chorley / Bolton)	£872,000
Blackpool Museum – Project Manager	Prince’s Regeneration Trust (London)	Development Phase - £88,559 Delivery Phase – (Subject to funding bid) £166,250
Blackpool Museum – Architect Design Team	Buttress Fuller Alsop (Manchester)	Development Phase - £378,570 Delivery Phase (Subject to funding bid) - £607,719
Computer Consumables	Supplies Team (Sheffield)	£65,000
Fresh Meat	Clifton Quality Meats (Blackpool)	£176,000
Oral Health	Blackpool Teaching Hospital (Blackpool)	£55,000
Fitness Equipment – Palatine School	Matrix (Stoke on Trent)	£91,000
NHS Health Checks - Data Processor	Health Intelligence (Sandbach, Cheshire)	£51,600

A record 44% of Council overall third party spends is now with local providers/ suppliers as at quarter three in 2014/ 2015. This has increased from 38% as at 2013/ 2014 year end.

The Public Contracts Regulations Act 2015 has now been published and came into effect on 26 February 2015. The Regulations aim to make the current rules quicker, simpler and more flexible and will help councils to contribute to economic growth by improving the access of suppliers to the EU market.

A host of reforms are identified in the new Regulations, including a new Light Touch Regime, reduced timescales, new types of procedure, payment of supply chains and they will also implement two of the ‘Lord Young’ reforms, namely no Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) under the EU threshold and advertising on Contracts Finder for local authority procurements over £25,000 or each council’s standing order limit whichever is the higher. The requirement to publish on Contracts Finder will become effective for local authorities on 1 April 2015.

The Council’s Procurement procedures and standard control documents will be updated to reflect the changes.

Legal Services

The service has completed various land transactions, including the lease of Unit 1, Talbot Road Multi-Storey Car Park and the lease of the Marton Mere Holiday Park Visitor Centre (and an associated refurbishment contract). The land transactions associated with the conversion to an academy of the former Christ the King Catholic Primary School have also been completed, as has a licence agreement to facilitate the recent 2015 North West Stages (Motor) Rally on the promenade.

The inquiry into the Rigby Road/ Tyldesley Road Compulsory Purchase Order resumed on 5 and 6 February 2015 and was formally closed by the Inspector on 13 February 2015. A decision is not expected for some weeks.

Recent prosecutions for toy safety, trademark, truancy and street trading offences have resulted in convictions and other varied prosecutions continue to be ongoing. The Core Strategy Examination (Planning) is to take place in May 2015 and the service is assisting with this matter.

Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in legal client care. The Legal Service has been accredited with Lexcel since 2004 and was inspected again on 21 and 22 January 2015. The service has retained the accreditation and the Lexcel Inspector found no non-compliances and no areas for improvement.

Blackpool Museum Project

The new in-house project team is now complete with four of the eight staff recruited locally. Led by Project Director Belinda Betts, the team has been working on community mapping and engagement, developing skills and learning contacts and researching collections and stories, as well as writing the functional brief for the design team and procurement of the professional services.

In the New Year, Buttress from Manchester was appointed as Architects on the project leading the design team that includes Buro Happold as structural engineers and Troup Bywaters and Anders as services engineer. The team is currently in the process of tendering for interpretative design, quantity surveying, governance and fundraising. They will be releasing the business planning tender shortly. The plan is to reach Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) stage two in July 2015 and to seek further approvals at the Executive meeting in July.

The team is planning to make the Round Two submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund in December 2015.

Electoral Services

The Electoral Services Team in the Governance and Regulatory Services Directorate is busy preparing for the forthcoming Local and Parliamentary Elections. The last time both were held on the same day in Blackpool was 1997 and it is anticipated that over 600 people will support the Returning Officer in delivering these Elections. The Notice of Election for the Local Election will be posted on Monday 16 March 2015 and this will begin the pre-Election period.

Managing the budget process

The Employee Relations Team is currently working with managers and employees to ensure the Budget proposals for 2015/ 2016 are being managed consistently across the Council.

A series of briefings took place across the authority on the 8 and 9 January to advise staff of the implications of the budget reductions.

Those employees placed at risk of redundancy have access to a comprehensive package of support to ensure that they receive all the help they need during this difficult time. The package includes

dedicated support from an Employment Advisor, group information sessions, training, careers and money advice and access to the Employee Assistance Programme.

In order to reduce the number of compulsory redundancies, a voluntary redundancy scheme was offered and on closing date of 2 February, almost 90 applications had been received. For those services which are under review there will be further opportunities for employees to request voluntary redundancy once the review outcome is known and therefore this figure is expected to rise.

Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board met on 28 January 2015. It received the annual report of the Child Death Overview Panel, which has a responsibility to review the deaths of children and young people resident within the three local authority areas of Blackpool, Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen, with the aim of identify themes, trends and recommendations in an attempt to prevent future child deaths. The report makes a number of recommendations for the Board to take forward, which will be done through the Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board.

An update on the Winterbourne View Concordat gave assurance to the Board that the needs of individuals falling under the Winterbourne criteria are being met. The Concordat is a programme of action designed to transform services for people with learning disabilities or autism and mental health conditions or behaviours described as challenging. It should be recognised that a significant amount of work is underway and good progress has been made locally to achieve the objectives set out in the Concordat.

The Board received a report on the NHS England paper 'Primary Care Co-commissioning' and its implications. The paper offers Clinical Commissioning Groups the opportunity to assume greater power and influence over the commissioning of primary medical care from April 2015, with the option of choosing one of three co-commissioning models as follows:

- Greater involvement in primary care decision-making by greater involvement in discussions, but no decision-making role
- Joint commissioning arrangements with NHS England area teams
- Delegated commissioning arrangements – full responsibility for commissioning general practice services delegated to Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Board was advised that Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has submitted an application to NHS England to take on full delegated arrangements from April 2015. The CCG has discussed the principles of co-commissioning primary care services with practices and has received overwhelming support and confidence of the ability of the CCG to deliver this.

The Board also received an update on the current delivery of Affordable Warmth initiatives across Lancashire and an overview of the planned changes that are currently in development, which aim to maximise the opportunities available to Blackpool and the other Lancashire authorities by packaging together work, which is less attractive to the private companies running the scheme. Blackpool has one of the highest levels of fuel poverty in England and a greater percentage of hard to treat houses than other areas, which are those without a cavity wall or with a roof lift into the attic and therefore require expensive solid wall insulation.

The next Board meeting is on 4 March and will consider items including the Blackpool Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2013/ 2014, the Lancashire Crisis Care Concordat and Action Plan to sign up to, consultation on the Fylde Coast Highways and Transport Master plan, which includes a significant health component, approval of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment, which informs decisions on the provision of Chemists and services available through them locally and an update on

the Project Search, the Council's programme for supporting young people with learning disabilities into employment.

Marketing and Promotion

The Channel Shift Project, which aims to streamline how enquiries to the Council are handled and will encourage more people to carry out transactions online rather than face to face or over the telephone where possible is progressing well. The first project will focus on taking the "Bulky Matters" service online and is expected to be ready for testing in spring.

Increased enquiries to The Wedding Chapel at Festival House on the Promenade have been experienced as a result of a New Year marketing campaign, which has used social media, digital marketing, radio advertising and new signage.

Public Health's focus this last month has been on sugar swaps, to be clear on cancer (stomach cancer) and also alcohol and substance misuse through promotion and development of Blackpool Council's Horizon Service. The Horizon Service has radio ads airing on Rock FM this month

DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR URBAN REGENERATION – COUNCILLOR JACKSON

Getting People into Work

Positive Steps in to Work (the Council's adult employment services team) is continuing to perform to a high standard in terms of assisting residents to find work. To the end of January 2015, some 316 people have secured employment with the help of its skilled advisors. To achieve this, the team delivers a number of commercial and public-funded projects including the Government's Work Programme, Healthy Futures (funded by Public Health), the Chance to Shine work placement scheme and redundancy support to public and private sectors. The Chance to Shine project recently received the Fair Train Gold Standard for the quality of the work placements provided to over 120 long-term unemployed.

Positive Steps and NHS Blackpool are also co-delivering a £2m integrated mental health and employment pilot set to commence in the summer. It is one of only four impact pilots funded by Government. The Blackpool pilot aims to assist 1,000 people prepare for work whilst simultaneously accessing treatment. Currently, the link between employment support and mental health treatment is poor with long waiting times. Nationally, 75% of people in receipt of the Employment Support Allowance and 25% on Jobseekers Allowance are stated as having moderate mental health disorders. The pilot will be independently evaluated.

Youth Employment

The percentage of 16 – 18 year olds who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at the end of December 2014 was 7% the same as the previous year equating to 358 young people. The numbers have traditionally increased in January following the end of seasonal work. The percentage of young people who were "Not Known" to Connexions at the end of December 2014 was 3.8% the lowest it has been at this time of year (5% in 2013). This is due to developments in data sharing with Jobcentre Plus and the large training providers.

A bid to the Skills Funding Agency for a "Pathway to Traineeships" programme was successful. This will be delivered jointly by Connexions, Adult Learning and Positive Steps providing 8-week skills and work experience courses for unemployed 19 – 24 year olds. The value of the contract is £128,000.

Economic Development

Blackpool businesses have been successful in accessing over £450,000 of financial assistance, thanks to the focused help of the Council's Business Support team (part of Economic Development). The Business Partnerships Co-ordinator in particular has brokered a series of quality referrals to key support initiatives including the North West Access to Finance service (an impartial financial appraisal and brokerage service) and the Fuse Fund (new firms capital grants fund). In the six months between July and December 2014, 48 clients were referred to the Fuse Fund and 31 to the Access to Finance service. Some 13 clients have received approval of Fuse grants totalling £238,000, contributing to £955,000 total capital investment, set to create 37 new jobs. The Access to Finance service helped five clients raise a further £220,000 in other funding including loans.

Blackpool Tourism Academy is making excellent progress in rolling out the WorldHost international customer service standard across key attractions and smaller businesses in the resort. The Academy is pioneering improved customer service standards and four founding members have already secured Worldhost Business Recognition status (meaning they have trained at least 50% of front-line staff)

including Sandcastle Waterpark, Blackpool Zoo, Blackpool Transport and the Winter Gardens. More than 1,100 people are expected to have been trained in the standard by the end of March, on track to achieve the resort-wide destination status target of 2,500 people trained by the end of 2015.

Planning and Land Use

The Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy

The Core Strategy Proposed Submission document (June 2014) with the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment and other supporting evidence base documents was submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination on 19 December 2014.

Malcolm Rivett has been appointed as the Planning Inspector for the examination, which is due to be held week commencing 11 May 2015 at the Solaris Centre. It was hoped the examination could have taken place in March but due to the Inspector's availability and the pre-election period, the earliest convenient date was in May.

It is expected that the examination will last no longer than one week. The Inspector has issued the Matters and Questions, which will be discussed at the examination, along with a draft programme. All information regarding the examination is on the Council's website. Officers are required to respond to the Inspector's Matters and Questions and our responses have to be with the Programme Officer by 22 April.

Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Show-People Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)

As previously reported, an updated GTAA 2014 has been produced identifying the accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people across the Fylde Coast. The outcome of the assessment identifies a need for additional sites for the period up to 2031. For Blackpool, a need for an additional 38 pitches for gypsies and travellers is identified (26 for Fylde and 17 for Wyre) along with two additional yards for travelling show-people (none for Fylde and 12 for Wyre).

The next stage of the process is to identify suitable and appropriate sites to accommodate this need where possible. Therefore a 'Call for Sites' was due to be undertaken towards the end of February this year, where the Council will invite residents, landowners, and other interested parties to let us know of any sites which are suitable for such a use by filling in the appropriate form with details of the site and submit it to the Council.

The suggested sites will be assessed by officers to determine their suitability. Sites assessed as suitable will be put forward for public consultation as part of the Local Plan process in preparing the Site Allocations and Development Management Development Plan Document, (Part 2 of the new Blackpool Local Plan).

Coastal Defence Scheme

Work continues on the Anchorsholme sea defence project, with a great deal of public interest and support for the project.

The contractor, Balfour Beatty, who has a proven track record in relation to sea defence schemes, building Blackpool and Cleveleys new defences and promenade, are working closely with the Council and the public to ensure Anchorsholme is to the same high standard.

Consultation with the public is ongoing and recently a number of people have expressed concern in relation to early works, which unfortunately were damaged by the sea. In relation to these people, we have worked with Balfour Beatty to involve them as much as possible in the process now and in the future and react to their concerns and queries.

The project is design and build and therefore Balfour Beatty carry all the risk in respect of the schemes design and construction.

Sea Water Quality

This year will see the introduction of the revised Bathing Water Directive with much more stringent standards. Predicted results have now been produced by the Environment Agency and unfortunately, two of the four Blackpool bathing waters are likely to be poor at the end of the 2015 bathing season, these are Blackpool North and Blackpool Central. However, Blackpool South and Bispham are predicted to be sufficient if not good.

This will result in signage advising against bathing at the start of the 2016 bathing season. The Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Water, Forestry, Rural Affairs and Resource Management invited representatives from Blackpool, Hastings and Cornwall to a meeting with him in January to discuss the work being carried out to improve bathing waters and implications, particularly on the potential effect on tourism.

The meeting concluded that all three authorities are working hard with their partners particularly United Utilities and the Environment Agency and a number of actions will apply nationally so the public understand the implications:

- Agreed a need for joint communications lines similar to those prepared for drought;
- Need to involve Public Health England to support communications work;
- NFU and CLA would share local contacts to engage land managers; and
- The importance of information on apportionment of sources for each bathing water catchment. The Environment Agency agreed to ensure that this information was shared.

It was also agreed to investigate the potential for funding works to improve bathing waters through the Coastal Communities funding allocations and Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Blackpool Council continues its partnership working across the Fylde Peninsula with Wyre, Fylde and Lancashire County Council along with United Utilities and the Environment Agency and United Utilities have a series of meetings with Area Forums and Community Groups to present their plans for bathing water improvements.

Following the determination by Ofwat in December 2014, work has commenced this year on a new sea outfalls at Anchorsholme and one due at Harrowside.

In addition, the regional Turning tides Partnership has produced a new action plan based on the predictions produced by the Environment Agency, which also provide source apportionment.

It is important to note that the Fylde Peninsular Water Management Partnership has been shortlisted for "Partnership of the Year" in the Local Government Chronicle Awards 2015, with the winner to be announced in London on the 11 March 2015.

Flood and Water Management Act and Regional Flood Coastal Committee

The Council is delivering its obligations under the Flood and Water Management Act in particular the actions prepared in the strategic flood risk management plan.

Due to the reapportionment of funding, an opportunity has arisen to bid for low value flood risk schemes and officers are collating evidence from various studies to assess if Blackpool meets the necessary criteria to bid for these funds.

Marton Mere replacement pump and spillway works have commenced on site, this will provide

protection to properties and ensure the spillway is now fit for purpose. In addition, an opportunity arose to bid for an additional mobile pump, this bid was successful and £16,000 has been allocated to the Council. The benefits for the Council mean that this can be deployed in the event of a flood and assist in protection of properties.

Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership

The Partnership is still awaiting formal confirmation on the legislation in respect of the Sustainable Urban Drainage role, however it would appear that this would now be a Planning decision role with the lead local flood authority as a Statutory Consultee. In the meantime, the Partnership continues to develop its strategies for ensuring all development considers its drainage proposals ensuring they address the need for sustainable drainage.

The Fylde Peninsula Water Management action plan has also been revised and work is currently ongoing in respect on the bathing water specific plans. This document will provide information on the works completed and the short medium and long term plans from all Partners.

Dates have now been confirmed for the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Coastal Group who will host its Annual General Meeting in Blackpool from the 30 June to 2 July 2015. This will involve representatives of all coastal towns in England visiting Blackpool to look at the coastal investment and its associated economic benefits.

Phones and IT

Windows 7 Upgrades and device Deployment

The IT Service is continuing with the refresh of Windows software and hardware devices. This is necessary due to the withdrawal of Windows XP and the age of many hardware devices significantly exceeding their serviceable lifespan. Windows 7 was selected over Windows 8 to ensure future compatibility with over 250 software applications and the failure of Windows 8 and 8.1 to gain wider adoption amongst larger organisations across the globe. The Windows 7 operating system is future proofed until 2020.

In the January and February a further 271 devices were rolled out taking the total number of devices upgraded since the programme started to 2124. The new devices will enable faster access times, improved productivity and flexible working.

Digital Inclusion

Wireless Blackpool the Council's free WiFi offer available in Council Buildings, Libraries and the Winter Gardens has had over 50,000 successful registrations this year.

The Digital Inclusion Sub Group is working on evidence to develop a picture of need in relation to ICT skills, access to equipment and support across Blackpool. This will help to focus resources on areas and sections of the community with high levels of need. Proposals are being developed for joint working with the Department for Work and Pensions around online support available to job seekers through a dedicated job skills site that can be customised to meet Blackpool's requirements.

We have also submitted a bid for £10,000 of funding from the Digital Experts programme, which would support our Channel Shift programme by re-designing services to be delivered through our website and supporting residents to access digital services. Ultimately, this would improve customer service and save money through the reduced transaction costs incurred by online services compared to those delivered by telephone.

Joint working with NHS

Provision of the free Wi-Fi facilities has been extended into Victoria Hospital, Fylde Coast Medical Services Whitegate Drive and Trinity Hospice.

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING, PUBLIC SAFETY AND ENFORCEMENT – COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL

New Homes

The first residents have moved into to Foxhall Village and Queens Park. The first 56 homes on the Queens Park development will be completed by the end of March and it is now possible to see the quality of the homes and the neighbourhood that is being created. Plans to complete the redevelopment of the rest of the estate have also been approved and demolition of the remaining tower blocks will start in the spring. This will create a total of 190 new Council houses when the development is finished.

The Foxhall Village development is also visibly progressing very well. The first 70 homes will be completed by the end of March and the next 50 are already starting to be built.

The developers, Hollinwood Homes are reporting a strong demand for sales from potential owner-occupiers. This development will create 410 new homes once it is fully developed.

“BSafe Blackpool” – Blackpool Community Safety Partnership

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Performance

All crime in Blackpool showed a 12.8% decrease in the period December 2014 to January 2015, when compared to the same period the previous year. This equates to 305 fewer crimes. Individual breakdown of other crime categories include:

- Anti-social behaviour has decreased by 4.9% (equivalent to 78 fewer crimes)
- Vehicle crime has increased by 6.5% (Seven additional crimes)
- Burglary (other than a dwelling) has decreased by 38.3% (75 fewer crimes)
- Burglary (dwelling) has decreased by 24.4% (30 fewer crimes)
- Domestic Abuse has decreased by 25.2% (78 fewer crimes)
- Sexual Offences (not including rape) have decreased by 3.5% (Two fewer crimes)
- Assaults have increased by 6.6% (39 additional crimes)

Crime reduction and substance misuse initiatives

Operation Impression

The Community Safety Team and PCSOs held the first of a series of bike coding events from the Neighbourhood Policing Team in December. The initiative, named Operation Impression, came after Police highlighted the need to tackle a recent increase in cycle thefts.

A trailer was set up in St John’s Square where members of the public could come to speak to the Community Safety Team or the Police about cycle theft, obtain information leaflets about cycle security and the Bike Register and also get their bicycle coded free of charge. Nineteen bikes were successfully coded during this event and a further 30 have been coded at a subsequent site in Bispham. Further Operation Impression action days are planned for spring and summer, which will help to raise the public’s awareness of cycle safety and security.

Advocates for child trafficking victims

A 12-month trial of specialist independent advocates for victims of child trafficking has recently begun, with the aim of providing support, advice and guidance to vulnerable children. A dedicated person will support each child with the capacity and expertise to promote their safety and wellbeing and guide them through the social care, immigration and criminal justice systems. This will help reduce the risk of these vulnerable children going missing and being re-trafficked. Once the findings from this trial are gathered, a decision will be made as to whether this scheme could operate nationally.

Coercive control now a criminal offence

It was announced in December that coercive and controlling behaviour would now be considered a domestic abuse offence after 85% of consultation respondents agreed that the previous law did not provide sufficient protection to victims.

The new offence is designed to help protect victims of domestic abuse by outlawing sustained patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour. Victims of coercive control can have every aspect of life controlled by their partner, often being subjected to daily intimidation and humiliation. Perpetrators will now face a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment, or a fine, or both.

Change in rape recording

From 1 April 2015, all reports of rape will now be recorded and categorised as rape until proven otherwise. This removes the current period of 72 hours in which officers are able to establish the validity of rape claims. The move comes after criticism that Police forces nationwide have not been reporting rape correctly and it is hoped that these new measures will allow for more accurate and reliable recording.

Blackpool has actively encouraged the reporting of rape and sexual assault for a number of years through work done by the Aquamarine Team. It is therefore expected that crime figures in this category will rise across the country because of these changes, but this will not be the case in Blackpool.

Trading Standards, Food Hygiene and all Enforcement activities

Out of Hours Noise/ Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)

This service was launched by the Public Protection Division on the weekend of 6 and 7 February. The intention is to provide the service every weekend between the hours of 21.00 and 03.00 hours and it will tackle matters of previously held intel, along with responding to calls to a dedicated, published mobile phone number. Statutory Notices were issued over both the first two weekends and the first prosecution has already been submitted. The service has been delivered from within existing resources and part of the review process of Environmental Protection.

Legal Highs

Officers from Public Protection, working with colleagues from BSafe, Public Health and the Police have become the first in the country to use Community Protection Notices to tackle the sale of 'legal highs'. The five major dealers in these products were all issued with formal Warning Letters under the ASB, Crime and Policing Act instructing them to remove these products from sale and two were subsequently issued formal Community Protection Notices. All five premises are currently in a state of compliance, but observations are ongoing and any non-compliance will lead straight to seizures and prosecution.

National Performance Statistics

The Public Protection Division has again ensured that Blackpool Council has finished as overall the top performing Unitary Authority in the country regarding enforcement. These figures are from the

nationally ratified CIPFA statistics, with the Authority finishing top of virtually every meaningful category and no lower than second in any single category.

Protecting the Vulnerable

Officers of the Advice and Education team have extended their activities regarding utilising the intel provided by the National Scams Hub, regarding repeat victims of scams. Personal interventions to disrupt these activities has now identified and protected 52 separate individuals and further activities are ongoing. Funding has been accessed from Proceeds of Crime to fit "Truecall" call blocking systems to 24 further victims of crime/ scams over the telephone. Further funding opportunities are being pursued.

ASB, Crime and Policing Act

Officers are robustly utilising the new tools designed to reduce crime and ASB. Notices have already been issued to tackle a variety of problems from begging, drinking in the street, aggressive dogs, rowdy hotels, takeaways to legal highs. Prosecutions for non-compliance have already been submitted. A consultation exercise is already planned with regard to imposing a Public Space Protection Order in the Town Centre and Promenade to further control behaviour.

Super No Cold Calling Zone

The first pilot of an intended town-wide Super No Cold Calling Zone has been launched at Low Moor Sheltered Accommodation. It is thereafter intended to extend the scheme across other sheltered accommodation before extending across the rest of the town. It is intended to increase effectively the controls that the Authority has over the activities of doorstep sellers who ignore displayed stickers.

Domestic abuse

Early intervention

The Stakeholder Group is continuing to develop the UCLAN pilot 'Step Up – Building the Evidence Base for Early Intervention Responses for Children Living with Domestic Abuse'. The researchers are in post and working with the group to establish methods of collecting data, establishing the service and the contribution of focus groups.

The external advisory group has been selected, made up of a range of experts and will be meeting at the Early Intervention Foundation offices in Westminster in March. The research team will be using range of research methods including interviews with children and families who have accessed the service.

Domestic Abuse Commissioning Review

The Domestic Abuse Mapping Workshop was held on 6 February, the event was well attended with 40 stakeholders from across sectors including specialist domestic abuse services and partners who work with children, families and adults who experience domestic abuse.

The North West Public Service Transformation Network supported the facilitation of the event, where a mapping exercise was undertaken to establish the services that are currently in place. Case studies were used to identify where partners can intervene earlier to support the identification of Domestic Abuse and the groups created ideal pathways of provision for children, adults, victims and perpetrator's incorporating preventative work through the continuum of need to high risk cases. The findings from the event will inform the commissioning of services. Service user participation will also be utilised to gain the experiences and views of people who have accessed services.

The next stage will be to establish the work streams required across the partnership to ensure effective provision of services. With the following stage of the review being to hold a stakeholder event utilising, 'Positive Transitions' to facilitate a customer journey through Domestic Abuse pathways. This will determine the work that is currently undertaken and establish what the identified need is moving forward. Service User participation will be included to capture real experiences.

Sanctuary Service

The Sanctuary Service continues to assess and maintain the security of properties where Domestic Abuse has been identified. A total of 114 referrals have been submitted since April 2014, the securing of the property can alleviate some of the fears that victim experience.

Training

The Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Team is currently reviewing and updating all the training. Dates have been set for the MARAC representatives training and we are looking to set dates for Domestic Abuse training, MARAC training and Honour Based Abuse training.

Inner Strength Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme

The Police and Crime Commissioner's office and the Council's Public Health directorate have provided funding to purchase a Domestic abuse Perpetrator programme using the 'train the trainer' model of delivery. This has previously been flagged as a gap in provision by the BSafe Partnership. There will be 12 professionals from across the partnership trained to deliver a 13-week programme, four per year with an evidence based therapeutic approach currently delivered in Prison settings. This initially will be a pilot to test the effectiveness of the programme in the community in Blackpool.

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES – COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

Social Care

The Blackpool Improvement plan continues to be a focus and key priority for both children's services and partner agencies. The priority actions as highlighted within the Ofsted Report 2014 have been identified and supporting evidence is being collated to present to the Improvement Board in March 2015 identifying those actions that have been completed. The plan highlights areas of action that need to be improved to ensure services to children young people and families are coordinated to support improved outcomes of the people in Blackpool.

The evidence presently identifies improvements in the areas of care leavers, outlining that a review of caseloads of Personal Advisors took place to ensure that plans were being delivered consistently and that there were planned interventions to this group of young people. There continues to be improvement with health assessments of looked after children and there is a steady increase in the personal education plans of looked after children being completed. Children's views are regularly sought and a vast majority of children and young people attend their reviews and actively participate in the discussion about plans for their future. Alongside this, there is also evidence that the timelines of private fostering assessments have improved and these are completed in line with both the legislative framework and Blackpool's policies and procedures.

As an Authority, the improvement journey is on track, with a coordinated response from all partners.

Looked After Children and Children's Homes

The number of Looked after Children in Blackpool remains high in comparison with neighbouring statistics and national comparators. The Head of Service and Service Managers review those children becoming looked after to ensure a consistent response to decisions to remove children from their families.

Bispham Children's Home was recently inspected in January 2015. This was a key inspection and the home was rated as outstanding. There have been changes to the regulation 33 visits to children's homes; this is currently being reviewed to ensure that as an Authority we are responding in line with changes to regulations.

Further new regulations will come into force on the 1 April 2015, which govern looked after children placements and expectations on Local Authorities placing children outside of the child's home area. Procedures are being updated to ensure the Council is compliant with these regulations.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is now embedded in Blackpool and based at South King Street. There is a commitment for agencies to support the MASH process, which involves multi-agency sharing of information to safeguard the children and young people of Blackpool and support families. Funding has now been obtained for an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) to be located in the MASH to support the Domestic Abuse strategy and the vision is that this new addition will support families who are victims of domestic abuse at an early stage and reduce the referrals to MARAC.

Safeguarding (Local Safeguarding Children's Board)

Blackpool Safeguarding Children's Board held a development day on the 30 January 2015 and all professionals and agencies attended. The aim of the development day was to consider plans and

priorities' for the next year, discussions were very helpful and will inform business planning.

From March 2015, Blackpool Safeguarding Children's Board will have a shadow safeguarding board in place attended by frontline practitioners. This Board will be consulted on a range of issues and will comment on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Blackpool.

Children's Centres

All seven of Blackpool Children's Centre cafes have achieved the Public Health Healthy Catering Award. The Children's Centres have been providing evidence against 97-point criteria, which covers Healthier Cooking Methods, Environment, Fruits, Vegetables and Salads, Starchy Foods, Protein Sources, Dairy, Fats and Sugars, Salts, Hot and Cold Beverages, Engagement, Communication, Promotion and Marketing. Children's Centres will be presented with certificates from the Royal Society of Public Health at an awards ceremony in March.

Adult, Community and Family Learning.

A Family Learning Functional Skills course has been piloted in Holy Family School, which has proved to be successful with most learners passing the qualification. Cooking on a Budget has really made an impact at Kinraig with learners giving feedback on meals they are cooking for themselves.

Basic skills continue to be a key priority. English and Maths courses continue to be popular in children's centres and across the community. Adult Learning is also co-ordinating drop in advice sessions including IT. This shall be starting shortly at Claremont Community Centre and the City Learning Centre, targeting vulnerable adults through the Family Intervention Team and the Council for Voluntary Services.

14 -19 Strategy.

The Blackpool Skills and Careers Event was held over two days in January 2015. A wide range of organisations including the local colleges and training providers took part providing exciting "hands on" activities for young people to inspire them to think about their future. The event was also used to raise awareness of apprenticeship opportunities with young people and parents, as there is evidence of a lack of knowledge about apprenticeships. An evaluation report is being collated but in summary over 1500 young people (primarily Year 9) from all Blackpool schools attended over the two days with a further 280 (provisional figure) visitors attending the evening session.

Blackpool Council is facilitating collaboration between the Blackpool Provider Group of training providers and colleges and the secondary schools on a common interest form for apprenticeships. The aim of the pilot is to simplify the application process for apprenticeships for young people by using an 'App' to register interest. This also aims to raise awareness of apprenticeships with young people.

Early Years.

Ofsted inspections

Early years settings, five group childcare and four childminder inspection reports have been published since my last report. One setting provides out of school care including for children in the Early Years age group and maintained the Outstanding judgement awarded at their previous inspection. Of the four other group settings inspected, two received a judgement of Good, one was Requires Improvement and one was judged to be inadequate. The setting judged to be inadequate is being challenged and supported to improve by members of the Early Years and Childcare Team. An action plan is in place and the setting has already taken steps to address the concerns raised by Ofsted. The Early Years and Childcare Team will continue to work with the setting until they are re-inspected by Ofsted in six months time.

Of the childminder reports published, one had no children present so was judged to be meeting

requirements of the Early Years register, the other three all received a judgement of Good. Based on published reports, the overall percentage of settings and childminders with Ofsted gradings of good or outstanding is 89%, with 91.6% of child minders and 85.7% of group childcare settings. This compares to national figures (as at 31 August 2014 which is the most recent data available) of 80% overall, 78% of child minders, and 83% of group settings.

Early Years Pupil Premium

Blackpool is one of seven Local authorities piloting the implementation of the Early Years Pupil Premium from January 2015, before it is rolled out nationally in April 2015. The early implementers will test the eligibility checking and funding systems so that full roll out, from April 2015, is smooth and successful. The pilot is underway and the Free Entitlement Grants (FEG) database has been developed to link directly with the Department for Education's Eligibility Checking Service. Checks are being carried out to identify eligible three and four year olds.

School Support and Advice.

The Inspection of Blackpool Council's arrangements for supporting school improvement was undertaken by Ofsted in December 2014. The report published this month is balanced and highlights the strengths and weakness within the Blackpool Education System as well as the progress made since the last inspection.

The Local Authority School Improvement Plan is being revised to incorporate the recommendations made by Ofsted and the identified Secondary improvement themes are being addressed in conjunction with the Regional Commissioner for Schools, local Academy Sponsors and the Council.

Governor Services

In line with the need to recruit more highly skilled Governors onto Governing Bodies, Local Authority Clerks to Governors are now supporting Governing Bodies to undertake annual skills audits on their members, and providing an analysis of the audit. In addition to identifying where there are skills gaps, the analysis will be used to identify future training needs and will be fed into the planning of future training provided by Governor Services. The majority of Governing Bodies now have a requirement for all newly elected/ appointed Governors to complete a skills audit prior to being formally accepted onto the Governing Body.

School Organisation and Buildings

Old Christ the King School (Bathurst Avenue)

The Council now has possession of Christ the King Primary School (Old School) and will be undertaking some minor refurbishment works in there during the next three months in preparation for it to be used as a Pupil Referral Unit (to be named Pegasus), as previously reported.

Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) – Phase 1

Work at the former Collegiate site as part of the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) is now well underway, with the steel frame being completed and external wall panels now having been erected. The site will accommodate Aspire Academy and Highfurlong. Building works are due to be completed in autumn 2015, with external works due to be completed by January 2016. The Education Funding agency (EFA) is managing the scheme and has confirmed that works are on schedule.

The planning applications for the other two new build schools under PSBP Hawes Side Academy and South Shore Academy were approved on the 14 January. The EFA has selected Morgan Sindall as their preferred bidder for this phase of the Priority School Building Programme with programme delivery between 2015 and 2017. Both these schemes will be delivered under the Private Finance Initiative.

Priority School Building Programme (PSBP) – Phase 2

The Local Authority made four applications for works under phase 2 of the Priority Schools Building Programme. Applications were made for works to Moor Park Primary, Revoe Learning Academy, Roseacre Academy and Woodlands Special School. None of the above applications were successful.

Inspection and Intervention of Schools

Since the last report dated November 2014, the following schools have been inspected:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| • Norbreck Primary Academy | Inspection Date: 25/11/14 | Overall Effectiveness: 2 (2) |
| • Highfield Humanities College | Inspection Date: 8/10/14 | Overall Effectiveness: 4
– Special Measures |
| • Claremont Primary School | Inspection Date: 11/2/15 | Unpublished Report |
| • Highfield Humanities College | Inspection Date: 13/1/15 | Positive
– Monitoring Visit |

Continuing Professional Development, School Workforce and the City Learning Centre

The termly schools review continues to identify key areas of Continuing Professional Development for schools. Brokerage for these areas, involve a number of local, regional and national key partners. Education London, Bill Thompson, FCTSA and Bright Futures have been active this last quarter. Active working parties are examining pupil premium and the role of teaching assistants. Her Majesty's Inspectorate has now completed their support series of workshops, which have proved successful. Opportunities for the school workforce to develop continue to be encouraged throughout the professional development pathways at all levels. The recent Ofsted inspection highlighted the need for continued brokerage for schools drawing in expertise from outstanding sources.

Education Diversity and Support Units/ Service e.g. Pupil Referral Units.

The Team is progressing with a remodelling of the Service to enable an increase in the staff/ student ratios across all settings. This will support a much more proactive approach with individuals and provide the opportunity to provide even more wrap around support to remove barriers to learning and make positive behaviour change.

A new initiative involves the creation of a vocational curriculum within one of our Centres and the early signs are really promising. A number of young people who previously struggled with their attendance have improved dramatically and are really engaged in their learning. The Team is working in partnership with Blackpool and Fylde College from whom we are commissioning tutors to deliver the learning. One of the crucial objectives of this initiative is to increase the number of young people who go on to pursue Post 16 accreditation pathways, building from the foundations of the level 1 and 2 qualifications they are studying.

Special Education Needs, Assessment and Support and Psychological.

Blackpool is one of four North Western local authorities chosen for a pilot by the Department for Education (DfE) to explore further aspects of the national changes around SEN and Disability for 0-25 year olds. The pilot will test, along with health partners, widening the remit of the SENDIST tribunal to be able to make non-binding decisions on the health and care aspects of an Education, Health and Care Plan. Currently only binding decisions on the education aspects of the Plan can be made. The DfE will give further details on the pilot later in the spring.

A major new resource has been placed on the Local Offer site and sent to all schools. It outlines the reasonable expectations of all Blackpool state funded schools in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND. This resource was developed in Blackpool with schools, specialist support services (teaching, educational psychology) and external consultants. It will be further explored with SENCOs at their conference next term.

On 23 January 2015, Blackpool Parents Forum, in partnership with the local authority, put on a day for parents at the football club. All relevant services had a stall for parents to look at, outlining the service offer. The three special schools in Blackpool gave a performance of music or acting and there were also national speakers. The day gave many opportunities for the Council and NHS trusts to consult further on how the national changes around Special Educational Needs were being implemented locally. In addition, further consultation has occurred with a group representing the deaf community and groups of young people.

Part of the challenges around the national changes is converting all current Statements of Special Educational Needs (or Learning Difficulty Assessments for post school students up to the age of 25) into Education, Health and Care Plans. Within Blackpool, the Council is currently on track to achieve this within the prescribed three-year period.

The Local Offer is operational as a web site to outline all services available within Blackpool for 0-25 year olds with Special Educational Needs and their families. It meets all statutory duties and currently is being refined, following comment, to make it even more user friendly.

Commissioned Services for Children

The Council has completed a tender process for a Care at Home and Short Break Service for Children with Disabilities. As a result of this process, a new contract framework of six providers has been established of which, four providers are new to delivering children's care services to the Council.

The following providers have been successful in their bid to be on the new framework:

Successful providers
Autism Initiatives (New)
Cherish UK
Homecare For You Ltd (New)
Ormerod Home Trust (New)
Safehand Care Limited
Sevacare (UK) Ltd (New)

The providers who have been successful in gaining a place on the framework have been assessed as part of the tender process, and met the agreed quality and value for money benchmark.

Youth Offending Team

Both the Youth Offending Team and its administrative support are currently undergoing service reviews to be completed in early March.

Practitioners and managers are engaged in two important pieces of accredited training:

- a) Restorative Justice Conference Facilitation training for practitioners and managers is part of the strategy to improve the involvement of victims and their satisfaction with the criminal justice process. A grant from the Ministry of Justice's "Transforming Rehabilitation" Programme has been used to fund a full programme of training in restorative approaches across the service.
- b) The course in the Speech, Language and Communication Needs of vulnerable young people gives practitioners the skills and knowledge to engage with and tailor interventions to meet the needs of young people in the criminal justice system whose inability to comprehend or communicate effectively puts them and others at risk. The course is the second of two phases in a wider programme to prepare staff for the introduction of a new assessment model in 2016, which will be the most significant practice change in Youth Offending Teams in the last ten years.

Blackpool Music Service and Music Education Hub

In January, Continuous Professional Development courses were attended by 95% of Blackpool schools. Outcomes included greater understanding and improved School Music Education Plans.

Council and Parental support for Christmas and New Year events was excellent and exemplified by a grant from the Cherry Tree Area Forum, which will be used to inspire a greater number of instrumentalists to participate in ensembles. Additional support from parents has also resulted in new fundraising initiatives including sponsorship, monthly and annual donations and opportunities for the general public to become Patrons. This will embellish the funds of the Charity Status 'Friends of Blackpool Music Service' organisation.

The school based teaching programme has increased by 25% since September and 100% of instrumentalists have passed their Trinity and Guildhall Examinations Grades 1 to 7. Workshops with Travelling by Tuba have been successfully delivered at Unity Academy, Roseacre Primary Academy, Hawes Side Academy and, Revoe Learning Academy. These fully inclusive activities provided new aspirations for all.

A total of 35 Blackpool schools (including two special schools), two Blackpool Children's Orchestras, Blackpool Concert Band, Brass Bands and, Youth Choir have all performed successfully to capacity audiences as part of Schools Alive at the Grand Theatre (9 to 12 February). This event celebrated the achievements of 1,400 Blackpool children at their very best and received excellent media coverage.

Youth Service

The Specialist Support Team is delivering a number of initiatives across Blackpool, including the mental health pilot that offers young people up to the age of 25 a dual diagnosis service for their co-existing mental health and substance misuse issues and the PSHE project that is supporting secondary schools in Blackpool to offer a consistently high quality PSHE curriculum to year 7 and year 9 students and the self-harm project that is supporting young people on the adolescent ward and linking them into support on discharge.

These projects are being evaluated locally, the results of which will be reported on a regular basis. The team continue to support the excellent partnership work in Blackpool, which has seen the lowest rate of teenage pregnancies since recording began, and a significant reduction in the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system. The hub regularly achieves over 80% of young people completing their treatment either drug/ alcohol free or occasional users.

The HeadStart project is now well under way with the focus on support for young people aged 10-14 both on a universal and targeted level to build their resilience. The project is a pilot until December 2015 with the opportunity for bidding for up to 10 million over five years and is being delivered mainly through a number of pilot schools across Blackpool.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TOURISM AND LEISURE – COUNCILLOR CAIN

Illuminations

Blackpool's world-famous Illuminations are to be reinvented following the award of a £2m Government grant. The Coastal Communities Fund has confirmed that Blackpool Council's bid to transform the Lights show has been accepted in full.

With further contributions from the Council and from Left Coast, it means that the Illuminations will benefit from a £2.4m investment over the next few years. Proposed new attractions within the "Lightpool" project will include:

- Digitally mapped projections on to the Blackpool Tower building, enhanced by bespoke audio tracks.
- Digital festooning leading people from the Promenade into Brilliance on Birley Street, where there will be a new sound and light event space.
- New gateways at the promenade and Central Car Park arrival points with illuminated kiosks and navigational signage.
- A new artistic light installation at the Grundy Art Gallery.
- Employment of Illuminations "ambassadors" to improve the overall visitor experience.

Work on the scheme will commence from April, with some elements in place by the start of this year's Illuminations season. It is estimated that the investment could generate an additional two million extra visits to Blackpool over the next five years.

Business Support

A new brochure aimed at driving up the levels of business support for the illuminations has been produced. It was launched at a business event at the Winter Gardens on 26 February, hosted by Illuminations creative curator and TV personality Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen.

External Work

A large-scale project is underway with Sunderland Council with designs and presentations being made to them mid-March for a display which will build on the highly successful 2014 show.

Tourism and Marketing Services – VisitBlackpool

SHOWZAM!

Blackpool welcomed performers from across the globe when Showzam! 2015 rolled into the resort with a "Circus Town" theme. Highlights of Showzam!, which ran for most of the February half-term holiday included the Columbian-based Circolumbia, which performed daily at the Tower Circus, Carnival Ball at the Tower Ballroom, 100 free performances in Showzam! Central in the Winter Gardens' various venues and street theatre throughout the town centre.

This year's festival was programmed by Left Coast in association with VisitBlackpool.

Blackpool's Back

The Blackpool's Back destination marketing campaign, which played such an integral part in the resort's highly successful season in 2014, is to be repeated this year. Blackpool Council and Merlin Entertainments have agreed to part-fund the £700,000 campaign, with contributions being sought from other businesses within the visitor economy.

The campaign will again comprise a mix of TV advertising, digital activity and PR. It is anticipated that the TV ad will be largely based on the 2014 ad with some minor changes to the content. This year, the campaign is expected to start earlier than last year's July launch.

The new joint campaign was announced by Nick Varney, the Chief Executive of Merlin, who also revealed that the 2014 campaign had helped his Blackpool attractions out-perform all of his other UK-based operations in terms of increased revenue.

In 2014, the marketing campaign was credited with helping Blackpool grow its visitor numbers by over 200,000 visitors during the May to August period and growing the number of overnight stays by 30% compared to previous year.

Relationships with the Winter Gardens Company

2015 Shows Programme

The programme for the 2015 season is building well with most of the shows between Easter and the October half term in place. The principal show for the summer is expected to be announced in March. The latest addition to the 2015 Opera House line-up is the world premiere of a new musical, Last Night A DJ Saved My Life, starring David Hasselhoff. It will run during the October half term. Other shows already confirmed include The Sound Of Music, A Christmas Carol, Jesus Christ Superstar and the UK premiere of the revival of Tommy The Rock Opera.

Winter Gardens Trust

A formal launch of the second edition of the Blackpool Winter Gardens book by Professor Vanessa Toulmin was staged at the venue at the end of February. The new edition contains an additional chapter on the restoration and future of the complex, as well as new photography. The launch event was staged by the board of the Winter Gardens Trust.

Theatre Bar

The former Bar Red building in the St John's section of the Winter Gardens has been refurbished to create a new bar and eating establishment. It will now be known as 'The Theatre Bar' and opened at the end of February.

Cemeteries and Crematorium

All three cremators have now been refurbished and are operational on a daily basis. From April, bookings can now be made for services in the crematorium for a 30-minute period or a 45-minute period (currently just the 30-minute period is offered). Services will also be offered for booking on a Saturday in the Crematorium, which is an addition to the current Monday to Friday.

Leisure Management

This year began in great style for School and Community Sport, schools from across Blackpool competed at the School Games Indoor Athletics competitions at Blackpool Sports Centre. Over 300 young athletes competed in track and field events with the honour of representing Blackpool at the Lancashire School Games County Finals. Anchorsholme, Highfield, St Georges and Montgomery took the titles and will now take on the rest of the county at the next rounds in Hyndburn later this year.

Sport Blackpool has joined forces with Street Games to offer a young person's sports club hosted at Blackpool Sports Centre on a Friday evening. The new sporting offer has been recognised by Street

Games and has seen Sport Blackpool be awarded the Street Games Quality Mark Award the first provider of Street Games to receive this accreditation locally.

The sessions are a welcomed addition to the existing community sports offer in Blackpool, which now provides engagement opportunities every weekday evening.

The school cycle training programme continued through winter delivering Bikeability road safety training to a total of 113 Year 5 pupils at Waterloo, Claremont and Holy Family Schools throughout January and February. During the same period, Learn to Ride sessions were delivered at Waterloo School to 15 Year 5 pupils who lacked the skills and confidence to ride a two-wheeled bike. The Schools cycle training programme achieved high pupil engagement at Holy Family (100%) and Waterloo (92%).

In January, six adults received 'on the road' cycle training as part of a programme to equip riders with the skills and confidence to cycle in traffic.

As part of the Palatine Leisure Centre Open Day a Dr Bike safety check and local Police team security bike coding event was arranged as part of the cycling promotion. The yellow bikes were free to hire and the cycle track made available all day.

Three bikes donated by the Police have been booked in for refurbishment for the Fulfilling Lives project as a means to help people improve their mobility.

The Wheels for All programme currently provides for Park, Woodlands and Highfurlong schools, Age UK and Active Blackpool clients to access cycling sessions weekly. The session offers a mentally and physically stimulating activity to engage with friends and have fun.

Blackpool's Early Years Physical Activity Programme for children aged 0 – 5 years has got off to a flying start this past year. We have worked across 20 private and school based nurseries delivering our Early Start programme, which looks to deliver high quality physical activity provision for Blackpool's future generation. The programme is delivered over a six-week period and covers a wide range of multi-skills, games and activities, which have strong connections with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS) and adhere to guidelines set by nationally recognised organisations. As part of the programme we have helped develop the awareness and knowledge of over 70 early year's professionals, whilst encouraging and supporting parents and carers with appropriate physical activity based activities.

Our School Transition programme has also seen similar success, aimed for students in Year 6 and 7, we have helped encourage and increase levels of physical activity by increasing opportunities and removing social and emotional barriers. We have increased the activity rate of pupils by over 20%, and sign posted students to our community and local sports clubs to continue their desire to participate in sport.

'Learn to Cycle' is a unique and exclusive programme for two year olds and older to get an early start into cycling. Sport Blackpool has a range of balance bikes on offer to provide the confidence, have fun cycling and understand the basics of road safety. Having an early start can only speed up the cycling skills and having them riding around on two wheels in no time.

Stanley Park and Showground

The Parks and Open Spaces Service submitted a bid to Barclays Bank Spirit of the Community Awards to enable the creation of the largest man-made wildflower meadow on the Fylde Coast.

Busy Bee Meadows will be a stunning, bee shaped wildflower experience in the heart of Blackpool's urban metropolis. Fed up of staring at excessively mown lawns and grassland areas that add little

colour or habitat for insects and birds, our vision is to develop the Fylde Coast's very first purpose made wildflower meadow experience that brings nature to the doorstep of the community and provides a hugely important habitat for bees and butterflies. With a meadow guide and interpretive signage, the meadow will go a long way to enhance people's appreciation of Blackpool's green heritage.

Busy Bee Meadows will be developed within Stanley Park. The meadow will be situated on an existing field overlooking a number of key park facilities and will be accessible through an existing path network. The meadow will contain a series of mown paths enabling people to explore up-close. The visitor centre at Stanley Park as well as the planned new visitor centre at Marton Mere Nature Reserve will serve as superb hubs to promote the meadow and distribute information.

The construction, management and conservation of the meadow will enable an excellent range of volunteering projects, including the inclusion of volunteers to assist in the preparation and seeding of the site, as well as keeping pernicious weeds in check. Seasonal seed collecting events (such as National Seed Gathering Sunday) will spearhead a Blackpool Seed Hub, where park visitors can purchase bags of native, local wildflower seed to sow at home.

Stanley Park's five-year strategic management plan, created in partnership and consultation with a comprehensive range of stakeholders including Natural England, English Heritage, Blackpool Civic Trust and local group Nature Watch, outlines a clear need for implementing sustainable grassland management practices within the park. This will facilitate a wildflower legacy, benefit local biodiversity, reduce uneconomical and labour intensive grass cutting regimes, enable volunteer involvement and benefit local schools. It is hoped the scheme will set the precedent for town wide wildflower creation schemes, which are a colourful and creative way to reduce grass cutting.

Marton Mere Nature Reserve and Ecological Areas

The official launch of the Marton Mere Heritage Lottery Project occurred Thursday 5 February 2015, giving local media the opportunity to discuss the project details. Publicity from the Blackpool Gazette, Radio Lancashire and Granada has boosted interest from local schools, colleges and volunteers who are signing up to get involved. Progress of the project can be followed on Twitter and Facebook, where we are showing a photographic diary and promoting opportunities for people to get active on the site.

A series of volunteering taster days was organised throughout February, attracting over 40 participants who are signing up to become permanent volunteers. Volunteers will play a key role in supporting staff with specialist habitat management, wildlife surveys, nature walks, education with schools and the running of the new visitor centre. A new Marton Mere Volunteer Information Pack has been designed which will be promoted, circulated and uploaded on websites to encourage new applicants and guide people through the process of becoming a fully fledge project volunteer.

Contractors are now on site and work has commenced on the island and hide in the northeast corner of the reserve. The works will include re-profiling the island to make better feeding habitat for wintering wildfowl and encourage breeding of our ground nesting birds. The removed spoil will be used to create higher ground on which a brand new hide will sit, giving views across the island and the reserve. A temporary causeway across water to the island has been created to allow machinery on to undertake the works. Things are about to get even busier as we head towards March, when large areas of meadow are cut ready for spring, reed control works begin, an artificial Sand Martin Nesting Bank is built and our visitor centre building will be completed.

Sport, Physical Activity and Play.

A new Feel Good Factory facility, which is aimed at supporting clients to lose weight, get in shape, improve mobility, tone up and improve strength, has opened at Moor Park Health Leisure Centre. The new facility has already attracted 55 new members after only two weeks of opening.

The Active Blackpool team has introduced two more cardiac rehabilitation phase IV classes at Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre due to a further increase in demand from clients wishing to attend from the NHS Cardiac phase III rehabilitation team.

A new partnership with England Golf and Tee Time Golf will provide Feel Good Factory and Active Blackpool members with an alternative activity to try with friends.

A total of 60 people from the walking group enjoyed a very informative tour of the illuminations workshop in January. They were amazed at all the hard work to operate the illuminations at Blackpool. Members felt that having had a behind the scenes tour of the factory, 'they would appreciate the illuminations a lot more in the future'.

In partnership with the Amateur Swimming Association, Sport Blackpool was the first adopters of the centre based swimming technology 'Swimtag' in the North West region. The Swimtag system was installed at Palatine Leisure Centre in January 2014 for a 12-month trial period and over this time, the swimming challenges that were created received coverage in both the Blackpool Gazette and on BBC Radio Lancashire.

In the first year over 550 customers created a Swimtag account and the number of swims often exceeded 1,000 Swimtag swims per month. At the end of the 12-month trial period feedback was sought from the Sport Blackpool Swimtag users as to how they felt about the Council investing in the Swimtag technology permanently. As a result of the overwhelming feedback the decision was made to purchase the equipment for Palatine Leisure Centre.

Less than a month on from the permanent installation, the number of users has now exceeded 620 with new initiatives such as Swimtag Swim fit sessions, School engagement and Active Blackpool referral programmes being introduced.

Sport Blackpool has recently revised the Liquid Assets adult learn to swim programme to offer a price reduction for adult swimming courses, increased flexibility for pay and play customers and incorporated half price swimming lessons for all adult Sport Blackpool members and parents paying for their children to learn to swim. It is hoped that by addressing the barriers to participation we will reduce the number of non-swimming adults in Blackpool and encourage more families to swim.

The importance of school swimming provision in Blackpool has never been higher as the percentage of children entering primary school swimming with little or no prior experience of swimming is currently at an all time high of 62%. 31 primary schools participate in the local authority School Swimming Programme.

Sport Blackpool whilst focused on primary school pupils achieving and exceeding the minimum standards at Key Stage 2, has developed an Early Years intervention programme 'Tiny Tadpole' engaging parents and their children. The new partnership with the Better Start Team will support the development of pre-school swim classes with children centres. Grange Park, Talbot and Brunswick and St Cuthbert's and Palatine Children's Centres will be provided with the opportunity to learn to swim after half term utilising both Moor Park Health Leisure Centre and Palatine Leisure Centre Swimming Pools.

Sport Blackpool introduced 'Kayaking Come and Try' sessions at Moor Park Health Leisure Centre, starting on Saturday 7 March 2015. These sessions were aimed at providing individuals with an initial kayaking experience in a safe and warm environment with the aim of encouraging them to progress onto the water-sports programme on Stanley Park lake due to start in summer 2015.

New partnership with the Boathouse Youth Group has provided over 32 young people with an opportunity to learn to climb utilising the indoor climbing facility at Blackpool Sports Centre.

A new partnership with Age UK and the University of Central Lancashire has created an opportunity to explore the outdoor activities for 50+ age group with an initial focus on climbing and the high ropes facility.

Work has started on the high ropes course being built at the side of Blackpool Sports Centre near Stanley Park. The high ropes course is due for completion in mid-April, with it expected to open to the public at the beginning of May. Residents can register to be kept up to date on opening information and special offers at www.blackpoolhighropes.co.uk. A new underground caving experience is also close to completion at the back of Blackpool Sports Centre close to the high ropes course. The new facility known as the 'mole hole' will provide a fantastic opportunity for children and young people to explore 'underground' crawling through small tunnels using a head torch and helmet and taking part in fun team building activities and games as part of the new outdoor experience being brought to Stanley Park.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE – COUNCILLOR ROWSON

Care and Support – Adult Provider Services

Vitaline Service Offer for People undertaking a Reablement Programme

As part of a revised service offer, The Vitaline Bronze Service will be made available to everyone going through the Council's Reablement at Home Service; this is in response to feedback from Adult Social Care, Health and Commissioners.

This revised service offer is part of a wider approach and focus to support people to return home quicker after an admission to Hospital and/or short term residential care placement or not have to be admitted to Hospital in the first place therefore enabling the person to remain at home for longer with the appropriate Reablement support to help them maintain their independence and safety.

The Vitaline and Reablement Service will work collaboratively during the Reablement Period, which is typically up to six weeks, to support the person in receipt of Reablement as part of the work they do to familiarise themselves with the use of the equipment and signpost them to Vitaline and other services if they require any further information and assistance.

If the person in receipt of Reablement does not require on-going care and/ or does choose to continue with the Vitaline Service as a private customer after the reablement period has ended, then Vitaline will take action to de-install the equipment at no cost to the person.

Local Authority Peer Review

The Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC) programme brings together partners at a local, regional and national level to improve outcomes for citizens. It works with and for local government and its partners to enable them to take responsibility for their own improvement, with a focus on innovation and people centred coordinated care.

The Adults Peer Challenge intends to assist local government to help itself to respond to the changing agenda in adult social care. The peer challenge process is intended to be a constructive and supportive process with the central aims of:

- Helping a council and its partners to assess its current achievements
- Identifying those areas where it could improve

The Peer Review team was on site at Bickerstaffe Square for three days from 28 to 30 January 2015 and Blackpool requested it to consider three aspects of safeguarding practice:

- Strategic approach
To consider direction and policy setting, work with partners and the working of strategic bodies, such as the Safeguarding Board.
- Commissioned services
To consider how the Council ensures effective safeguarding practice in commissioned services, particularly consistency of approach and outcomes.

- Frontline social work practice

In particular a review of the consistency of its approach, impact and the quality of decision-making.

Preliminary feedback from the Peer Review team was as follows:

Strategic approach

The team noted that the Council's commitment to safeguarding adults at risk of harm was clearly a key focus. There was evidence of good partnership working, good quality multi-agency policies and processes had been developed and an overall commitment to safeguarding adults at risk of harm from both Adult Services and from its partner agencies.

The team identified areas for development in strengthening the working of the Safeguarding Board, which holds a vacancy for an Independent Chair, a post that is currently advertised.

The Board will gain statutory status in April 2015 and whilst the peer review team recognised wider corporate commitment to the Board, it was helpful in identifying areas where it could be strengthened such as extending the collection and analysis of the data collected.

Commissioned services

The quality of some provider services was highlighted as an area of good safeguarding practice. The team identified as good practice examples where there had been robust decisions made about commissioned services who may not be meeting the standards of care expected by the Council, and where the Council had been successful in gaining external funding to support the preventative, protective and responsive work being carried out in Adult Safeguarding.

Areas for development were suggested as creative market development and shaping and increasing information sharing to anticipate and therefore prevent the possibility of any future market failure within commissioned services.

Frontline social work practice

The wide range of staff interviewed were found by the team to be 'knowledgeable, committed and passionate' about keeping adults at risk safe from harm. A clear corporate commitment to training and development was noted and a widespread concern for treating people with dignity and respect was highlighted.

The team identified that the 'voice of the adult' and its level of information sharing could be better incorporated into processes, an area that had been already noted for the Peer team by the Service in its preparatory documentation for the review.

The team's overall findings will form the basis for a Report for the Director of Adult Services and the Chief Executive and support the service to focus its thinking in order that it that may bring about better outcomes for individuals and for all its stakeholders.

Care at Home Tender

The Council has just completed a tender process for Care at Home Services. As a result of this process, we will have five new providers on our list of providers. The following providers have been successful in their bid to be on the new framework:

- Sevacare (UK) Ltd
- I Care (GB) Limited
- Carewatch Care Services
- The Human Support Group Ltd

- Safehands Care Limited
- Guardian Homecare (New)
- Comfort Call Limited (New)
- Homecare For You Ltd (New)
- CIC (New)
- Cherish UK
- Napier Homecare Services Ltd

Service users who are currently supported by providers who no longer have a contract with the Council will be allocated one of the new providers. Over the next few weeks Commissioning and Contracts and Adult Social Care will be working very closely with the new providers and outgoing providers to ensure that service users are moved over to the new providers with minimum disruption.

Adult Social Care

Services are working through the triple impact of impending new legislation with the Care Act 2014, changes to Frameworks as it moves to Phase 2, and the relentless impact of requests for DoL assessments from managing authorities. The Care Act changes mean a review and updating of all our documentation, policy and procedures, together with a comprehensive training programme for staff. There will be some limited recruitment of new staff across a number of divisions to cope with increased demand.

The details of the consultation on the proposals for the funding reforms as part of the Care Act, due to be implemented from April 2016, have now been published and written comments are invited until the end of March 2015.

The Care Act

A series of consumer-tested campaign materials and tools have been developed in collaboration with the Local Government Association, ADASS and local authority colleagues, the Department of Health and Public Health England, to support councils in effectively informing local communities of the changes to care and support.

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CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY – COUNCILLOR JONES

Highways Maintenance – potholes, carriageway and footway repairs.

Highways Asset Management Plan

Due to Project 30, approximately 20% of Blackpool's highways are more resilient to damage from wear and tear, ageing, increasing traffic and severe weather. This however does mean that if our highways are going to continue to provide the service for which they were built, there must be a sustainable approach to highway maintenance to make the best possible use of available funding. If not then the highways condition will decline, with a return to defects like potholes and increased liability due to tripping claims.

However, there are some decisions to be made on the levels of funding required to sustain the good work of Project 30. To assist the Members with these choices, the Highways Asset Management Plan is currently being reviewed and will be released later this year, the plan will be based on the following principles:

1. The first priority will be to minimise risks to the safety of people living, working or travelling in the area. The Council will keep our operational maintenance policies under regular review to ensure that they reflect evidence from local data and best practice in risk assessment and management.
2. The Council will prioritise maintenance options that minimise disruption to traffic, residents and businesses over the whole life of our highway infrastructure.
3. The Council will prioritise maintenance options that improve the overall resilience and reliability of the network, particularly in the context of climate change and the growing frequency of extreme weather events.
4. The Council will prepare and review a five-year rolling programmes of work every year covering all our transport assets. We will maintain accountability in developing our programmes by regularly reviewing and publishing the criteria for approving scheme proposals. The Council will also ensure that critical infrastructure risks to safety, the economy, the environment and local communities are prioritised and addressed through the programmes by using a robust risk assessment process.
5. The Council will adopt the principle that decisions on short and medium term budgets should not result in unaffordable costs being deferred to future generations.
6. The Council will prepare and continually review 20-year budget forecasts for the Council's infrastructure assets to enable us to assess and manage long-term risks and guide the Council towards minimising costs over the life cycle of the infrastructure. Investment options will be considered where they are very likely to achieve high value for money or where there is evidence of significant social benefits. However, the Council will also monitor and publish forecast shortfalls in future budgets as this is the only way to develop strategies to address them and to build the business cases needed to access external funding.
7. The Council will identify optimum levels of service using appropriate methods to assess the changing needs of the local population and businesses and balance these with the need to minimise costs over the life of the assets.

8. Innovation will be a fundamental part of our strategy to reduce the whole life costs of maintaining our transport assets recognising the growing demands on budgets across all portfolios. The Council will continue to develop relations with partners and contractors to draw on their expertise and research and development in identifying new solutions. The Council will also proactively participate in Local Authority alliances to draw on and share best practice.
9. The Council will establish appropriate targets to reduce levels of waste, use of raw materials and emissions of carbon incurred by its infrastructure maintenance operations.
10. The Council will establish all necessary protocols to ensure that our asset information and systems are fit for the purposes of supporting the principles listed above and in doing so have regard to current and emerging standards for asset information management. We will also ensure that our suppliers and contractors provide all appropriate information to support our asset management system.

Project 30 has allowed the Council to understand the current state of its entire carriageway and footways and the rate of deterioration and the best treatment options that can be planned at the right time to have the most beneficial effect with regard to prolonging life at a point when the treatment is most cost effective (i.e. maximum value for money).

The reduction in the number and cost of highways related claims is critical and has reduced by £400,000 prior to the commencement of Project 30. A great deal of effort has been made by all relevant highways and risk stakeholders into monitoring claims and establishing improved practices in the reduction of the numbers and cost of tripping claims.

Highways Management

Yeadon Way Refurbishment Scheme 2014

The work commenced on Monday 10 November 2014 and is planned to be completed by 27 March 2015. The contractor, Galliford Try, has made excellent progress in relation to the extensive major repair works. The major risk elements of the project have been undertaken and completed on time, one such element was the piling, which was completed by the end of January. The project Board has been regularly updated with progress, which includes stakeholders from the business community.

The contract has been successfully managed and will deliver more for less due to the efficient working, which will provide an additional 10% re-surfacing. The final stages of the project are now underway with the kerbing being laid week commencing 23 February 2015 followed by the tarmac surfacing. Overall, there has been a good response from the neighbouring community, although a number of residents have expressed concern in relation to the disruption, with all issues and queries being answered.

Growth Deal Announcement

The strategic outline business cases are currently in preparation for the schemes given programme entry in July this year, which will help to secure the next stage of funding approval. The transport schemes in Blackpool included were:

- Integrated Traffic Management, providing an intelligent transport system to better manage traffic and parking in the town (starting 2015/ 2016)
- Maintenance of bridges, to repair a number of defective structures on key corridors (starting 2015/ 2016) – this business case has now been completed and has been delivered to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
- Green Corridors, improving gateway and arrival points to the town centre (starting 2016/ 2017)

- Blackpool-Fleetwood Tramway Extension, to North Station (Business Case being developed by 2015/ 2016 and statutory powers sought by 2016/ 2017)

Department for Transport Challenge Fund

The Department for Transport has set aside £600 million over the next six years for a Challenge Fund for major, maintenance projects. The Council has developed a business case to this year's round of funding for major maintenance to bridges.

This means that the Council is seeking funding from two sources to enable essential repairs and reconstruction of their ten strategic bridges to be undertaken at a total estimated cost of £11.365m. Confirmation is currently being sought from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP), via a Strategic Outline Business Case, that their previous preliminary approval of £4.23m for Growth Fund grant is confirmed. The Partnership meets to determine the final business case on 21 April 2015.

The remaining funding of £7.135m (including £1.570m local contribution) is being sought via this grant application, which, if successful, will enable all ten bridges to be repaired or reconstructed. Eight of Blackpool's ten strategic bridges were originally constructed to enable railways into Blackpool. Some were constructed at the same time as the railways and the others were built in the 1920s and 1930s to enable development. During the advanced preparation of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal funding, the Council undertook additional work to build in confidence as part of the amount requested. Recent detailed condition survey work has revealed that the resort's bridges are in a very poor condition, far worse than preliminary surveys had revealed. Without these bridges, the resort's distributor road network cannot operate with limited diversionary routes available. As most of these structures pass over railway lines, rail services might also be compromised. If this bid is unsuccessful then they will have to be considered as part of the Highways Asset Management Plan.

Highways/Footpaths

Joint Lancashire Rights of Way Improvement Plan – 2015 - 2025

The Council is responsible for more than 19km of Public Rights of Way including bridleways, footpaths and mixed use footpaths incorporating either cycle paths or bridleways.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires local authorities to prepare and publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) on a ten-year cycle. Thus, the current document released in 2005 will be superseded in 2015.

Lancashire County Council (LCC) previously requested a written Cabinet Member commitment in order for Blackpool Council to remain a joint party to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan development process, which I provided in January.

Although Blackpool has a small number of Public Rights of Way these are of value and of concern given the reduced amount of resources now available for their repair and improvement. Blackpool's Public Rights of Way have been surveyed and recorded within the Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) geographical information system. In the course of the Yeadon Way repair works, the opportunity to restore a Public Rights of Way that runs alongside it has been taken.

Street Lighting Private Finance Initiative

The core investment period for the replacement of street lighting and traffic signal junctions finished on the 31 December 2014 and approximately 16,000 street lights have been installed and 89 signal junctions across the town.

As a result of numerous requests, additional lighting has been provided in vulnerable areas. The most recent being a request to look at lighting at Mardale Road at Mereside.

Officers are continuing to liaise with the contractor to ensure the core investment has maximised the output specification.

Parking Services

A new hotel parking scheme has been established to help businesses in Blackpool and ease on-street parking problems. This coming season, hotels and guest houses will be entitled to offer their staying guests a new voucher-style pass called The Visitor Accommodation Permit at six different Council Car Parks.

The permit is designed to ease on-street parking problems, which often occur near hotels and assist hoteliers with helping their guests to park easily, conveniently and at a reasonable price.

Hoteliers will be able purchase passes from the Council and fill them out with the name of their guest, the registration number of their guest's vehicle, the name of the car park and the dates and times of their stay. The guest will then be entitled to half price parking at the selected car parks Lonsdale Road, Bloomfield Road, Banks Street, Gynn Square, South King Street and South Car Parks, a rate of £5 per 24 hours.

Once details of the scheme are finalised, hoteliers will be contacted directly with details of how to purchase the passes.

Equality and Diversity

LGBT History Month

February was LGBT history month and every year in partnership with the local LGBT Forum we promoted this through awareness raising and events. This aims to promote understanding and raise awareness of the prejudices faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

Highlights this year included:

- A community photography exhibition, Inside Out: Two Old Birds with Cameras
- Blackpool Tower illuminated in rainbow colours throughout the month and the rainbow flag above the Town Hall
- Our local LGBT History Exhibition in Central Library and a heritage tour of the Grand Theatre.

Launch of the British Deaf Association – British Sign Language Charter

The Council has now formally signed up to this charter and a successful launch event was held at the Town Hall to mark the occasion.

The five pledges are:

1. Ensure access to information and services.
2. Promote learning and high quality teaching of British Sign Language
3. Support deaf children and families
4. Ensure staff working with deaf people can communicate effectively in British Sign Language
5. Consult with the local deaf community on a regular basis.

For a number of months, thanks to help from Lancashire Deaf Services, a volunteer is now available every Thursday at the Council's Customer First Centre to assist people within the local deaf community with access to the Council's services.

Equality Analysis on Budget Proposals 2015/ 2016

Important work has been conducted to assess the potential impacts of the budget proposals that will affect staff and our public facing services. This work is conducted annually and helps to ensure key decisions are taken, having regard to the effects on people's shared equality characteristics via appropriate equality consultation and impact analysis. With regard to staffing issues, this work involves us producing statistical reports and comparing overall staffing profiles of those employees at risk of redundancy.

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CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH – COUNCILLOR COLLETT

Work on Dementia

Public Health Blackpool aims to deliver a dementia awareness campaign throughout 2015/2016. This campaign began on the 5 February 2015 with the Dementia 'Books on Prescription' launch at Central Library. The self-help books are now available within all eight libraries within Blackpool.

The awareness campaign will continue throughout the year, beginning again during May to coincide with National Dementia Awareness Week. Building on the success of last year's 'Dancing with Dementia' event, public health and colleagues in marketing are currently in the planning phase. The day will play host to a number of local dance troops encouraging people of all ages to dance and become more active.

The event will be supported by a number of services who will be providing information on the day. People will be able to access information on dementia and where to access support. For those who may have concerns about their memory, they will have the opportunity to undertake a memory assessment with one of the dementia services.

The campaign will go on throughout 2015/2016 and continue to support the Prime Ministers Challenge on Dementia and the ambition to create 1 million Dementia Friends by 2015. The focus of the 2015/ 2016 campaign is to sign up local businesses in retail, transport, leisure etc. to become dementia friends

Blackpool Council has submitted an action plan to the Dementia Alliance showing their commitment for Blackpool to become a Dementia friendly community.

Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL)

Green Deal and Eco are the national schemes for delivering energy efficiency improvements to properties. Green Deal provides loans and cashback incentives to homeowners, whereas ECO provides more traditional grants for qualifying properties and households.

The population of Blackpool experiences on average poorer health and lower life expectancy than the majority of the UK. Certain health conditions are exacerbated by the cold and environmental factors including cold damp housing and these contribute to excess winter deaths and high levels of unscheduled hospital admissions. There is also evidence to suggest that living in a cold home can result in poor mental health as well as lower educational attainment.

Blackpool has one of the highest levels of fuel poverty in England and a greater percentage of hard to treat houses than other areas. Hard to treat houses are those without a cavity wall or with a roof lift into the attic and therefore require expensive solid wall insulation. Blackpool Council has been working hard as an individual Local Authority to address these issues. Cosy Homes in Lancashire is now a Lancashire wide scheme supported by all the Lancashire Local Authorities. It has developed as a result of the key recommendation from an independent report, commissioned by the Lancashire Energy Officers Group, funded by Public Health Directorates across Lancashire.

The report was commissioned to investigate the potential of Energy Company Obligation and Green Deal across the County. The focus of the report was to maximise investment opportunities and

recommend the most effective potential delivery model, across Lancashire. This recommendation resulted in the development of Cosy Homes in Lancashire.

Supported by Public Health and still in its developmental stage, Cosy Homes in Lancashire (in Blackpool) is working closely with Care and Repair Blackpool regarding affordable warmth for vulnerable and fuel poor residents. The aim is to ensure those residents, especially where there is a cold related health condition, can keep warm in their home. Keeping residents warm and well, helps to reduce the amount of GP visits and emergency hospital visits, and also reduce the number of excess winter deaths.

The Cosy Homes in Lancashire scheme is able to provide free cavity and loft insulation where appropriate. Replacement high quality condensing boilers can be provided free dependent on certain benefit criteria being met. In instances where the criteria is not met, the scheme can still offer a very competitive deal for a new boiler and service package, including providing ethical finance options where no upfront payment is needed.

Care and Repair's Winter Warmth scheme provides boiler repairs and replacement, plus provision of free temporary heating and electric blankets until a permanent system can be installed. Draft excluders and carbon monoxide alarms are also available. The House and Homecare Advisor works directly with the hospital Discharge Team on a consistent basis, providing updates on the schemes and services available. The Discharge Team makes referrals to Care and Repair if they have patients who need assistance.

By working together Cosy Homes in Lancashire and Care and Repair in Blackpool can maximise the funding available in order to keep more of residents warm and well in their homes and out of the GP surgeries and hospital.

Blackpool wide PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education) in Secondary Schools Scheme

This report outlines progress to date on the key action identified in the Health and Wellbeing Board action plans for sexual health and alcohol, in the development of consistent and effective PSHE in secondary schools in Blackpool.

Through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and through the development of the Health and Wellbeing Board action plans for alcohol and sexual health, a need was identified for a consistent approach of Personal Social and Health Education across all Secondary Schools in Blackpool, to address the local Public Health priorities:

- Sexual Health including sexual exploitation
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Self-Harm and emotional wellbeing

The evidence base on effective Personal Social and Health Education was collated through Lancaster University, OFSTED, consultation with young people and the Personal Social and Health Education Association which collectively prescribed the way forward following a multi-component whole school approach.

To support schools in the delivery of a consistent approach, a school support package has been developed by Children's Services Specialist Support Team commissioned by Public Health, which includes:

- Personal Social and Health Education Association membership for the whole school along with three Continuing Professional Development days for Personal Social and Health

Education Leads

- Supply teacher budget to allow staff to be released for training
- TLR point for Personal Social and Health Education leads
- Personal Social and Health Education Forum has been established and Personal Social and Health Education Association Continuing Professional Development training days organised.
- 44 Core Lessons in Sex and Relationship and Drugs and Alcohol have been developed for Years 7 and 9, written by the Specialist Support Team staff in consultation with individual schools and school nurses. These are timetabled to begin in September 2015
- Risky Behaviour Training is now provided for Personal Social and Health Education staff and wider school staff:
 1. Basic Drugs Awareness
 2. Alcohol
 3. Consent and Sexual Exploitation
 4. Hidden Harm
 5. Sexual Health
- Further work is planned in relation to emotional wellbeing and resilience in 2015/ 2016 based on the outcomes of work through the pilot HeadStart programme.

Growth Portfolios and Evaluations have been developed to both show and to monitor the outcomes that have been achieved through this scheme. In addition, the bi annual Schools Health Survey will be repeated to understand the impact that the education has had at a population level.

The support package has been developed in partnership with schools and has been well received.

Health Funding

Background

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, responsibility for commissioning many public health services was transferred to local government under the responsibility of the Director of Public Health (DPH) as part of a ring-fenced public health grant. Nationally it has been agreed that the commissioning responsibilities for 0-5 Healthy Child Programme (universal/ universal plus) will transfer to local authorities on 1 October 2015. Funding will sit within the overall ring-fenced public health budget.

Finance

The proposed funding allocations have been released to Blackpool Council for commissioning responsibilities for 0-5 Healthy Child Programme. The Baseline Agreement Exercise document addresses a number of the concerns we had, specifically inflationary pressures and commissioning costs. The proposed allocation Blackpool Council will receive for the six-month period 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2016 is £1,551,000, this is the proposal that was expected and would be sufficient to cover the contract values. The proposed funding allocation figures have been adjusted to ensure a minimum floor for local authorities such that no local authority is funded to a level below an adjusted spend per head (0-5) of £160. The adjusted spend per child 0-5s services in the Blackpool area is £388. This is the fourth highest spend per child of all English local authorities and it is higher than both Lancashire County Council at £276 and Blackburn with Darwen at £353.

From 2016/ 2017, the allocations are expected to move towards a distribution based on population needs. The fair shares formula will be based on advice from Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation (ACRA), the successor body to the Resource Allocation Group (RAG) and the Resources Allocation Working Party (RAWP) and is an independent committee which make recommendations

on preferred relative distribution of resources to the Secretary of State for Health and NHS England. Local authorities may move incrementally to the formula position over several years.

Child Poverty

Work on developing the Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development (Better Start) has focussed on recruiting staff, developing an implementation plan, developing an outcome framework supported by evaluation and monitoring system and work to enable the drawn down of finance from the Big Lottery Fund.

The Better Start Executive Board has received proposals for the expansion of the Family Nurse Partnership programme from 150 to 200 places in the seven Better Start Wards, allowing more teenage parents to take advantage of the programme, securing better outcomes for their toddlers. In addition, the Board has considered provision of the Baby Steps programme to replace current antenatal care across the same area. This is an evidenced based antenatal programme which supports and optimises parents' and babies' health and wellbeing. It promotes protective factors against child maltreatment, as well as more sensitive parenting and secure attachments.

Together, these initiatives will make a significant difference to the life chances of young children in our most deprived Wards and will start to tackle some of the root causes of child poverty.

CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND THE ENVIRONMENT – COUNCILLOR CROSS

Cleansing, Bins and Litter Management

The number of fly-tipping incidents reported from April to January 2014/ 2015 was 3,740 compared with 3,896 incidents in the same period last year. Tonnage of waste disposed because of fly tipping is down April to January 2014/ 2015 was 590.7 tonnes compared to 665.6 tonnes in the same period last year. Tonnages of waste collected from street cleansing this year is also down 2499 tonnes comparing to 2698 tonnes last year.

Street Cleansing teams have been involved with the clearance of fly-tipping from the dyke system, which is part of the larger highways project around Yeadon Way with approximately 2.5 tonnes cleared to allow drainage systems to run as they were intended to. Residential cleaning continues to meet its four weekly objective with the addition of deeper cleaning to streets, identified by residents and the LEAF team. The service leaflets people the day before to try to ask residents to park their vehicles elsewhere on that particular day.

The treatment of weeds on highways and footpaths will commence in early March and will be the services priority activity, weather permitting. A successful application during March is vital to being able to maintain cleanliness standards currently being achieved.

Domestic Waste (including refuse collection and recycling)

Kerbside collections from April 2014 to January 2015 to date collected 43,764 tonnes of waste, 34.7% of this was recyclable material, which is in line with the same period last year and the previous year.

As the Council is continually striving to improve recycling rates the Council has planned communication campaigns around plastics and recycling in general, as well as engaging with residents through events such as Area Forums where the Council has the opportunity to educate them on what can be recycled.

Following the introduction of seagull proof sacks in an identified trial area, community engagement has been undertaken and as a result, an increased number of residents have used the sacks having a positive impact on the quality of the environment. Consideration is now being given to other areas that may benefit.

Blackpool's total waste arisings, April to December 2014 was 56,826 tonnes, a rise of 5% on the same period last year. Total waste arisings includes all the waste that has been collected by Blackpool Council from all its regular sources, kerbside collections, street cleansing, Household Waste Recycling Centre and Commercial Waste. There is a planned programme of communications from residents, which will inform them of their recycling responsibilities. This communication will stress the need to continue with the great results Blackpool has achieved in raising its recycling rate to an annual figure above 40% for the first time.

Commercial Waste Services

Commercial Waste Service continues to hold a large share of the market with the contracts having collected 5,132.8 tonnes of waste between April 2014 and January 2015. This is processed through the Waste Treatment Plant and so 57% of the waste is diverted from landfill. There was also 245 tonnes of commercial glass collected, 100% of which was recycled.

Household Waste Recycling Centre

The recycling rate for the year to date is currently 69.5% compared with 70% over the same time period last year. Tonnages are also down at 6,704 tonnes compared with 6,869.

This year from April to January 2015 Rover has collected 111 tonnes of waste from 6,386 visitors who have brought 37,000 items. The items collected from Rover have generated £2,127 of income through the shop.

Lancashire Waste Private Finance Initiative

The direct management of the previous Private Finance Initiative arrangements is now fully established. New management and reporting arrangements are in place and considerable effort is being made to ensure the new company, Lancashire Renewables, fully adopts local government practices, particularly in procurement and reporting. Lancashire County Council (LCC) has appointed a high-level officer to the role of Client Manager to assist in the transition process and Blackpool Council will continue to maintain its presence at board meetings.

As part of the Woodlands from Waste project, the final 100 street trees have been planted across Blackpool. The new grant arrangements for future planting have changed and will come into force during the summer. Officers from Blackpool Council and Lancashire County Council are currently awaiting further guidance on the implications of future planting of woodland across the county. It is anticipated that should the programme continue in some form then there will be opportunities for Blackpool to plant further street trees albeit in smaller numbers than over the past four years.

Bulky Matters Furniture Service

Bulky Matters collected a total of 615 items in January, with 12% of the items reused as part of the Council's Discretionary Support Fund which distributes large pieces of household furniture to families in Blackpool in need. The remainder of the bulky waste collected was recycled, 45% and 43% items landfilled.

The ReNew Workshops, a social enterprise partnership with Calico, receives over 50 large electrical appliances from a contract Calico has with a large take back redistribution company, DHL. DHL is in receipt of appliances people from across the UK removed from households following a purchase of a new appliance from one of the high street electrical retailers. The 50 units received by ReNew and those delivered from the Household Waste Recycling Centre, Rover and the Household Waste Recycling Centre are the basis for the training workshop courses that will see approximately 72 people in the year trained to repair large electrical equipment as well as training in the computer workshop, also based within the ReNew facility.

The last quarter resulted in 47 large domestic units have been refurbished and delivered to local homes through the Social Discretionary Fund and sold at the Household Waste Recycling Centre Reuse Shop to residents of Blackpool. All remaining units refurbished at ReNew are sold by Calico in a variety of outlets across Lancashire, to other social enterprises on the Fylde and other parts of the county. In year two of this project the Council intends to further increase amounts of equipment utilised within the local area.

Pest Control.

The Pest Control service during the winter months carries out sewer baiting to approximately 1,000 'man holes' per year together with general requests for the service. Progress to date is that 600 have been completed. The service continues to offer their expertise to commercial and residential premises on a daily basis with nothing unusual to report.

Keep Britain Tidy Awards

During February Keep Britain Tidy group help their Diamond Jubilee Awards ceremony at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Liverpool. Blackpool Council's Rover Service, the mobile recycling unit, was nominated for Campaign of the Year. Rover received a highly coveted runner up award in this very competitive category.

In addition, Rover has been nominated for Local Council Innovation of the Year for the National Recycling Awards in London later this year following last year's highly commended placing for all the innovative work in Blackpool with local Third sector groups or increasing recycling and delivering social benefits to the local community.

Do Walkers Campaign

The Street Cleansing service has been supporting the " We are Watching You" campaign. The campaign sets its sights on irresponsible dog owners, with recent research showing that dog walkers are more responsible, and pick up after their dogs, when they think that they are being watched. In partnership with Keep Britain Tidy "We are watching you" signs were installed during December 2014. Initial results have shown a 17-45% reduction in level of dog fouling incidents. Streets in Layton, Claremont and Victoria wards were chosen for the initial campaign where its findings at the end of March 2015 will determine whether to continue and or expand the project.

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CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE – COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE WRIGHT

Libraries

Towards the end of 2014, the Government released William Sieghart's Independent Library Report for England. The report strives for a plan that is achievable and makes three clear recommendations and sets out clear and practical advice on how to ensure they are implemented. There were three recommendations and these are backed up by a number of actions that include Wi-Fi in every library, sharing good practice, encouraging and supporting a top class workforce and to look at ways of supporting e-lending models. The report recognises, as we have, that libraries need to be more than books. Apart from one library, Blackpool Libraries offer Wi-Fi to enable residents to bring in their own devices. Recently two drop-in sessions were held to support customers with the e-book and e-audio offer and because of customer feedback, a decision has been made to streamline our offer in these areas. This will result in a less complicated, improved service to the customers.

Following the review of ICT in 2013, the library service is making final arrangements for a new public ICT offer, including new hardware, an improved management system and a better printing facility. Residents will be able to print from library, home and personal devices. Once this is in place, a review of charges can take place to increase income generation but at the same time offer a much better service.

Successful partnership working has continued during the first part of 2015. The Grand Theatre offered some workshops and tickets to go alongside Horse and Bamboo's production of Hansel and Gretel. The offer included craft workshops at Moor Park and Palatine Library and a puppet-making workshop with the creative director of Hansel and Gretel.

The Dementia Books On Prescription book launch took place in February. Officers in the Public Health directorate supported the library service with the event and purchased book stock and associated publicity for the eight libraries. Many activities were held throughout the day, including knitting sessions, reminiscence work, games workshop, information stands, a tea dance, and music from Fylde Ukulele Network. The Arts Service supported the event by supplying a local artist and the heritage service displayed a couple of their Treasure Trove pop up museums. With the support of the public health service and neighbouring library authorities, all of the libraries team are designated as Dementia Friends. Two members of staff will be trained as dementia friend's champions in March.

A number of events took place to celebrate National Libraries Day, attracting media and social network attention. An online blogging and publishing workshop was hosted by DigiEnable. A family history taster, dark matter games, Dr Who Club and a jobs and skills club were held at Central Library. Dan Worsley's *Impossible Tales* book signing and a local history talk about Old Bispham were held at Moor Park Library.

Grundy Art Gallery

The Grundy, working in partnership with Park Community Academy and Mereside Primary School, successfully applied to become a Quality Hub for Curious Minds and is one of only three in the North West region to receive grant funding of £4,000 for a demonstration project. Curious Minds is the lead agency for creative and cultural education in the North West of England.

The Blackpool Quality Hub has been working with artist Kevin Hunt and students from the partner schools to explore Arts Council England's 'Quality Principles' for working with children and young

people. The partners invited Kevin Hunt to devise a programme of collaborative sessions, in which students from both schools would have the opportunity to develop new work and curate an exhibition of the outcomes in Grundy Art Gallery's spaces. The project sat alongside a main gallery exhibition of artwork produced by local school children in response to the Blackpool Showzam! Festival themes of Circus, Magic and Theatre. The Quality Hub partners intend to share the project at a special event for local teachers, paving the way for future partnership projects.

Curious Minds have also selected the Blackpool Quality Hub as a Case Study for their website, enabling the learning and outcomes from the project to reach a wide audience as an example of best practice.

Grand Theatre

The Grand Theatre continues its commitment to offering Blackpool children and young people high quality learning experiences through the Royal Shakespeare Company Learning and Performance Project. Nine Blackpool schools are in the second year of this programme and most recently four Blackpool children went to a national weekend for Young RSC Ambassadors. Two came from Montgomery and two from Our Lady of the Assumption. They met and worked with young people from the other partner venues and towns taking part in a range of Shakespeare-based workshops, watching performances and experiencing backstage tours. These Blackpool Young RSC Ambassadors will be involved in peer learning, sharing information about the first Blackpool schools Shakespeare festival based at the Grand in 2016 and being young cultural leaders.

The Grand, in partnership with Blackpool Council and Curious Minds, is launching the Shakespeare Challenge Arts Award project. In February and March this year 30 teachers will be trained as Arts Award Advisers and will be running the RSC's Shakespeare Challenge in their schools to contribute to raising standards in literacy and English. All Blackpool schools can take part in addition to the nine schools in the Learning and Performance Network. This June, Blackpool schools in partnership with the Grand will be celebrating Shakespeare in Stanley Park. There will be approximately 400 children performing.

COUNCIL APPOINTED COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE - REPORT TO THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLORS JACKSON, MRS TAYLOR AND MRS DELVES

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, 8 September and 15 December 2014. 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) 8 SEPTEMBER 2014

CHAIRMAN'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chairman recognised the work of Area Manager Chris Waters and Area Manager Keith Marsh who were both retiring at the end of September and the Authority wished them well for the future.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

In June 2013, the Authority had considered a paper, which outlined the main findings from Sir Ken Knight's Review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England alongside the progress that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had made against the key areas identified in the Review. At that time, it was anticipated the Government would give its views on the Review in the autumn.

A written Ministerial Statement had been issued on 15 July 2014, which was considered by Members. The Statement did little to change the direction of travel for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), which remained around increasing efficiency and working collaboratively where appropriate. One new piece of information was that the Government was to commission an independent review of the conditions of service for all fire and rescue staff and the way in which they were negotiated and decided.

OPENNESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES REGULATIONS 2014

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 came into force on 6 August 2014. These Regulations applied to the Authority. They made provision for any person attending one of the Authority's meetings (while that meeting is open to the public) to be permitted to report on the meeting. The Regulations define the term 'reporting' as:

- (a) Filming, photographing or making an audio recording of proceedings at a meeting;
- (b) Using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it took place or later; or
- (c) Reporting or providing commentary on the proceedings at such a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary was available as the meeting took place or later, to persons not present.

The Regulations do not require the Authority to permit oral reporting or oral commentary on a meeting as it takes place, if the person reporting or providing the commentary is present at the meeting. They allow any person who attends a public meeting for the purpose of reporting on it to use any communication method, including the internet, to publish, post or otherwise share the results of their reporting activities and the Authority must provide, so far as practicable, reasonable facilities.

Members considered the Government's plain English guide, which provides practical information to help the public and practitioners exercise the new rights to film, blog, tweet and use other social media to report meetings and access information about decisions taken by officers. Members considered and approved a draft 'Guidance for Reporting at Meetings' which set out some of the practical considerations and clarified the role of the meeting Chairman in order to support any person who wished to attend an Authority meeting.

Subject to the rules concerning the disclosure of confidential exempt information, the Regulations also required the Authority to make publicly available, as soon as reasonably practicable a 'written record' to be produced in a specified format of a decision delegated to an officer either:

- (a) Under a specific express authorisation; or
- (b) Under a general authorisation to officers to take such decisions and, the effect of the decision is to:
 - (i) grant a permission or licence;
 - (ii) affect the rights of an individual; or
 - (iii) award a contract or incur expenditure, which, in either case, materially affects that relevant local government body's financial position

The written record must be retained for a period of six years with any background papers for a period of four years. The Regulations also make it an offence for a person to intentionally obstruct, or refuse to make available for inspection by members of the public, documents relating to these decisions.

The Authority considered that it already complied with the principles of this. For example, in terms of delegated authority decisions were reported back through the urgent business process or through other reports to other Committees. Members considered and agreed that a full report be presented to the Authority meeting in December 2014 on the practical effects of the implementation of the Regulations.

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY (CFA) 15TH DECEMBER 2014

PERFORMANCE REPORT AND ACTION PLAN – OUTCOMES 2014

At the CFA Planning Committee meeting on 17 November 2014, Members considered the outcomes of the Performance Report and Action Plan 2014 consultation.

The Planning Committee considered the adequacy of the consultation exercise surrounding the proposals and the conclusions post-consultation and Members duly determined that the consultation had been adequate in scale and scope and endorsed the adoption of the revised Public Consultation Strategy. Members did however have opposing views regarding the proposal to vary the scale and structure of the Home Fire Safety Check Service according to an individual's fire risk and resolved to defer for final decision to the full Authority.

Preventing fires and casualties is an Authority priority and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) has provided a home fire safety check service to any resident in Lancashire, irrespective of the fire risk at the property. A comprehensive review of the service showed that although Lancashire was delivering one in eight of all Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC's) in England, the casualty rates (the

number of people killed or injured in fires) although they demonstrated significant reductions, was no better than many other Services who delivered far fewer HFSCs. The proposal was to vary the scale and structure of the HFSC service according to an individual's fire risk; targeting the most effort and resource toward those who were most vulnerable to fire risk (such as the elderly and homes of multiple occupancy). While those with lower risk would still receive a Home Fire Safety Check service, this would in some cases be delivered in a different way to the traditional visit, for example digitally on the website and by signposting people to product providers. The review also recommended the further development of partnerships with other agencies which had a direct responsibility or contact with vulnerable people, and in particular that LFRS should explore the potential for a much greater increase in the numbers of HFSC's that are delivered by other agencies. In addition, to streamline the processes, a Contact Centre would be adopted to provide a more efficient referral service and prioritisation of risk and administration of any arising visits.

The Authority considered the proposal in full and following a vote, the proposal to vary the scale and structure of the HFSC service was agreed.

CAPITAL BUDGET 2015/ 2016 – 2019/ 2020 AND REVENUE BUDGET 2015/ 2016 – 2018/ 2019

The Authority noted and endorsed the draft Capital Programme for 2015/ 2016 - 2019/ 2020 and Revenue Budget for 2015/ 2016 - 2018/ 2019.

The Authority also authorised consultation with representatives of non-domestic ratepayers and Trade Unions on the budget proposals and agreed to give further consideration to both at their Budget Fixing Meeting scheduled for 16 February 2015.

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Report to:	COUNCIL
Relevant Officer:	Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Eddie Collett, Cabinet Member for Public Health
Date of Decision:	11 March 2015

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECLARATION ON TOBACCO CONTROL

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the Executive's recommendation that the Council signs up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To endorse the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

2.2 To sign up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 By endorsing and signing up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control the Council will:

- demonstrate Blackpool Council's commitment to the:
 - World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
 - Tobacco Control Plan for England and;
 - Blackpool Tobacco Control Strategy
- protect local health policy from the tobacco industry
- provide strong leadership on tobacco issues within the Council

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 alternative option is not to endorse the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

“Improve health and well-being especially for the most disadvantaged “

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Background

Smoking is associated with a range of illnesses and is the primary preventable cause of ill health and premature death. Each year, there are over 403 smoking related deaths (around a quarter of all deaths in Blackpool every year) and 2,125 smoking related hospital admissions in Blackpool. Annual costs to Blackpool's health service associated with smoking-related illness are estimated to exceed £7m each year with an additional £744,000 as a result of secondhand smoke.

Whilst figures in other areas of England have seen reductions in the numbers of adults who smoke, in Blackpool the figures have remained static over the last few years at around 29.5% of the adult population smoking as compared to the England average at 20%. Smoking rates in the most deprived communities in Blackpool remain disproportionately high.

Tobacco control remains central to achieving Blackpool Council's Vision and Priorities, as well as to meeting the Council's international obligations such as the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention for Tobacco Control. For Blackpool to become a more successful town, with opportunities for everyone to flourish, everyone needs to remove the burden of ill health, which tobacco contributes significantly to.

Blackpool Council is committed to tackling tobacco related harm through its Tobacco Strategy 2014-2016. This Strategy has been developed with input from the Blackpool Tobacco Alliance, which includes partners from Lancashire Fire and Rescue, North West Ambulance, Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals and sets out the next steps on Blackpool's journey to becoming tobacco-free. The strategy and associated action plan has been endorsed by Blackpool's Health and Wellbeing board.

5.2 The Declaration

The Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control is a statement of a Council's commitment to ensure tobacco control is part of mainstream public health work and

commits Councils to taking comprehensive action to address the harm from smoking.

The Declaration commits Councils to:

- Reduce smoking prevalence and health inequalities
- Develop plans with partners and local communities
- Participate in local and regional networks
- Support Government action at national level
- Protect tobacco control work from the commercial and vested interests of the tobacco industry
- Monitor the progress of their plans
- Join the Smokefree Action Coalition

5.3 Key reasons for signing up to the declaration

The Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control is a national response to the enormous and on-going damage smoking does to the health of Blackpool's communities. It has been developed to provide a very visible opportunity for local government to:

- Publicly acknowledge the significant challenge facing Blackpool
- Voluntarily demonstrate a commitment to lead local action to tackle smoking
- Secure the health, welfare, social, economic and environmental benefits that come from reducing smoking prevalence
- Publish a statement of declaration to protecting local communities from the harm caused by smoking.

The key reasons for signing up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control are:

1. To demonstrate Council commitments to the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and the Tobacco Control Plan for England

Under the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, to which the UK is a signatory, countries have pledged to protect health policy from the commercial interests of the tobacco industry. Local authorities are also subject to this treaty. By signing the Declaration, Blackpool Council will demonstrate commitment to a comprehensive local approach.

2. To protect local health policy from the tobacco industry

Tobacco companies have a long record of attempting to influence council policies. For example, in England they have sponsored schools and museums, paid for industry branded smoking shelters on Council property and used subsidiaries to arrange

meetings with members and officers on local harm reduction policies. Signing the Declaration allows the Council to send a clear signal to the public, health professionals and the industry itself that local health policy will not be influenced by the vested interests of the industry.

3. To provide strong leadership on tobacco issues within the Council

Signing the declaration demonstrates a strong corporate and political commitment by the Council as a whole to make tackling the harm from smoking a priority. This is particularly important as tobacco remains the biggest cause of premature death and contributes to half the difference in life expectancy between the rich and poor.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information?
No

5.5 **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 7(a) – Executive Decision Notice EX/12

6.0 **Legal considerations:**

6.1 No implications identified

7.0 **Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None specific. Any new initiatives would be considered as part of operational budgets or subject to separate proposals to be considered.

8.0 **Equalities considerations:**

8.1 No implications identified

9.0 **Financial considerations:**

9.1 None specific. Any new initiatives would be considered as part of operational budgets or subject to separate proposals to be considered.

10.0 **Risk management considerations:**

10.1 No implications identified.

11.0 **Ethical considerations:**

11.1 Signing the declaration would support the Council's core values, morals and beliefs

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Not applicable

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 Blackpool Tobacco Control Strategy

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Notice of:	EXECUTIVE
Decision Number:	EX12/2015
Relevant Officer:	Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Eddie Collett, Cabinet Member for Public Health
Date of Decision:	23 rd February 2015

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECLARATION ON TOBACCO CONTROL

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To brief the Executive on the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control and invite the Executive to recommend that the Council signs up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

To recommend the Council to:

- 2.1 Endorse the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.
- 2.2 Sign up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 By endorsing and signing up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control the Council will:

- demonstrate Blackpool Council's commitment to the:
 - World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
 - Tobacco Control Plan for England and;
 - Blackpool Tobacco Control Strategy
- protect local health policy from the tobacco industry
- provide strong leadership on tobacco issues within the Council

- 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 Yes

budget?

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

The alternative option is not to endorse the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

“Improve health and well-being especially for the most disadvantaged “

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Background

Smoking is associated with a range of illnesses and is the primary preventable cause of ill health and premature death. Each year, there are over 403 smoking related deaths (around a quarter of all deaths in Blackpool every year) and 2,125 smoking related hospital admissions in Blackpool. Annual costs to Blackpool's health service associated with smoking-related illness are estimated to exceed £7m each year with an additional £744,000 as a result of secondhand smoke.

Whilst figures in other areas of England have seen reductions in the numbers of adults who smoke, in Blackpool the figures have remained static over the last few years at around 29.5% of the adult population smoking as compared to the England average at 20%. Smoking rates in the most deprived communities in Blackpool remain disproportionately high.

Tobacco control remains central to achieving Blackpool Council's Vision and Priorities, as well as to meeting the Council's international obligations such as the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention for Tobacco Control. For Blackpool to become a more successful town, with opportunities for everyone to flourish, everyone needs to remove the burden of ill health, which tobacco contributes significantly to.

Blackpool Council is committed to tackling tobacco related harm through its Tobacco Strategy 2014-2016. This Strategy has been developed with input from the Blackpool Tobacco Alliance which includes partners from Lancashire Fire and Rescue, North West Ambulance, Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals and sets out the next steps on Blackpool's journey to becoming tobacco-

free. The strategy and associated action plan has been endorsed by Blackpool's Health and Wellbeing board.

5.2 The Declaration

The Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control is a statement of a Council's commitment to ensure tobacco control is part of mainstream public health work and commits Councils to taking comprehensive action to address the harm from smoking.

The Declaration commits Councils to:

- Reduce smoking prevalence and health inequalities
- Develop plans with partners and local communities
- Participate in local and regional networks
- Support Government action at national level
- Protect tobacco control work from the commercial and vested interests of the tobacco industry
- Monitor the progress of their plans
- Join the Smokefree Action Coalition

5.3 Key reasons for signing up to the declaration

The Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control is a national response to the enormous and on-going damage smoking does to the health of Blackpool's communities. It has been developed to provide a very visible opportunity for local government to:

- Publicly acknowledge the significant challenge facing Blackpool
- Voluntarily demonstrate a commitment to lead local action to tackle smoking
- Secure the health, welfare, social, economic and environmental benefits that come from reducing smoking prevalence
- Publish a statement of declaration to protecting local communities from the harm caused by smoking.

The key reasons for signing up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control are:

1. To demonstrate Council commitments to the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and the Tobacco Control Plan for England

Under the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, to which the UK is a signatory, countries have pledged to protect health policy from the commercial interests of the tobacco industry. Local authorities are also subject to this treaty. By signing the Declaration, Blackpool Council will demonstrate commitment to a comprehensive local approach.

2. To protect local health policy from the tobacco industry

Tobacco companies have a long record of attempting to influence council policies. For example, in England they have sponsored schools and museums, paid for industry branded smoking shelters on Council property and used subsidiaries to arrange meetings with members and officers on local harm reduction policies. Signing the Declaration allows the Council to send a clear signal to the public, health professionals and the industry itself that local health policy will not be influenced by the vested interests of the industry.

3. To provide strong leadership on tobacco issues within the Council

Signing the declaration demonstrates a strong corporate and political commitment by the Council as a whole to make tackling the harm from smoking a priority. This is particularly important as tobacco remains the biggest cause of premature death and contributes to half the difference in life expectancy between the rich and poor.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

5.5 **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control document

6.0 **Legal considerations:**

6.1 No implications identified

7.0 **Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None specific. Any new initiatives would be considered as part of operational budgets or subject to separate proposals to be considered.

8.0 **Equalities considerations:**

8.1 No implications identified

9.0 **Financial considerations:**

9.1 None specific. Any new initiatives would be considered as part of operational budgets or subject to separate proposals to be considered.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 No implications identified.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 Signing the declaration would support the Council’s core values, morals and beliefs.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Not applicable

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 Blackpool Tobacco Control Strategy

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1 Is this a key decision? No

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

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: N/A 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:

To recommend the Council to:

Endorse the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

Sign up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control.

18.2 Date of Decision:

23rd February 2015

19.0 Reason(s) for decision:

By endorsing and signing up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control the Council will:

- demonstrate Blackpool Council's commitment to the:
 - World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
 - Tobacco Control Plan for England and;
 - Blackpool Tobacco Control Strategy
- protect local health policy from the tobacco industry
- provide strong leadership on tobacco issues within the Council

19.1 Date Decision published:

24th February 2015

20.0 Executive Members in attendance:

20.1 Councillor Blackburn, in the Chair

Councillors Cain, Campbell, Collett, Cross, F Jackson, Rowson, I Taylor and Wright

21.0 Call-in:

21.1

22.0 Notes:

22.1

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Report to:	Council
Relevant Officer:	Neil Jack, Chief Executive
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting	11 March 2015

COUNCIL'S PAY POLICY STATEMENT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the Council's Pay Policy Statement and the scale of fees for elections.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve the Pay Policy Statement and the scale of fees for elections, as recommended by 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 31st March each year. It is also good practice to review the scale of fees for elections before a major election and these have not been reviewed since 2012.

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 Communities and Local Government. In relation to the election fees some minor changes are recommended which do not alter the overall budget. Other changes could be made but the Returning Officer does not wish to increase the overall costs and believes that the fees proposed are consistent with other similar Councils.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is "Deliver quality services through a professional, well-rewarded and motivated workforce."

5.0 Background Information

5.1 The Council is required to produce a pay policy statement which must be in place for the year 2015/2016 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 Department for Communities and Local Government has added that they expect the policy statement to cover:

- I. The opportunity for full Council to vote on senior 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. Senior 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 Blackpool Council - Pay Policy Statement

The Pay Policy Statement is attached at Appendix 8 (a). Central to the statement is recognition that it is acknowledged that jobs have a value in terms of scope, specialist skills and knowledge, size and impact and the Council uses equality tested job evaluation schemes to ensure that this is done correctly and applied to an appropriate pay scale. Beyond that, the Council's employee benefits policies are universally applied wherever possible and the financial arrangements for all employees leaving the organisation for whatever reason are based on the same principles regardless of grade.

5.6 Scale of Fees – Local Elections

The draft Pay Policy Statement incorporates the fee paid to the Chief Executive in his personal role as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer has a personal liability for running the local election and in doing so employs staff for assistance in that purpose (rather than the Council) and pays them accordingly. In carrying out the role the Returning Officer is accountable to his statutory responsibility, not to the Council (in other words, the appointment is separate from his appointment as an officer of the Council).

5.7 Section 28(5) of the 1983 Representation of the People Act (as amended by paragraph 6(b) of Schedule 4 to the Act of 1985 and Schedule 16 to the 1994 Act) requires Councils to assign officers of the Council to assist the Returning Officer in carrying out all or any of his duties at an election. A scale of fees was agreed by Council in March 2012, for paying staff who work in this connection and this has been the basis of payments to staff who worked on national based elections and referendums with funding provided through external grant (e.g. Parliamentary and European elections and the Alternative vote referendum) and these fees have been accepted by the Government's Electoral Claims Unit, as a basis for paying staff.

5.8 The Returning Officer would also need to 'buy' in any other support directly related to the election (local or national based) (e.g. IT, customer services and operational services). These would be paid on the basis of reasonable and actual cost and again can be claimed back for national based elections/ referenda.

5.9 The scale of fees (Appendix 8(b)) includes set fees for certain tasks and hourly payments for other duties in accordance with a spinal column point on the Council's pay scales, commensurate to the duties to be undertaken. Any Council staff used in this connection do not accrue flexi time or time off in lieu. Since they were last reviewed in 2012, the following minor changes are proposed.

- 5.10 Reduction Postal Opening Room Supervisor rate from SCP 37 to 33 and a similar reduction anyone for the providing/ delivering training, as it would be more proportionate to both these roles based on the experience of recent elections.
- 5.11 With regard to the count, some minor changes are proposed. For counts taking place out of working hours (e.g. after 10pm) then it is recommended that the first hour (including pre training) is paid at double time to assist with recruitment externally, (rather than time and a half). Many authorities use a 'retainer' for the first hour of either a set fee or a particular rate. A new rate for a Deputy Table Supervisor allowance is proposed to assist the Table Supervisor and identify 'doubtfuls' and consequently a reduction in the Table Supervisor rate is suggested from SCP 37 to 33 as a result. With regard to clerical / poll cards, it is recommended that these payments be paid at the individuals own SCP rate, up to a maximum of SCP 30.
- 5.12 The Proposed Pay Policy Statement and the scale of Election Fees were considered by the Chief Officers Employment Committee at its meeting on Wednesday 25th February and that Committee recommended them to Council for approval.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

List of Appendices:

Appendix 8 (a) – Draft pay Policy Statement.
Appendix 8 (b) – Schedule of Election fees.

6.0 Legal considerations:

- 6.1 All legal duties concerned with this matter have been included in the Statement. It is considered good practice to have the Scale of Election fees for Local Elections agreed by or on behalf of the Council.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

- 7.1 The Council's Pay Policy statement covers Chief Officer Remuneration in various forms and also its relationship with that of other staff. The Returning Officer has a personal liability for running the local election and in doing so employs staff for assistance in that purpose (rather than the Council).

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. The next all out Local Elections are scheduled for 7th May 2015 and the budget for that is set to accommodate any fees paid to staff who work on the local elections. With the Parliamentary Election being held on that same date, then the Council's costs will reduce accordingly, due to it being a combined election.

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 and the Returning Officer is also setting down the election fees paid.

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.

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.

Living Wage

In order to support the lowest paid workers in the Council, from April 2013, the Council introduced the Living Wage supplement for Council employees whose total hourly rate is currently less than £7.65. 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.

Apprentices are paid at the National Minimum Wage during their apprenticeship period.

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 in writing that they have achieved or exceeded their objectives in order to progress through the grade.

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.

All Chief Officer appointments are dealt with by the Chief Officer Employment Committee, using the normal recruitment procedures and options with appointments made to posts with a remuneration package of more than £100,000 being ratified by full Council.

Overtime and Additional Hours Payments and Premium Payments

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, additional hours 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 hours 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 or all 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. It is the application of these schemes that 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.

Pension

Where employees have exercised their statutory right to become members of 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. The employer contribution rates are set by statute and are available from the Payroll Team.

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 a European, UK Parliamentary 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. Other fees paid to employees appointed by the Returning Officer for a local election are paid by the returning Officer, against fees set 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 payment, including salary paid in lieu, redundancy compensation, pension entitlement, holiday pay and any other fees or allowances paid to an employee, is more than £100,000, the decision will be ratified by full Council.

Termination Payments

In exceptional circumstances the Council may make a termination payment to an individual under a compromise agreement. Such agreements protect the Council where there is a risk of high financial impact and/or damage the Council's business or reputation. Payments are authorised by the Chief Executive or his delegated Officers. In the event a compromise agreement involved the Chief Executive or a Chief Officer, where the payment exceeds £100,000, the decision would be made by the Council based on a recommendation from the Chief Officers Employment Committee

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.

Blackpool Council

Fees for Council elections and by-elections

A. Returning Officer's Fees

Fee for conducting the election and generally performing the duties required other than any duties for which separate fees are provided:

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 the last equivalent election/referendum 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. For additional by-elections taking place on the same day, a discretionary rate will be applied.

B. (i) Deputy Returning Officer's Fees (full powers)

Fee for conducting and generally performing the duties assigned by the Returning Officer, other than any duties for which separate fees are provided - 75% of Returning Officer fee.

(ii) Deputy Returning Officer's Fees (specific powers)

The Returning Officer has the discretion to determine the level of fees taking into account the responsibilities and time undertaken when performing these duties.

C. Polling staff

The Returning Officer may vary these rates for a combined election/referendum, on the basis of fees set nationally.

	Fee
Presiding Officer	
Polling day	£200
Training fee	£30
Poll Clerk	
Polling day	£120
Training fee	£20
Polling Station Inspector	
Polling day	£200
Training fee – Presiding Officer training	£30

Note: SCP = Spinal Column Point and refers to the appropriate level on the Council's pay scales.

	Fee
Training fee for each Polling Station Inspector training	£15

D. Issue and opening of postal votes

A 50% reduction will be applied for Council staff during normal working hours.

Postal Issue Supervisor	SCP 26
Postal Issuer	SCP 14
Postal Vote Opening Room Supervisor	SCP 33
Postal Vote Opening Team Member	SCP 18

E. Count

A 50% reduction will be applied for Council staff during normal working hours. For any Count taking place outside of normal working hours, the first hour will be paid at double time, with the appropriate rate applied for any hours worked thereafter.

Count Assistant	SCP 14
Count Deputy Table Supervisor	SCP 26
Count Table Supervisor	SCP 33
Other count roles – at the discretion of the Returning Officer	

F. Other duties

A 50% reduction will be applied for Council staff during normal working hours.

Poll cards - preparation	Own staff SCP rate up to a max of SCP 30.
Poll cards - delivery	16p per card
For providing general clerical assistance / technical support	Own staff SCP rate up to a max of SCP 30.
Providing/ delivering training (unless covered elsewhere)	SCP 26

(Should circumstances require, additional clerical payments may be made at the discretion of the Returning Officer)

G. Mileage / travel

Mileage payments for all roles will be subject to individual claims and will be at the rate equivalent to the Council's lowest casual user rate if used car or actual and necessary cost.

Note: SCP = Spinal Column Point and refers to the appropriate level on the Council's pay scales.

H. Unsociable working hours

Any work which may be undertaken during evenings and Saturdays will be paid at time and a half. Any work undertaken on Sundays and Bank Holidays will be paid at double time. (ie outside of the Council's normal core working hours).

Note: SCP = Spinal Column Point and refers to the appropriate level on the Council's pay scales.

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