

# Public Document Pack



## BLACKPOOL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 30 June 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, 8 July 2015 commencing at 6.00 pm for the transaction of the business specified below.

Director of Governance and Regulatory Services

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### **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 22 MAY 2015**

(Pages 1 - 6)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 May 2015 as a true and correct record.

#### **3 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive official announcements from the Mayor.

#### **4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

To receive a representation from Mr Neil Smyth a representative of UNISON regarding the cessation of Supported Living in accordance with Procedure Rule 9 and a response from Councillor Eddie Collett, Cabinet Member for Reducing Inequalities and Adult Safeguarding.

#### **5 EXECUTIVE REPORTS AND OUTSIDE BODY REPORTS** (Pages 7 - 54)

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) Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs) - Councillor Campbell
- c) Cabinet Member for Housing, Procurement and Income Generation - Councillor Mrs Wright
- d) Cabinet Member for Municipal Assets - Councillor Jackson
- e) Cabinet Member for Business and Economic Development – Councillor Mark Smith
- f) Cabinet Secretary (Resilient Communities ) - Councillor Cain
- g) Cabinet Member for Reducing Health Inequalities and Adult Safeguarding - Councillor Collett
- h) Cabinet Member School Improvement and Children’s Safeguarding - Councillor Jones
- i) Cabinet Member for Third Sector Engagement and Development – Councillor Kirkland
- j) Cabinet Member without Portfolio – Councillor I Taylor

#### **6 COUNCIL PLAN 2015/ 2020** (Pages 55 - 66)

To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 22 June 2015 relating to the Council Plan 2015/ 2020.

#### **7 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY** (Pages 67 - 76)

To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 22 June 2015 relating to the Statement of Licensing Policy.

#### **8 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** (Pages 77 - 90)

To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 22 June 2015 relating to the role of the Area Forums along with other forms of community engagement.

**9 REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS** (Pages 91 - 100)

To consider the recommendation of the Standards Committee from its meeting on 23 June 2015 relating to the revised Code of Conduct for Members.

**10 THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (STANDING ORDERS) (ENGLAND) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2015 - APPOINTMENT AND DISMISSAL OF SENIOR OFFICERS** (Pages 101 - 104)

To consider the necessary changes to the Council's Constitution in light of regulations recently published concerning disciplinary action against Chief Officers.

**11 EXECUTIVE, AUDIT COMMITTEE AND COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPORTS TO COUNCIL** (Pages 105 - 110)

To consider proposed changes to the Council's Procedural Standing Orders on Executive, Audit Committee and Combined Fire Authority reports to Council.

**12 POLITICAL ASSISTANTS** (Pages 111 - 116)

To consider the principle of political groups appointing political assistants within the framework of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and if agreed, to outline the arrangements for appointment of political assistants should any group decide to appoint one.

**13 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL** (Pages 117 - 128)

To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to a full review of the Members Allowances scheme, undertaken following an all-out local election.

**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](mailto: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](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk).

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### **Present:**

Mrs Haynes (in the Chair)

### Councillors

Benson	I Coleman	Jackson	Ryan
Blackburn	Collett	Jones	Scott
Brown	Cox	Kirkland	Singleton
Cain	Critchley	Matthews	Smith
Callow	Cross	Maycock	Stansfield
Mrs Callow JP	Elmes	Mitchell	I Taylor
Campbell	Galley	O'Hara	L Williams
Clapham	Humphreys	Owen	T Williams
D Coleman	Hunter	Robertson BEM	Mrs Wright
G Coleman	Hutton	Rowson	

### **In Attendance:**

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

Carmel McKeogh, Deputy Chief Executive

Alan Cavill, Director of Place

Delyth Curtis, Director of People

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

Yvonne Burnett, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

### **1 THE ELECTION OF THE MAYOR OF THE COUNCIL**

It was proposed by Councillor Clapham, seconded by Councillor Galley and

**Resolved:** That in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Peter Callow be elected Mayor of the Borough of Blackpool for the municipal year 2015/2016.

### **2 THE ELECTION OF THE MAYOR OF THE COUNCIL**

It was proposed by Councillor Clapham, seconded by Councillor Galley and

**Resolved:** That in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Peter Callow be elected Mayor of the Borough of Blackpool for the municipal year 2015/2016.

### **3 THE MAYOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Callow made a Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Mayor according to the requirements of the law and thereupon took the Chair.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 22 MAY 2015

### 4 THE APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR OF THE COUNCIL

It was proposed by the Mayor, Councillor Callow, seconded by Councillor Blackburn and

**Resolved:** That in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Tony Brown be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Blackpool, for the municipal year 2015/2016.

### 5 THE DEPUTY MAYOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Brown made a Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Deputy Mayor according to the requirements of the law.

### 6 THE MAYOR'S ADDRESS

The Mayor, Councillor Callow, addressed the meeting.

### 7 CONGRATULATIONS TO THE INCOMING MAYOR

Councillors Blackburn and Williams congratulated Councillor Callow upon his election as Mayor. Oberbürgermeister Bernd Tischler also offered his congratulations on behalf of the people of Bottrop.

### 8 APPRECIATION OF THE EX-MAYOR

It was proposed by Councillor Mitchell, seconded by Councillor Jackson and

**Resolved:**

'It is with great pleasure, that Blackpool Council places on record its appreciation of the duties so very ably and enthusiastically undertaken by Val Haynes, as Mayor of Blackpool. Her dedication for the town, three times as Deputy Mayor, together with her many years of service on the Council have stood her in good stead for her year as Blackpool's civic head.

The Blackpool Mayoralty again maintained its status as a busy one this year with a variety of civic engagements and as the town still attracts a large number of conferences. The Mayor and Consort attended a variety of annual gatherings such as National Pensioners Convention, UK Bus Driver of the Year Awards, WMCIU, Royal Pigeon Racing Association and USDAW, to name a few.

Many ex-service and military organisations still hold their events in Blackpool and Val and Alan attended reunions of the Canal Zoners, the Royal Artillery Association, Aden Veterans, the Royal Air Force Association, the Parachute Regimental Association, a D Day Commemorative Service, the HMS Penelope Association and recently the VE Day Service and beacon lighting at the Cenotaph.

At the beginning of June, the Mayor and Consort attended the Royal Garden Party in London and combined this with an invitation to a ceremony in Hampshire in support of 12 Regiment Royal Artillery, who have Freedom of the Borough.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 22 MAY 2015

Blackpool Armed Forces Week, at the end of June, was again a great success attracting thousands of visitors to the town and the Mayor and Consort attended a variety of events during the week, amongst the highlights being the Flag Raising Ceremony at the beginning of the week and a Service and Parade on Sunday 29 June.

During her mayoral year, Val took great interest supporting in schools, scouts, guides, the Princes Trust and the Air Training Corps, attending or hosting many events involving young people. Val also supported, through her attendance, many new ventures and enterprises in Blackpool along with invitations to dance festivals, the Pride Ball, Strictly Coming Dancing, Local Business Awards and many volunteer and carers events.

The opening of the various new enterprises in Bickerstaffe Square featured in Val's mayoral year with state of the art Council Offices, a gym, supermarket and various shops and eateries.

In September, the Mayor and Consort headed a civic delegation for a visit to our twin town Bottrop for the Brezelfast and enjoyed a superbly hosted few days with Oberbürgermeister Tischler and the Bottrop Councillors. Following on in October Val, Alan and Deputy Mayor Councillor Chris Ryan were invited by The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment to Neuve Chapelle in Northern France to represent the town at a First World War Commemorative Service.

Val took great pleasure in welcoming our new citizens to Blackpool at the many very popular Citizenship Ceremonies that were held throughout the year. During this mayoral year also saw the Council Chamber and the Mayoralty hosting the Army Recruitment team and new army recruits at their Junior Oaths of Allegiance proving a proud and moving event for all involved.

This year, the Mayor's chosen charities were Donna's Dream House and The Snowdrop Centre and Val and Alan organised and hosted a wonderful Charity Gala Dinner in April where more than 340 people attended. This mayoral year raised over £28,000 for the charities.

A special reference has to be made to the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress, Chris and Nicola Ryan, for their support and contribution to this mayoral year and to Councillor Fred Jackson who acted as Mayor's Chaplain throughout the year.

To Val and Alan, Blackpool Council places on record its sincere appreciation of their services as Mayor and Consort, and expresses the hope that memories of their mayoral year will stay with them forever.

The Council extends to them both, every good wish for the future.'

### **9 THE EX-MAYOR'S REPLY TO THE RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION**

Mrs Haynes replied to the resolution of appreciation.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 22 MAY 2015

### 10 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2015

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the Council held on 11 March 2015 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

### 11 ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements on this occasion.

### 12 ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**Motion:** Councillor Campbell proposed (and Councillor I Taylor seconded):

'That Councillor Blackburn be appointed Leader of the Council, to serve for a four year term of office until the Annual Council meeting in 2019.'

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

### 13 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Members received the report on the appointment of committees for the 2015/2016 municipal year. As part of the report, they considered a review of the overview and scrutiny framework, and the proposal for two main scrutiny committees: one focussed on resilient communities, including children and adult services and health, with the other based around tourism, the economy and jobs as well as scrutinising those responsibilities of the Leader of the Council. Both scrutiny committees would have a greater focus on performance management in order to improve key outcomes and would also deal with any 'call-in' requests relating to their specific areas.

The Council also considered the proposal for an Audit Committee with a core audit function as recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, with the proposal for financial scrutiny to be undertaken by the Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

In relation to other committees (namely the Planning Committee, Appeals Committee, Standards Committee and Chief Officers Employment Committee) it was recommended for these to be reappointed according to their current terms of reference. There were no proposals to make changes to the Health and Wellbeing Board other than to reflect the proposed Cabinet Member responsibilities and the appointment of a new Chairman.

A full schedule of committees was submitted to the Council based upon the political balance calculations and which contained the notified names of committee members, Chairmanship and Vice Chairmanship nominees.

**Motion:** Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor I Taylor seconded):

'1. To appoint two scrutiny committees namely:



## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 22 MAY 2015

- Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
- Resilient Communities Scrutiny Committee

in line with the political balance calculations at Appendix 12(a), (membership of nine and with a composition of six Labour and three Conservative), with the powers and duties as set out at Appendix 12(b), subject to the responsibility for discharging the statutory functions in terms of crime and disorder scrutiny being assigned to the Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

2. That the Resilient Communities Scrutiny Committee also appoints the two diocesan co-opted representatives and the two governor co-opted representatives.
3. That both scrutiny committees be assigned the power to deal with any 'call-in' requests initiated in line with Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.
4. That the Chairman position in both scrutiny committees be filled by a majority group councillor and the Vice Chairman/ Shadow Cabinet Member position be filled by an opposition councillor representative.
5. To also appoint the following committees, in line with the political balance calculations and adjustments at Appendix 12(a) to the Council report. These are:
  - Audit Committee (membership of nine and with a composition of six Labour and three Conservative), the revised purpose, powers and duties of this committee to be as set out in Appendix 12(c) to the Council report.
  - Appeals Committee (membership of seven and with a composition of five Labour and two Conservative)
  - Planning Committee (membership of seven and with a composition of five Labour and two Conservative)
  - Standards Committee (membership of seven and with a composition of five Labour and two Conservative)
  - Chief Officers Employment Committee (membership of seven and with a composition of five Labour and two Conservative).
6. To agree that the powers and duties of the Appeals, Planning, Standards and Chief Officers Employment Committees remain as set out in the Council's Constitution.
7. That the Licensing Committee also be re-appointed with the powers and duties as set out in the Constitution (membership of fifteen and a composition of ten Labour and five Conservative).
8. That the Licensing Committee be requested to re-appoint the Public Protection Sub-Committee, with the powers and duties, as set out in the Constitution (membership of seven and with a composition of five Labour and two Conservative).
9. To note the appointment of members to committees as set out in Appendix 12(d) to the Council report and thereafter any nominations or changes to nominations reported to the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services by the relevant Group Leader.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - FRIDAY, 22 MAY 2015

10. To agree to the appointment of the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen for those committees and the Health and Well Being Board as identified at Appendix 12(d) to the Council report based on the above recommendations.
11. To confirm the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board as set out in Appendix 12(d) to the Council report.
12. Subject to the appointment of the Cabinet Member, to note that in line with the provisions within the Constitution (set out at paragraph 6.1 of Article 7), that the Leader of the Council intends to appoint two non-Executive councillors to Cabinet Assistant posts and will inform the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services of those names in due course and any future changes to those appointments.
13. To agree that the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services be authorised to amend the Constitution accordingly.'

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

### 14 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Council considered whether to make any changes to the scheme of delegation for which it had responsibility.

**Motion:** Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Cain seconded):

'To agree that no changes are made to the scheme of delegation for which the Council has responsibility'.

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

### 15 PROGRAMME OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Council considered a programme of meetings for the municipal year 2015/2016.

**Motion:** Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Jones seconded):

' To approve the calendar of meetings and the start times of meeting as set out in Appendix 14(a) to the Council report.'

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

### Mayor

(The meeting ended at 3.09 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance  
Tel: 01253 477127  
E-mail: [lorraine.hurst@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.hurst@blackpool.gov.uk)

## LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR SIMON BLACKBURN

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### Financial Management

The 2014/ 2015 Accounts prepared under the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) format have been completed. These will now be examined by our external auditor and reported to the Audit Committee on 24 September. The draft Accounts show that the Council's working balances as at 31 March 2015 are slightly above the £6 million target at £6.2 million.

### Council Efficiency Programme

The Budget for 2015/ 2016 required total savings to be found of £25.2 million. The first Corporate Budget Savings report for 2015/ 2016 was reported to the Corporate Leadership Team on 26 May. As at 30 April 2015 (month 1), 66% of the 2015/ 2016 savings target had already been delivered and of the remainder a further 20% is expected to be achieved by the year-end.

### Revenues, Benefits, Invoices and Payments

The average time to process new benefit claims and changes for April was 36 days. Work continues on processing old items of work. Until this work is completed, processing times are unlikely to improve. Work is progressing to automate the download of claims into the back office processing system.

The Universal Credit housing pilot has been extended until the end of August, but the number of cases transferring from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit remains low.

The council tax year-end collection was 92.4% against the target of 92.5%. It is anticipated that the difficulties in collecting from working age customers who receive council tax reduction will continue. At the end of April, collection showed an improvement at 10.7% compared to the previous year at 9.5%.

Business rate collection at the end of March was 95.09%, which is a small improvement on the previous year, which was 94.89%. At the end of April, there was an improvement at 9.14% compared to 8.21% the previous year.

Transactional Services have been trialling lodge cards in four sections of the Council and with Ralph Livesey, the supplier of fruit and vegetables to the Council. A lodge card is a purchasing card that is held with the supplier allowing the sections to place orders by phone, saving processing time and catalogue management. The supplier is also paid quicker as they receive payment seven days later. This process is now being rolled out to all sections and schools who use Ralph Livesey. We will then be looking to introduce further suppliers from September.

### Customer First

Customer First ensured maximum staff resources were available to deal with increased demand due to annual billing and elections.

Customer First is working closely with the Communications Team and other service areas to progress the corporate Channel Shift agenda. This enables customers to access certain services themselves online. The first objective is the Bulky Matters collections where furniture items are removed and recycled.

### **Risk Services**

A revised structure for Risk Services was implemented from 1 May 2015. The service will now comprise the three teams of Internal Audit, Corporate Fraud and Risk and Resilience. The restructure has seen the Senior Risk and Insurance Officer, Business Continuity Officer and Emergency Planning Officer take on more generic roles as Risk and Resilience Officers and an increased capacity in Corporate Fraud with a focus on high-risk areas such as insurance fraud.

The service has been involved in the investigation into a former employee who fraudulently obtained £18,000 from the Housing Options service. This resulted in a guilty plea and a suspended sentence was given by the Crown Court.

An independent actuary has been appointed to undertake a review of the Council's self-insurance reserve to help determine whether adequate provision is being made to pay for future claims.

The Council's Annual Governance Statement has been prepared and approved by the Corporate Leadership Team. This was considered by the Audit Committee on 18 June.

### **Legal Services**

The Queens Park Compulsory Purchase Order was confirmed on 7 April 2015 and notice of confirmation has been published. A General Vesting Declaration could be made after 16 June 2015. The Royal Mail Hawking Place delivery office hybrid agreement completed and stage 1 monies have recently been refunded as the stage 1 standard has been met. Work relating to the development agreement for the proposed Energy College is ongoing.

The surrender of the telecommunications mast on the former Syndicate Nightclub has been completed. Other completions include the lease of leisure facilities at Stanley Park and the lease for the use of the former Ponden Mill premises as a restaurant. The Service has advised in connection with the contract for the musical, CATS, which is to be performed at the Opera House. A new deferred payment agreement for accommodation charges has been drafted and those that have completed are being registered as required.

The Corporate Legal Service has now litigated various cases under the recently introduced Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It obtained an anti-social behaviour injunction under this legislation in an application on behalf of the Council and a neighbouring authority and a similar injunction that related to the Council as provider of housing. Additionally it acted on the obtaining of a Criminal Behaviour Order for breach of a Community Protection Notice that had been served under this Act.

### **Staff and Public Communications**

The summer edition of 'Your Blackpool' will be distributed mid-June. It will include contact details of the Councillors, a guide to events and activities taking place over the summer, details of the Council couch consultation events and a profile on the new high ropes course at Stanley Park.

Residents are being encouraged to sign up for an electronic version of Your Blackpool that is distributed once a month.

Communication has gone out to staff thanking them for their efforts during the very busy election period.

The Council collection of bulky waste service has now gone online as part of the channel shift programme. It has been live for a month and despite not being promoted at all, 26% of orders have been received online this month.

It was foster care fortnight (1 to 14 June) and we ran a campaign to encourage potential fosterers to attend our tea party events at Stanley Park. The long service awards for foster cares also take part during foster care fortnight. This year we celebrated 500 years of fostering and the tower was lit up in recognition of the years Blackpool foster carers have dedicated to fostering.

## **Human Resources (including Schools)**

### Social work recruitment

The recruitment of Social workers, Advanced Practitioners and Team Managers remains challenging both locally and nationally.

We continue to work very closely with children's services to continue to improve the local situation and have begun joint working with health and education partners to promote professional roles within Blackpool.

### Step up to Social Work

Blackpool in partnership with Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire has been successful in a further bid to deliver the Step Up to Social Work programme.

This is a 14-month training programme designed to enable high-achieving graduates or career changers with experience of working with children and young people to become qualified social workers at the same time as gaining intensive hands-on experience.

## **Payroll**

### Changes to Teachers and NHS pensions

The required changes to the above schemes have now been implemented.

## **Employee Development and Training**

The team is currently arranging a number of important events and conferences including:

Staff Conference – 19 October

Children's conference – 30 June

The Blackpool Challenge event – 22 June

## **Strategy Development and Research**

We have undertaken a comprehensive representative survey of residents' views and satisfaction with Council services, allowing people to tell us about their priorities for Blackpool over the next few years. The top three priorities are Street Cleaning, Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour and Regeneration. Areas of good performance identified were around the visitor economy, improving health and wellbeing, whilst areas for improvement were keeping Blackpool clean and giving young people the best start in life.

## **Democratic Governance**

Thursday 7 and Friday 8 May saw the Polling day and Counts for both the Local Election and also the two parliamentary constituencies of Blackpool North and Cleveleys and Blackpool South. This is the first time both elections have coincided since 1997 and created a huge logistical exercise with regard to planning and carrying out the support for both types of election. The Returning Officer used over 600 people throughout the election period in supporting the process and it was certainly an event that brought together staff from all across the Council and colleagues from the Police, Health, Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited, Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Sandcastle Waterpark, the Winter Gardens and Blackpool and Fylde College and many others who were just employed for the election. All this ensured the process was efficient and professional.

On behalf of all the candidates who stood at the elections could I pass on my thanks to those involved.

**Blackpool Museum Project**

The Community Engagement Team is working with groups across the town to gather memories and stories about Blackpool, which will add to our historic collections and inform the development of the Museum. They have collected memories in Glasgow, Bolton and Bradford and attended Dementia week events and the International Dance festival. The team is also developing plans for a major public consultation event in the Winter Gardens on the August Bank Holiday weekend, which is open to all.

The Museum team has also recruited and inducted 41 volunteers who will be supporting the Museum team across a range of tasks on the project.

In April, the project team appointed interpretative designers who have since been working closely with the museum team on developing the exhibition design based on research, investigation of the collections and community feedback. Specialist museum and interior designers Casson Mann bring formidable experience having worked internationally and for organisations such as the V and A, Imperial War Museum, Science Museum and the Natural History Museum.

The Round two submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund, our major funder, is scheduled for February 2016.

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

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### **Tourism and Marketing Services (VisitBlackpool)**

The second Blackpool's Back destination marketing campaign was launched in April following the success last year when visitor numbers grew by 200,000. This year's campaign, which includes a mix of PR, digital campaigns and TV advertising, is aimed at growing the number of short breaks by visitors as well as changing negative perceptions of the resort.

The TV element of the campaign was launched in Scotland at the end of June and will be followed by a campaign in the north of England, which runs from 15 July to 29 August. The TV advert is largely based on last year's advertisement, but updated to include CATS at the Opera House and new features at Madame Tussaud's.

The 2015 campaign has been funded in the main by Merlin Entertainments and Blackpool Council, but with additional contributions from a number of attractions and accommodation businesses across the resort.

### **Illuminations**

The development of the new "Lightpool" show within the 2015 Blackpool Illuminations display is now taking shape following the procurement of the suppliers of the equipment that will be used to project spectacular 3D films on to the frontage of the Blackpool Tower buildings. The films, the first of which will be premiered at the start of this year's Illuminations, are being specially produced for Blackpool and will focus on the resort's rich history of entertainment. The Lightpool project, which also includes new town centre digital festooning, installations at The Grundy and themed shows within Brilliance on Birley Street, follows a successful £2m bid to the Coastal Communities Fund to help reinvent the annual Illuminations display.

### **Beach Patrol**

The Beach Patrol Service is working in partnership with the RNLI in the development of a Community Life-Saving Plan for Blackpool, as well as promoting the RNLI's national 'Respect the Water' campaign. The service has also been working with Balfour Beatty in order to ensure that the new stretch of Promenade at Anchorsholme, where the new seawall is currently being built, will have the best possible safety features including public life-saving equipment, physical safety barriers and beach safety signs.

### **Planning and Land Use**

#### The Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012/ 2027

The Core Strategy Proposed Submission document (June 2014) with the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment and other supporting evidence base documents were submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination on in December 2014. The examination subsequently took place with the appointed Planning Inspector between 11 and 13 May at the Solaris Centre. Details of the Examination Programme, the Matters and Issues and the documents submitted to the Inspector can be found on the Blackpool Council website on the Local Plan 2012 to 2027 Examination page and the Core Strategy Submission page.

Following the Examination the Inspector has requested that the Council makes some modifications to a small number of policies in the plan and undertake a further round of public consultation. Officers

are currently working on the draft modifications, which will need to be agreed by the Inspector and then published for consultation. The consultation is currently expected to take place between July and September 2015.

### **Private Sector Housing Licensing/Transience**

The Council's Housing Enforcement and Transience teams continue to inspect private rented properties and reach out to residents in the Claremont area as part of the on-going selective licensing and transience programme. Additional funding of £1.54million from the Government's Transformation Challenge Award fund will boost the capacity of the transience team from July, enabling them to increase work in the South Beach area and to plan for activity in new areas in the rest of inner Blackpool from the start of 2016. Proposals to roll out selective licensing to Talbot and Brunswick, Revoe and St Heliers are likely to be brought to Executive for consideration in October 2015 following statutory consultation with residents and landlords in these areas.

### **Decent Homes**

The programme of Government-funded investment in Council housing to bring homes up to the Decent Homes Standard formally ended at the end of March 2015. Between 2008 and 2015, £60 million of additional funding was received from Government and invested in modernisation and backlog repairs to the Council's stock of around 5,000 homes by Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited. As well as investing in improvements, some of the least popular homes were demolished to enable the re-development of new affordable housing, such as at Queens Park and others were radically remodelled. The Council continues to have a responsibility to maintain its homes at the Decent Homes Standard and while investment in the capital programme will initially reduce, provision has been made in the Housing Revenue Account business plan to continue to invest to achieve high standards over the coming years.

### **"BSafe" – Blackpool Community Safety Partnership**

#### Crime Statistics

All crime in Blackpool showed an 8% reduction between April 2014 and March 2015, when compared to the same period the previous year. This equates to 1217 fewer crimes.

Individual breakdown of crime categories include:

- Anti-social behaviour has decreased by 3% (366 fewer crimes)
- Vehicle crime has decreased by 8% (82 fewer)
- Domestic Burglary has decreased by 11% (83 fewer)
- Domestic Abuse has decreased by 8% (131 fewer)
- Sexual Offences (not including rape) have decreased by 5% (12 fewer)
- Non-Domestic assaults have increased by 8% (171 more crimes)

#### Tools and powers

Since the implementation of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act in October 2014, Blackpool Council has been proactive in utilising the new tools and powers to tackle a wide range of antisocial behaviour issues. Officers from Blackpool Council have issued 98 Community Protection Notice Warnings, with only 17 of those progressing to the Notice stage. This demonstrates how effective this tool can be in resolving antisocial behaviour in its early stages.

Three persistent antisocial behaviour offenders have recently been tackled with the new tools and powers including the obtaining of Criminal Behaviour Orders for two prolific fly-tippers in Blackpool.



### Legal highs

As a result of the emerging issue of legal highs within Blackpool, Community Protection Warnings and Notices have been issued to the five main retailers of legal highs in Blackpool. These establishments have now ceased to trade and as a result, this work was recognised as good practice and included in the Home Office guidance to local authorities in tackling legal highs. Recently it was announced by Central Government that similar measures will take place nationally, illustrating Blackpool's lead in addressing this issue.

### **Crime reduction and substance misuse initiatives**

Work has been undertaken to tackle issues with drug supply and associated anti-social behaviour in the Claremont area. A number of tactics were employed during the four-week operation, including drug warrants, community engagement, leaflet drops and high visibility patrols.

Throughout the project so far, there have been twenty arrests and twenty visits to properties of concern where warnings have been issued in relation to persistent antisocial behaviour. Reassurance visits have also taken place in neighbouring properties, which has also helped to provide additional intelligence for the police and partners.

The operation has also uncovered a specific address, which is suspected of being involved with the recent influx of high strength heroin into Blackpool and a warrant has subsequently been issued to the premises concerned.

### **Highways and Transportation Policy**

The Fylde Coast transport masterplan, a joint document with Lancashire County Council, is due to be published in the next few months and has been through a consultation exercise.

Refranchising of the rail services for Blackpool is now underway and will be completed by early next year.

### **CCTV/ Security Service**

Work is ongoing to explore a number of different arrangements that would allow CCTV in the town centre to be monitored again, in partnership with Lancashire Constabulary. Although at present the cameras are not monitored, they continue to be maintained and are recording. As and when footage is required, it can be downloaded accordingly.

### **Arts**

LeftCoast, the Creative People and Places programme for Blackpool and Wyre which was established 18 months ago to encourage more people to participate in the arts, has been invited by the Arts Council to apply for a further three years of investment. A total of £1m can be applied for with a match of 25% required on the total cost of the programme, which would be able to run from October 2016 up until October 2019. Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited is required to remain as the lead organisation as the recipient of the original £3m award. A range of match funding for the bid is presently being sought and secured, the outcome of the bid will be known in October 2015.

### **Grundy Art Gallery**

Young people from Blackpool, who have been working with artist Sophie Mahon in response to the recent Grundy Art Gallery exhibition Modern History Vol 1, had the opportunity to take over and showcase their work in the gallery. The Grundy Art Gallery exhibition, Modern History Vol. 1, was the first instalment of three shows across the North West showcasing the work of emerging creative talent in the region. The show was in partnership with the Contemporary Visual Arts Network, which has created a series of projects and programmes, which aim to encourage artistic professional development.

A bid to the Arts Council by the Institute for Contemporary Arts including Grundy has just received a major award to form a national touring programme for day screenings of international artists' films by young and established artists. Each venue will have up to five events a year following a particular theme such as travel. The Grundy will receive funding of £35,000 to support the film programme coming to Blackpool for an Assistant Curator, audience development and marketing.

## **Libraries**

All Blackpool Libraries staff have completed the five e-learning modules contained within the Digital Skills Training Programme, the Arts Council England funded this Workforce Development opportunity. Recent evaluations have shown that the programme has been an overall success with a clear indication of increased confidence and capabilities of library staff, resulting in potentially significant impact on library customers.

Following the launch of the Reading Well Books on Prescription (Dementia), there has been uplift in borrowing of 68% of the books. Staff supported the recent Dancing with Dementia event at the Tower Ballroom, promoting our services and linking with other partners in order to support this area of work. All of the library staff are trained as Dementia Friends and two of the team are Dementia Champions. A new partnership has recently been set up at Palatine Library between Age UK and the library for people living with dementia and their carers.

Staff training was scheduled for the beginning of June prior to the rollout of the long-awaited ICT offer for residents. Chrome devices will replace the People's Network equipment, which was introduced in libraries during 2004. This is an affordable, quick and pioneering solution for Blackpool Libraries and we hope that our residents will enjoy many more hours of surfing the web, emailing, job searching and much more. The new offer will include new hardware, an improved management system and a better printing facility. Following the staff training each library will receive their new equipment, timetabled for fitting between 15 June and 13 July 2015.

Following an Open Tender procedure and according to European regulations, the library service has two new library book suppliers. From 1 June, Askew's and Holts Library Service will supply and service Adult Fiction and Non Fiction and Peters Bookselling Services will supply all children's materials.

## **Heritage**

### Historic Collections

Blackpool Council owns a number of regionally and nationally significant historic collections. These include the Illuminations Collection, the Tourism Collection and the Cyril Critchlow Collection. Together they tell the story of Blackpool as the first working class seaside resort in the world. Blackpool Council has a responsibility to care for these important artefacts on behalf of the community.

The quality of care of these collections has improved significantly over recent years. This good work is now being built upon by the appointment of a dedicated Collections Manager. This post is externally funded by the John Ellerman Foundation for three years. The Collections Managers role is to ensure that the care of our collections is in line with national museum accreditation standards. This will potentially open up additional external funding opportunities. It will also support the development of the Blackpool Museum project. Work includes improving the storage and documentation of collections and encouraging wider public access to these fascinating and inspiring artefacts.

### Blackpool Treasure Trove Project

The Blackpool Treasure Trove Project is part of the Community Heritage programme. The project brings together a number of community groups (including the Embroiderers' Guild and Claremont Community Centre) with artists. Using the heritage collections as the inspiration, they are making 'pop up' museum displays exploring the entertainment history of Blackpool. The pop up museums will be created over the next few months and will begin appearing around the town over the summer. This follows a similar project run with schoolchildren last year. The pop up museums developed by

the children are now touring Blackpool schools to encourage young people to find out more about their local history and the role Blackpool has played in the development of the seaside holiday.

## **Energy**

### Gas Supply Contracts: Saving 2014/ 2015

Blackpool Council introduced a proactive strategic approach to gas procurement in October 2006 with the introduction of flexible contracting rather than taking the conventional fixed price, fixed-term option. It has been identified through the use of flexible contracting, with the ability to make multiple purchasing decisions more economically advantageous timeframes could be identified to purchase opposed to purchasing large volumes of gas over a long period, significant reductions could be realised. Between October 2006 and March 2013, this has realised a saving of £1.4m.

Despite initial concerns for 2014/ 2015 over gas price direction with issues surrounding supply margins, Blackpool Council was able to take advantage of this marketing softening on the back of oil price reduction and warmer weather, achieving a reduction from initial contract prices. In financial terms an 11% reduction has been achieved in the delivered gas price compared with the conventional fixed price, fixed-term approach, delivering an end-of-year saving of £212,000 (net) across the Council's portfolio.

### Electricity Supply contract: Saving 2014/ 2015

Blackpool Council has introduced a proactive strategic approach to electricity procurement with the introduction of flexible contracting rather than taking the conventional fixed price, fixed-term option. Despite initial concerns for 2014/ 2015 over energy security, carbon prices and oil, Blackpool Council was again able to take advantage of the marketing softening and achieve a reduction from initial contract prices. In financial terms a 6% reduction has been achieved in the delivered electricity price compared with the conventional fixed price, fixed-term approach, delivering a saving of £194,000 (net) across the Council's portfolio.

### Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Phase 2

CRC Phase 2 started on 1 April 2014 and, unlike the previous Phase 1, there is a requirement to forecast and control energy use for the year with the incentive of lower forecast sale allowances versus the higher "Buy to Comply" purchasing. In April 2014, Blackpool Council bought 90% of its forecast allowances at a cost of £251,815. The 2014/ 2015 Phase 1 submission is going to final validation in preparation for audit for 31 July 2015 reporting deadline to complete Phase 1 of the scheme.

## **Integrated Transport Services and Central Vehicle Maintenance Unit (CVMU)**

Currently a full tender process for all passenger transport within Children's SEN and Adults Social Care provision is being carried out. The evaluation stage of all external operators who have submitted tenders for each individual route is being carried out with the awarding to the successful operators in time for the new academic year 2015/ 2016.

Road safety transition events during June and July are being delivered aimed at Year 6 pupils in Blackpool focusing on making the transition from primary to secondary school as independent road users. The day consists of a timetable of sessions each addressing different road safety issues. The main outline for the sessions is:

- Bus talk with PCSO – safety and behaviour (on the actual bus)
- DHL Trucks and Road Safety talk – blind spots with a HGV, cyclists and pedestrian behaviour
- Living Streets walk and talk – walk around the area and a discussion about walking to school
- Theatre – quiz and round up at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Last year 1233 Year 6 children came to the event with 23 primary schools targeted this year. The event won the Modeshift Partnership Award last year.

### **Rideability**

Rideability staff have now transferred onto the Council's terms and conditions, with a formal review of the service to be carried out in the near future.

### **Domestic Waste (including refuse collection and recycling)**

In the last financial year (2014/ 2015), we collected 52,000 tonnes of waste and recycling from the kerbside of which 34.1% was in the blue and green lidded bins and brown sack. This material is sent for recycling and composting at the waste treatment facility in Thornton.

The total amount of waste and recycling collected and disposed of by the authority in 2014/ 2015 was 71,500 tonnes and this includes waste from other sources like the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC), street cleansing, trade waste and parks. All these different waste types go towards calculating the overall Borough recycling rate.

A study is being undertaken this month to look at how we can improve the quality and increase the quantity of recyclable material in the blue bins. Also, closer working with the Communications team to develop targeted campaigns to raise awareness of what can and cannot be recycled.

The previous year (2013/ 2014), saw Blackpool break through the 40% recycling rate threshold for the first time and the service aims to maintain or improve on this year on year.

### **Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)**

The site accepted just short of 8,000 tonnes in the last financial year with a recycling rate of 67.6%, this is slightly down on last year, which was 69%. This would appear to be in line with the overall trend and the aim for this year will be to improve the rate.

### **Lancashire Waste Treatment Facilities (previously Lancashire Waste PFI)**

In partnership with Lancashire County Council for the long-term disposal/ treatment of waste, the Waste Disposal Contract represents one of Blackpool Council's largest contracts. As a result of this, in a spirit of continuous improvement, we are always looking at ways of releasing efficiency savings year on year. The service is looking very closely at the waste processing operations of both the Thornton and Farrington (Leyland) plants with a view to increasing the amount of material that is successfully diverted away from landfill.

The Education Centre at Farrington continues to prove extremely popular with local schools, with 95% take up in the Blackpool area.

### **Third Sector Initiatives: Bulky Matters, Renew Workshop and Rover**

Waste Services continues to develop and strengthen its partnerships in the third sector with a view to building capacity to deliver more services to local residents. These third sector initiatives continue to provide vital services to our residents enabling them to dispose of household items responsibly and putting those items to good use rather than landfilling them.

Bulky Matters has collected 2065 items in the first three months of this year with 57% of this recycled or reused.

The Re-New workshop has currently refurbished over 150 washing machines, among other items, to be sold on to residents who may be in need as well as supplying items to the Social Fund. Going forward there is an aspiration to secure a retail outlet to further increase the sale of refurbished electrical goods.

In the year 2014/ 2015, the Rover service exceeded all our expectations. It collected 44,183 items totalling 132.5 tonnes of material that was recycled from 7,624 visitors.

These initiatives have provided 26 people with training, 12 of whom have gained accredited qualifications as well as volunteering opportunities to improve the prospect of employment to local residents.

### **Public Protection Orders**

The consultation exercise is commencing regarding the possible implementation of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) relating to the town centre and promenade and Parks.

If successful, these areas would benefit from being more closely regulated with both Blackpool Council and Police officers having extra powers to deal with antisocial behaviour.

### **No cold calling scheme**

Public Protection officers are rolling out a new Super No Cold Calling Zone across the town, starting with sheltered housing areas. The aim is to provide extra support and reassurance to elderly and vulnerable residents, whilst criminalising the activities of unsolicited doorstep sellers.

### **Trading Standards, Food Hygiene and all Enforcement activities**

The draft Tattoo Hygiene Rating Scheme report has now been completed and officers are about to launch this scheme. The aim is to improve hygiene and health across the sector, to educate both businesses and the public and to drive up quality.

Selective Licensing Officers are now at the stage of reporting for prosecution those owners that have not licensed their properties in the Claremont area. To that end, 32 offence reports have now been submitted, with more to follow.

Officers of Advice and Education, Health and Safety Enforcement and Food Control are running an intervention operation 'Most Complained About Hotels' aimed at these premises. The intelligence used to identify the properties includes review sites as well as more traditional sources such as complaints to the Authority and Police. Initially education and assistance is provided, but backed by tactics that are more robust where improvement is not forthcoming.

Multi-agency Saturation Wards operations are underway with Public Protection officers working out of hours with the Police, Immigration, Benefit Fraud and Electricity North West to tackle antisocial behaviour and criminality around the problematic licensed premises in the saturation wards. Robust tactics involving prosecutions and licence reviews are underway to reduce the number of problematic premises and the associated problems.

Gambling Enforcement officers are working with the Gambling Commission to tackle underage gambling across the town. Over 40% of attempted test purchase attempts have led to contraventions. Repeat exercises are ongoing and failures are being reported for prosecution and licence review where appropriate.

A Charity Fraud prosecution is underway following a street fraud involving supposedly collecting on behalf of armed forces charities. As these cases are notoriously difficult to prosecute successfully, advice has been sourced from Counsel who will be engaged to present the case at Court.

The review of the working practices of the Environmental Protection team has been completed along with its embedding within the Public Protection Divisions methodology of working. The new procedures are in place, which should improve access and response to clients' needs, a new reporting mechanism to expedite production of Notices and Prosecutions and the delivery of the Out of Hours Noise / Antisocial behaviour service. This is now paying dividends with prosecutions starting to flow, including two major fly tipping cases.

## **Licensing Services**

The Licensing Committee met for the first time this Municipal year on Wednesday 3 June and agreed to recommend the Executive and Council to approve a new Statement of Licensing Policy. This will help strengthen the review process when holding licensed premises to account if they are alleged to be breaching one of the licensing objectives. The Committee will also be looking at the statement of gambling policy following the issuing of new guidance and also reviewing and strengthening the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing policy, in particular in relation to improved practice needed following the experience of Rotherham and Oxfordshire and the child sexual exploitation issues, which have taken place there.

## **Information Communication Technology (ICT) – within the Council and external**

### Upgrade of Libraries ICT Systems

Following a successful pilot of new public access computers using Google Chrome Technology the service will now be rolled out to all Libraries during July and August. This will include a new self-service printing solution, which will also work with mobile devices and tablets using the Libraries free Wi-Fi network.

In conjunction with the new public access computers the Libraries staff counter computers will be replaced. This will complete the Windows 7 rollout with all Windows XP devices now removed from the Council's network.

### Elected Members ICT

Members ICT facilities at the Town Hall have now been upgraded. The rollout of tablet devices to save on printing costs is continuing. As part of this rollout, Members are being upgraded to the new Microsoft Office 365 email service. The new email service will provide significant larger email storage than the previous system.

### Children's University

ICT Services is once again supporting and facilitating the graduations for the Children's University Programme. The service is supporting many small graduations at assemblies in individual schools for pupils participating in the programme. The main graduation ceremony will take place on Thursday 9 July at 6pm in the Empress Ballroom Winter Gardens for pupils over 300 pupils who have been enrolled in the programme for three years.

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING, PROCUREMENT AND INCOME GENERATION -  
COUNCILLOR MRS CHRISTINE WRIGHT**

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**Supporting the development of Affordable Housing**

The Council has sold 44 flats and maisonettes at All Hallows Road, Bispham, to Great Places Housing Group to enable demolition and re-development with new homes. Most of the 31 new houses and bungalows will be let at affordable rents and will provide much better accommodation for families in housing need. There has been a setback in the re-development with the building contractor going into liquidation, but a new contractor is now being appointed and the delay to the construction timetable is expected to be limited to two months. The new homes will be available to tenants in summer 2016.

**Parking Services**

The year 2014/ 2015 was an extremely good year for Parking Services with income achieved more than £250,000 ahead of the previous year when less car parking was available due to refurbishment and other developments.

During this year, a number of parking promotions took place, such as the discounted Christmas and the Small Businesses Day parking offers, which proved popular amongst those using the car parks. It is anticipated that these will be repeated this year.

More recently, an accommodation parking voucher was launched which allows hotels and guesthouses to provide discounted parking to their guests at a number of selected car parks. A number of these have already been purchased and positive feedback has been received from those using them.

The current financial year has started well for Parking Services, aided by a number of high profile events that have generated additional car parking usage. These include assisting 20 Century Fox with the filming of director Tim Burton's latest Hollywood film, "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children", the Rugby League Summer Bash event and the Red Arrows display on the Bank Holiday Monday at the end of May.

The Council's staff parking scheme is now in its second year and the newly established online system has worked very well since its launch in the last couple of months, with over 670 permits issued to members of staff.

**Contracts and Purchasing / Procurement**

The following contract awards have been made since the last report in March 2015:

Infrastructure Support to Voluntary Organisations	Blackpool Fylde and Wyre CVS (Blackpool)	£50,000
Vending machine supplies for leisure centres	Batleys Foodservice (Preston)	£57,000
Public Advertising	The Whole Caboodle (Harrogate)	£70,000

<b>CONTRACT</b>	<b>PROVIDER (Location)</b>	<b>CONTRACT VALUE</b>
Children's Software - Extension with Capita for 12 months	Capita One (Bedford)	£119,500
Schools Information Management System - Software	Capita (Hertfordshire framework)	£104,000
Christ the King Primary School - Internal refurbishment works, minor external works	F Parkinsons Ltd (Blackpool)	£185,581
Breast Feeding Peer supporting and School Nursing	Breastfeeding Network (Paisley)	£150,000
Blackpool Museum Project - consultancy support governance & management	DCA Consultancy Ltd (Birmingham)	£20,000
Your Blackpool Delivery	Letterbox Consultancy Ltd (Hertfordshire)	£4,488
Waste Paper Collection	Helping Hand (Blackpool)	£24,893
Wheeled Bin Management	Helping Hand (Blackpool)	£24,893
General Advice to Blackpool Residents	Blackpool CAB (Blackpool)	£50,000
Lightpool – Blackpool Tower Façade Architectural Projection Mapping	War Productions Ltd (Edinburgh)	£443,526
Mobile HWRC (ROVER)	Helping Hand (Blackpool)	£43,595
Winter Gardens Metric/Condition Surveys	Jubb and Jubb (Preston)	£275,000
NW e-tendering portal	Due North (Cramlington)	£17,120 (Blackpool costs only)

<b>Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited</b>		
Winter Gardens Washroom Service	PHS (Warrington)	£11,500 pa

A total of 39% of Council overall third party spend is now with local providers/ suppliers as at 2014/ 2015 year-end. This has increased from 38% as at 2013/ 2014 year-end.

The Council's Executive has considered and approved a Social Value Policy, which has been developed in conjunction with the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA). This will support commissioners to build social, economic and community outcomes into pre-procurement processes and should lead to third-party suppliers and providers seeking to deliver Social Value on behalf of the Council through contracting and tendering opportunities.



### **Commercial Waste Services**

Commercial Waste continues to perform well. Currently the service is the largest local provider of business waste collections and has approximately 48% of the market share with 1,400 trade bin customers and 1,600 sack customers across Blackpool and Wyre.

In 2014/ 2015, 5,959 tonnes of waste was collected and approximately 65% was recovered/ diverted as the waste is processed through the waste treatment plants. In addition 293 tonnes of glass was collected, 100% of which was recycled.

The Confidential Waste Service was launched in 2014/ 2015 with most of Blackpool Council now using this service contributing to the ongoing need for cost savings.

The service also carries out the household textile collection function as well as servicing the town's on-street recycling units and mini bring-sites.

The hugely successful Re-use shop located at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) generated sales in excess of £90,000 in 2014/ 2015 and once again donated to the Mayors Charity of £10,000.

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## CABINET MEMBER FOR MUNICIPAL ASSETS – COUNCILLOR FRED JACKSON

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### **Asset Management/ Council owned Properties**

Following their recent success in securing a regional 'British Council for Offices' (BCO) award, the new Council offices at Number One Bickerstaffe Square have been shortlisted for the prestigious National BCO Award of 'Corporate Workplace of the Year'. The panel will review the submissions and the winner will be announced at an Awards Ceremony in the autumn.

### **Sea Water Quality**

The 2015 bathing water season has commenced, this year sees the implementation of the revised bathing water standards, which means the final results will be based on the last four season's samples, previously results were based on the annual season. In addition, the standards for quality have now raised.

The final results this year's season will be published in November 2015.

In the meantime, Blackpool has received seaside awards for all four bathing waters. In order to achieve the seaside awards, our bathing waters passed the bathing water directive standards last year and have proved that Blackpool has met all the requirements commensurate with such an award in respect of its beach amenities.

Bathing water results are published by the Environment Agency on their website.

### **Flood and Water Management Statutory Services**

Blackpool Council continues to work in partnership as recommended by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC). The Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership has a reputation for excellence in the North West as recognised by the Chair of the RFCC at the recent Environment Agency Annual Coastal Practitioners conference held in Blackpool.

### **Coastal Defence Schemes**

Blackpool continues to work in partnership with the Fylde Peninsula Partnership and Turning Tides Partnership to deliver best practice. The emphasis this season will be to continue with campaigns and growing awareness and Blackpool will continue with its role to promote awareness and best practice with the Business Community.

### **Building Cleaning Services**

The Building Cleaning service is working in partnership with the 'Chance 2 shine' programme giving an opportunity to four people to gain work experience in Building Cleaning. The students work within the service, along with permanent staff for up to sixteen hours per week over a maximum of three days per week, helping them to gain and or update existing skills. Previous candidates now work for the service in a full time position with others gaining employment with external agencies.

### **Street Lighting PFI**

The Blackpool Street Lighting and Traffic Signals PFI has now entered its sixth year. The core investment was successfully completed in December 2014/ January 2015. Work now continues to maintain the lighting and traffic signals. Studies and monitoring have been undertaken at a number of sites to ensure traffic movement is the best that it can be and this will continue throughout the project.

**Sea wall and Promenade maintenance.**

The Anchorsholme sea defence project is progressing well with completion scheduled to be March 2016. This allows the much-needed co-ordination with United Utilities works that is being carried out.

There has been a great deal of interest by the public in the project and communication and consultation continues regularly with local residents. The contractor also has a visitor centre open at the site at Anchorsholme. The next round of public consultation will enable local people to play a part in the decision making process in relation to parking within the area.

Blackpool Council is also providing project management services for Wyre Council on the Rossall Project and are currently preparing a £17m bid for Fylde Council for their sea defences. Blackpool now has an exceptional reputation for delivering projects and is recognised nationally.

The Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest group hosted its Annual General Meeting in Blackpool from the 30 June to the 2 July, Members of that group visited the Anchorsholme seawall site, many of the Members and their officers have expressed a specific interest as they have recognised they learn from the Blackpool projects.

**CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – COUNCILLOR  
MARK SMITH**

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**Economic Development**

Business Support and Skills

Over the last year, the Business Support Team within Economic Development has actively supported new and existing businesses to access start-up and growth finance. Support comes from a number of sources including Lancashire-wide schemes (Accelerating Business Growth and the Fuse Fund), the Government Start-Up Loan fund, and an impartial brokerage service Access to Finance, as well as the Council's own Investment Fund.

Four Blackpool businesses were awarded £917,000 of financial assistance through the Accelerating Business Growth (ABG) scheme alone towards investments of over £6m, set to create over new 100 jobs. The largest grant awarded of £624,000 went to Bispham-based Laila's Fine Food, a £3.6m investment to extend production and warehousing facilities, creating 63 new jobs. A new Lancashire Growth Fund is set to replace existing schemes shortly.

The Blackpool Investment Fund (BIF) approved a further £367,000 in loans/ grants towards eight investments unlocking a further £1m towards works enabling re-use of former Regent Cinema building, re-use of space for a new hospitality venue attached to Viva Cabaret, a recording studio and distribution centre, land purchase for a factory extension, design costs necessary to unlock a £700,000 grant award to the Grand Theatre, shop improvements to a popular haberdashery shop in South Beach and works associated with bringing the New Market, South Shore, back into long-term use.

The Get Started team assisted new businesses to obtain Start-Up Loan funding worth £305,700 during 2014/ 2015 (bringing the total accessed since 2012/ 2013 to £712,650).

The Business Support Team will be based at Blackpool Enterprise Centre from July in order to provide a focus for all business support enquiries, advice and training for would-be entrepreneurs.

**Skills**

A key aim of the Blackpool Tourism Academy, a consortium of leading tourism employers committed to developing workforce skills, is to roll out WorldHost Customer Service skills across the resort. In only seven months, some 1146 training places have been completed and encouragingly this is now starting to expand beyond larger employers to a range of smaller hotels and hospitality businesses. Blackpool needs to complete at least 2,500 training places to become the first UK seaside resort to achieve WorldHost Destination status. Blackpool Council has its own WorldHost licensed trainer who can deliver the full suite of training available which ranges from the fundamentals of customer service skills to "Service Across Cultures" which increases staff awareness of other cultures giving them practical skills and advice to help them communicate effectively with visitors from overseas.

**Getting People into Work**

Positive Steps into Work

During 2014/ 2015, the Positive Steps team provided employment support to more than 500 people across the Fylde Coast, with 429 moving into paid employment.

This significant achievement was possible due to the successful implementation of a number of contracts, including the Work Programme, a mandatory Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

scheme for the long-term unemployed, which pays on results of people assisted into and sustained in employment.

Collaboration with the Council's Public Health directorate has led to the design of a number of Healthy Futures projects, targeted at getting specific groups of customers back to work.

Healthy Futures (South Beach/Claremont) offers individual support to those living in particular areas of the town and our advisor is integrated into the Selective Licensing team, which offers wider support to families. Healthy Futures (Recovery/HIV) offers employment support to clients who have come through drug and alcohol recovery services and are now ready to consider going back to work and those who have been diagnosed with HIV and access the Shiver help service.

This wide-ranging support allows us to offer different levels of support to local unemployed people to ensure their needs are met. In June, Healthy Futures (Clifton) was launched and aims to assist at least 100 residents to become more work-ready through an integrated package of advice, guidance and work-focused measures, delivered in the community.

Employment advisors will provide personalised back-to-work support in conjunction with the Wellness Service to include the option of a health MOT and ongoing support from health trainers. This will unlock access to a range of health and leisure support that will run parallel with employability support to provide a holistic approach. The 12-month pilot project is funded from a combination of ward budgets, Public Health and Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited Tenants Support Fund.

The in-house work placement scheme, Chance2shine, has gone from strength to strength in the last 12 months with 150 people undertaking a four-week supported work placement, with 39% of participants progressing into employment. The offer has extended to the private and voluntary sector where some 68 placements were completed. The Chance2shine work placement project recently received the Fair Train Gold Standard for the quality of the work placements provided.

The Positive Steps team is leading on a new £2.1m mental health and employment pilot project due to commence in November this year. It is one of four national pilots co-funded by the Government and the European Social Fund. It is anticipated that 1,000 Blackpool jobseekers with mild to moderate mental health issues will be offered a combination of psychological therapies and employment support concurrently to enable them to move closer to work. An approval is awaited on the European Funding element prior to the project commencing.

#### **Relationships with the Winter Gardens Company**

An extensive programme of top-quality musical theatre commences on 9 July when the West End production of CATS opens at the Opera House for the summer season. It will be followed by a series of productions including The Glenn Miller Story, the revival of Tommy the Rock Opera, the premiere of Last Night A DJ Saved My Life (starring David Hasselhoff) and A Christmas Carol.

The car park to the rear of the Winter Gardens building is due to be demolished in the autumn, opening up a significant amount of space for alternative use.

#### **Relationship with other Leisure Assets (Merlin), Blackpool Tower complex and associated buildings** Former Tower Lounge

Good progress is being made on the development of the former Tower Lounge. The development will result in the opening of a new themed family restaurant by a national operator.

#### Tower Illuminations

The Tower Illuminations repair and maintenance programme continues apace, moving toward full operation for the 2016 season.

## **Youth Employment**

The percentage of 16 to 18 year olds who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at the end of April was 6.8% which was an improvement compared to the same time last year (7.3%). This equates to 350 young people. The percentage of young people who were “Not Known” to Connexions at the end April 2014 was 4.3% which was an improvement compared to the same time last year (4.9%). The percentage of 16 to 18 year olds in learning (jobs with training, college courses) is 82.3% compared with 80.9% the previous year. The percentage of 16 to 18 year olds in jobs with out training is 12.3% compared with 12.1% the previous year.

The Youthability Hub continues to see growth in the numbers of 16 to 24 year olds attending. This increase has been driven by having a focus on different vocational areas that includes employers from that sector area promoting careers and providing job opportunities. In June the sector areas being focussed on are Hospitality in conjunction with the Premier Inn and Automotive Industries in conjunction with Arnold Clarke.

The Pathway to Traineeships programme, “Advance” is now underway providing 8-week skills and work experience courses for unemployed 19 to 24 year olds. To date 29 young people have accessed this provision with 26 achieving qualifications. Out of the 29 starts, 82% are currently in a positive destination.

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## CABINET SECRETARY (RESILIENT COMMUNITIES) – COUNCILLOR GRAHAM CAIN

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### Adult Social Care

A great deal of time and energy was being spent in preparation for the implementation of the 2014 Care Act on the 1 April 2015. A rolling programme of formal training was delivered, supplemented by in-house professional leads involvement. Following implementation the training is continuing, to ensure there is consistency in the application of the Act in terms of service delivery. Documentation for assessment and care planning was updated, together with a whole scale review of our Policies, processes and standard letters. In the context of the changes to FWI as we move to phase 2 involving accurate invoice processing for commissioned services and the increase in work generated by ever-increasing numbers of DoL assessments, the pressures remain very high. Recruitment of new staff to meet increased demand using part of the new Care Act monies was undertaken in May and we are awaiting start dates for these, from July onwards. This represents phase one and consideration regarding future staffing needs is scheduled for September, using information on the impact of changes over the first six months.

Despite this, the Adult Social Care teams are managing to continue to process all new work coming into the service, including allocating all new safeguarding alerts. They remain extremely busy, with high numbers of referrals and are steadily working through the reviews of service users, together with a dedicated reviewing officer. Progress in this area is kept under review, compiling formal monthly position statements to monitor progress. Progress on this (reviews) has slowed, due to demands on the service, posts not yet recruited to and sickness absences. The new Extensive Care Service, working with people over 65 who have two or more chronic physical conditions and are either at risk of or regularly being admitted to hospital is due to be operational at the beginning of July. The aim is to reduce unscheduled admissions to in-patient care and attendance at Accident and Emergency. This will be based at Moor Park Health Centre and a social work post has been funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to be part of the team.

The Integrated Learning Disability Team has also undertaken an analysis of their review position and is actively working to try to deal with some of the outstanding reviews, having reduced it by almost half. This also involves some data cleansing, which will be helpful going forward in terms of providing a clearer and more accurate position. We have agreed with Blackpool Teaching Hospital to review the management agreement for the team once they recruit to the forthcoming vacancy of their manager for the service.

Adult and Older Adult mental health services are now fully staffed. Demand on their services remains high. We have had some meetings with senior adult service managers from the main provider, Lancashire Care Foundation Trust, to review working arrangements and operational issues. The Trust is presently consulting on a community reorganisation of their services, as they consider downsizing their present community teams, to work more closely with respective locality services, including GPs, and to an extent mirroring the neighbourhood models developing out of the Better Care Fund arrangements. We have taken over the day service previously delivered by Richmond Fellowship, which has resulted in a number of support workers and a social worker being co-located with the Adult Community Team and focussing on the social inclusion and daytime activity needs of service users with serious and enduring mental health difficulties. The new in-patient facility, The Harbour, opened in March. This will affect the demand for Independent Mental Health Advocates for detained patients, as this has to be delivered by the Authority in which the hospital is located, not the ordinary residence of the patient.

The Hospital Discharge Team remains busy in ensuring discharge delays do not increase. The recent introduction of the Extra Supported Discharge team has created some pressures in terms of commissioning intensive care packages. Draft guidance has been published on the proposed Care Act Funding Reforms due to come into force from April 2016. We expect some further clarification in respect of how the proposed new arrangements will be organised and implemented in July 2015, with the timetable for the Statutory Guidance to be issued in October 2015.

### **Commissioned Services for Adults**

Existing Intermediate care provision in Blackpool is excellent, but during periods of increased demand, additional residential rehabilitation resource is sometimes required. A number of initiatives were implemented to increase system resilience across times of peak demand. Here are some of the measures taken to facilitate hospital discharges and to avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions including:

- Additional Vitaline installer/ Support officer hours to support people at/ to return to home
- Increased care at home available from bank staff across Easter period
- Age UK (Pilot) Social Isolation Prevention Scheme taking a holistic approach and offering practical assistance to support discharge from hospital and signposting to services, which support people to live independently and avoid re-admission.
- Volunteer service to deliver a six month Prevention Pilot (Friendly Faces) to reduce social isolation and promote wellbeing.
- Additional Rapid Response care at home available from bank staff across Easter period
- 20 Additional 'flex up' intermediate care beds utilising in-house and residential care sector.

Hoyle at Mansfield is able to 'flex' to offer additional intermediate care beds during these peak periods, preventing unnecessary hospital admissions and ensuring hospital discharges are not delayed. Resilience schemes such as this fit with the national drive to address delayed discharges and ensure the local social care system is resilient and able to contribute to timely hospital discharges by providing an intermediate support in an appropriate care setting.

### **Early Supported Discharge (ESD) Utilising Systems Resilience Funding 2015/ 2016**

The Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre ESD Rehabilitation at Home service is a joint initiative, which aligns to the following Fylde Coast strategic objectives:

- To provide a new holistic model of care, with treatment undertaken in community settings
- To prevent unnecessary emergency admissions to hospital through delivery of new service models that provide enhanced support in community settings and integrated care for the most needy and frail patients
- To provide safe, high quality and patient centred care, using evidence based pathways to provide standardised approaches to care with positive outcomes
- To be financially viable, managing services within available resources, allowing us to invest in our future
- To support and develop a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce that is able to innovate in the development of our services

This early supported discharge scheme reflects the strategic aims of the Unscheduled Care Strategy, Out of Hospital Strategy and Systems Resilience Plan and supports the overarching aim of the Care Act 2014 to promote wellbeing. Nationally, this service meets NHS England's mission of providing integrated high quality care for all by focussing on what care should look and feel like for patients and measuring its success whilst maintaining clinically effectiveness and safety. As part of the Fylde Coast Intermediate Care Review, the service will be integral in its development. The Commissioning Team has worked with the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Adult Social Care and existing In-House Provider Services to ensure increased care capacity to facilitate early supported discharges, for example:

- Additional short-term care 'flex up' hours to support Early Supported Discharge (ESD) and bridge care gap during initial assessment period until ESD reablement commences.
- Additional Vitaline installer / support officer hours to support short term reablement at home
- Additional Primary Night Care hours

In summary there is now an ESD dedicated care element funding with carers on stand-by (up to 16 hours available per day) and extra Vitaline installer/ support capacity (30 hours per week) to support short term reablement at home. Additional service capacity available to 'flex up' short term care at home services based on level of demand from ESD including a short term 'step up' residential bed as necessary.

### **Corporate Parenting Strategy**

The Corporate Parenting Panel will continue to focus on its priorities around looked after children and undertake its duties. An induction to Corporate Parenting is planned prior to the commencement of the next panel, along with a Corporate Parenting conference to be held in September 2015 to highlight the role of the whole council in undertaking its duties as corporate parents. Services will be asked to pledge their offer to our children and young people.

### **Adult, Community and Family Learning**

The Community Learning Mental Health Pilot has begun with the first course being jointly delivered by an Adult Learning Tutor and a Psychological Well Being Practitioner. The aim of the pilot is to provide holistic interventions for adults with mild to moderate mental health needs and will be part of a national evaluation in 2016. A celebration event was held at Central Library on 20 April to present vulnerable adult learners with certificates. Over 60 people attended including families and friends to mark this significant milestone for many adults.

Delivery of the "Key to Your Home" course has begun. The course has been specifically designed to support tenants to gain knowledge of what is involved in being a responsible tenant. The aim is to improve tenancy sustainment rates across Blackpool.

### **Ofsted inspections**

#### Early Years settings

Three group childcare and two childminder inspection reports have been published since the last Cabinet Member report. All three group settings inspected received a judgement of 'good'. Both childminders received a judgement of 'outstanding', which was a further improvement on their previous gradings of 'good'. Based on published reports, the overall percentage of settings and childminders with an Ofsted grading of good or outstanding is 89%, with 91.6% of childminders and 85.7% of group childcare settings. This compares to national figures (as at 31st December 2014 - the most recent data available) of 82% overall, 82% of childminders and 86% of group settings (this overall national figure also includes childcare on domestic premises, of which we have none in Blackpool).

### **14 -19 Strategy**

Motivat8 is a discrete short course that took place in May/ June for Looked After Children (LAC) Not in Education or Employment (NEET) young people that Connexions is delivering, in conjunction with the Over 12's team. The programme is designed to engage and motivate young people with the aim of supporting them into summer provision that leads to involvement in mainstream education, training and employment opportunities from September.

Connexions is currently preparing to repeat its summer school programme for 16-18 year olds this year. There will be a range of 10 different programmes under the Summer Ventures banner. It is hoped that we will see a repeat of the success of last summer's activities that engaged and supported 96 young people, 70% of which came from recognised vulnerable groups. Connexions will also be supporting a range of other activities taking place over the summer, for example The Prince's Trust programmes and events led by the Blackpool Providers Group.

Project 90 will again be taking place in conjunction with Education Diversity. This project aims to support all students leaving Education Diversity this year, into a positive destination in September whilst maintaining contact with them over the summer to ensure their wellbeing.

## **Early Years**

### Pupil Premium

Blackpool was one of seven Local Authorities to pilot the implementation of the Early Years Pupil Premium in January 2015. The pilot was successful and the Council's Free Entitlement Grant (FEG) database is now linked directly with the DfE's Eligibility Checking Service enabling checks to be undertaken swiftly to identify three and four year olds who are eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium funding. To date 468 eligible children have been identified which is 73% of the initial target, the average of the pilots as a whole was 55%. The FEG payments system has been adapted and the first additional payments were made to Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) and maintained nurseries and childminders in March 2015. The additional funding is worth £302.10 per year per child.

### Implementation of the free entitlement to Early Education for Two year olds

The implementation continues to progress with the number of two year olds accessing the grant, reaching 698 from a target number of 1009. This equates to 69%, a slight increase on the autumn term.

## **Governor Services**

Local Authority Clerks have supported the majority of maintained schools throughout the spring and summer term to undertake reviews of effectiveness and skills audits in readiness for their reconstitution. Most have now agreed their new constitutions, and new Instruments of Government. The remainder of schools are on target to have this process completed by the end of the summer term.

## **School Organisation and Buildings**

### Pupil Place Plan

The Council is currently out to consultation on the draft Pupil Place Plan 2015/ 2020. The plan provides background into the school estate within Blackpool and provides data relating to the future forecasted pupil numbers and how this may impact on the available school places.

## **Building Works**

### PRU - Pegasus: (Old Christ the King School, Bathurst Avenue)

Construction works have now commenced on the old Christ the King school building on Grange Park. The works will see the school refurbished in preparation for the facility to be utilised as a Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 Pupil Referral Unit to be named 'Pegasus'. The works will be completed by the end of June in preparation for a phased occupation during July.

### Westbury Lodge

The Local Authority has been working with the Blackpool Local Education Partnership (LEP) on a proposal to convert the vacant premises at Westbury Lodge into a Post 16 Special Educational Needs provision for both Park Community Academy and Woodlands School. This follows the successful application by Park Community Academy to expand their designation from September 2016.

### Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) – Phase 1:

There are four schools due to be rebuilt under the Government's Priority Schools Building Programme, these are:

### Aspire Academy and Highfurlong School

The contractors have now been on site for over 12 months and the work continues to progress well on the Blackpool Road site (former Collegiate High School site). The schools are due to take occupation

by October half term with the contractors then moving onto the demolition of the old Highfurlong School and the external works. There remains an outstanding concern relating to the Land Title ownership. The Local Authority has been liaising with both the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Academy sponsor on this matter in an effort to resolve.

#### Hawes Side Academy

Plans for the new school have now been approved by the Education Funding Agency. Work on the new school is due to commence on site this June, with completion due by September 2016.

#### South Shore Academy

The proposal for the new school at South Shore Academy has been approved. Work on this site is due to commence March 2016, with the school being available for occupation by September 2017.

#### **Special Education Needs, Assessment and Support and Psychological**

OfSTED is currently preparing a framework for the inspection of SEND services for 0-25 year olds with SEN and / or a disability. The Department for Education (DfE) in the near future will sign it off with a draft framework due. Pilots will take place with several localities before the first full inspections commence in January 2016. The focus will be the new SEND statutory frameworks from September 2014 and the various areas outlined in the May 2015 Code of Practice. These are extensive and cover a range of service and strategic areas across the council (Adult services, Children services, Education and Care), education providers/ schools/ colleges and health. The proposal is for three inspectors, two from OfSTED and one from the CQC for health, to carry out the inspections. It is unknown how long the inspections will last or the criteria for judgement. Preparation, within these parameters, has commenced.

#### **Music Service**

- Customer demand for this service has increased by 25%. New Service Level Agreements indicate further demand in September.
- 4,500 pupils continue to have weekly instrumental or vocal lessons. All instruments are loaned without charge. 1,280 instrumentalists have free weekly Wider Opportunities where children receive tuition for up to one year.
- Another two young instrumentalists have passed auditions for National Orchestras. This takes us up to 12 since September. This is also a first for Blackpool.
- The English Opera Touring Company has delivered inspirational programmes in Anchorsholme, Highfurlong and Marton Primary Academy.
- In April, a new Theatre Partnership was formed to meet the needs of our increasing number of young thespians.
- Charity Status has enabled us to set up a 'click on and donate' website button. Parents whose children receive free ensemble rehearsals have been particularly generous. As a result, the service has awarded its first £200 bursary.
- 20 Trinity Examinations were taken on 24 March. 100% passed including several distinctions at Grade 8.
- 59% of Blackpool School Choirs entered the Choir of the Year competition held in the Tower Ballroom. Winners included Anchorsholme, Norbreck and St Nicholas C of E Primary. Norbreck Academy have also performed in the under 12 finals in Barnardos National Choir Competition at the Royal Festival Hall.
- 50% of our schools competed in Musician of the Year. Primary School winners came from Norbreck, Anchorsholme and Claremont Primary whilst high school winners included Montgomery, Aspire, St Mary's and Lytham St Anne's High.
- 50% of our schools also competed in Pop Idol 2015. Winning primary schools included St Nicholas C of E, Our Lady of the Assumption and, St John Vianney Catholic. High School winners came from Montgomery, St Mary's Catholic and Aspire Academy. Several pupils are now auditioning in Blackpool for X Factor and The Voice.

### **Child Poverty**

As the Centre for Early Child Development intensifies its work and the Head Start pilot project starts to deliver results, the Council's Child Poverty Framework now needs to be reviewed to account for the new working arrangements. Over the summer, we will update the statutory Child Poverty Needs Assessment and from this, we will develop and deliver the new strategy in line with our aim to create resilient communities.

### **Health and Wellbeing Board**

We have undertaken a review of the Health and Wellbeing Board's operations with a view to increasing its influence at a time when its role is becoming ever more important. Our partners said they valued the discussions around priorities at the Board and as a result, we are bringing back thematic debates at the Board to focus on our priorities. This will also allow us to shape the detail of some of the main proposals our partners are working on, such as the New Models of Care work aimed at providing more cost effective care around the people who use our services the most. It will also help us get our thoughts in order around the NHS five year forward plan.

### **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) describes a process that identifies current and future health and wellbeing needs and the causes of poor health within Blackpool. Since 2008 undertaking JSNA is a statutory duty under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) have equal and joint duties to prepare JSNA through the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The JSNA aims to promote a common understanding of health and wellbeing and provides transparency with regard to the local decision making process. Local partnerships, but principally the local Health and Wellbeing Board and partners, are expected to prioritise based on the information and evidence identified by their local JSNA, as it highlights where there are gaps in knowledge or services and helps inform effective decision-making.

The outputs of the JSNA process can be found on <http://blackpooljsna.org.uk/>

The JSNA is the process that gathers all key statistics regarding the health and wellbeing of the population of Blackpool.

The JSNA assesses need by comparing the health and wellbeing characteristics of Blackpool against other areas and examines how these characteristics change over time. JSNA is also used to determine where inequalities exist between different communities within the town and identify communities with specific health needs. As part of the JSNA process, the views of the public and service users are gathered to determine the expressed needs of the community and the strengths and assets found within the community.

Key outputs of the JSNA process include:

- Five core chapter that describe the population of Blackpool, health and wellbeing, lifestyle factors, social environment and living and working in Blackpool.
- Topic based needs assessments and reports
- Children Needs Assessment
- Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment
- Library of Public Health Annual reports
- Ad-hoc analytical support

### **Schools Catering Services**

As previously reported, from September 2014 school lunches have been provided free of charge to all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 throughout all schools in England and Wales. This is a Government initiative aimed at ensuring a good quality, nutritional lunch is available to all pupils and it is anticipated that this scheme will be run on an ongoing basis for the foreseeable future.

As confirmed in the January 2015 census, the take up figure in Blackpool for the Universal Infant Free School Meal is in excess of 88%. Overall, there has been an increase of 34% in uptake since the introduction of Universal Infant Free School Meal. Whilst some of this is due to the introduction of the Universal Free School Meal, there has also been an increase in the number of KS2 pupils taking a school meal.

In order to meet legislative requirements allergen information is available in each school kitchen. All the meats used are being sourced from British animals and are Red Tractor certified or have Farm Assured certification, ensuring total traceability.

Pupils continue to have a choice of hot meals available every day, complemented by a salad bar, featuring a wide range of produce, a breadbasket and a selection of tasty desserts. Menus are fully compliant with the School Food Plan and are changed each school term to take account of seasonal variations.

The Free Breakfast Service, for all primary school children, currently serves breakfasts in 35 primary schools. On an average week, we serve over 50,000 breakfasts, which equates to a take up rate of 90%.

### **Sport, Physical Activity and Play.**

Blackpool's Early Years Physical Activity provision has been underway since the start of this academic year. January saw the recruitment of a full time Early Years Physical Activity Development Officer whose responsibility was to manage, deliver and co-ordinate the Early Years and Schools Transition Programme.

At the end of the last financial year, Blackpool's Early Years programme saw brilliant success with over 107 trained nursery professionals, of whom 96% have a good and excellent understanding of physical activity guidelines. We delivered in over 20 private and school based nursery settings engaging 689 (85%) young children. In addition, we established four Early Movers physical activity clubs around Blackpool's children's centres and schools with the aim to develop increase and sustain opportunities for children under five.

Consequently the curriculum sports provision and early years' level of service has continued to grow, with new programmes including Learn to Cycle and Learn to Swim being very popular and with many schools and nurseries requesting additional high quality physical activity provision and support for child and staff development.

We are looking to further increase the number of settings and staff involved in the Early Start programme, we have many new exciting events and opportunities for the whole of the Early Years and Foundation Family to get involved in with the first event having been held on 17 June at Blackpool Sports Centre. We are also looking forward to launching a summer programme to keep them healthy and active over the summer holidays.

The School Transition Programme has seen similar success with 92.80% of the cohort engaging within some form of physical activity. Transition clubs have seen popular uptake with 79 Year 7 students engaging, we have signed posted many students to local community and sports clubs to further increase and sustain their involvement within sport.

Sport Blackpool's School and Community Team has continued to promote the benefits of a healthy and physically active lifestyle through the provision of high quality delivery within the school day and beyond. The School Games in Blackpool has been recognised at National and Regional levels for the work undertaken with clubs and engagement with competitive opportunities.

On the ground competitions have recently taken place and have seen the winners medals presented to Stanley for Tag Rugby, Norbreck for High 5 Netball, St Mary's Handball and St Teresa's for Key Steps Gymnastics in build up to the SPAR Lancashire School Games Level 3 Finals that took place in Blackpool on 30 June.

Community Sport in Blackpool has seen an increase through the additional projects taken on with Street Games. The Friday Doorstep Sports Club will see the introduction of activities including handball, dodgeball and crazy catch to complement the existing football sessions. New activities in the shape of Rookie Lifeguards and Outdoor Revolution are due to get underway as part of the CLUB1 Programme. A new site for the Healthy Play Programme has been added to the programme, which provides children in the Claremont area to access sports sessions every Monday evening.

To celebrate National Bike Week, 13 to 21<sup>st</sup> June, guided bike rides took place from Moor Park Health and Leisure, Blackpool Sports Centre, Solaris Centre and Bickerstaffe Offices.

As part of Blackpool Youth Games, the first cycling event was held in the Sports Arena on Thursday 25 June as a way to reward children that completed the Bikeability cycling proficiency this year.

A new partnership with Blackpool Victoria Hospital has been formed to launch a staff bike scheme using four yellow hire bikes as part of their healthy workplace initiative.

A new partnership with 4techmoto vocational education centre to provide students with hire bikes to refurbish and utilise for further hire and provide new opportunities for individuals who may require a cycle to access employment.

An additional 12 balance bikes (pedal-less) are due to be delivered for rolling out of the new Early Years balance bike scheme that introduces bike control skills to 3 to 5 year olds. A programme of 1 day/ 3 days/ 5 days' options has been developed.

The Feel Good Factory continues to grow at Moor Park with over 160 new members. The Active Blackpool team has introduced a Heart Failure class at Moor Park, a new partnership with the NHS Heart Failure rehabilitation team will provide a swift and effective process for referrals and sustainability. A new Healthy Community Walk based at East Pines Park will start in July.

The Steps to Health Programme has been one of the six pilot schemes in the country to work with Walking for Health at Macmillan. The Health walks are incredibly valuable for people with many types of health conditions, including cancer. We know that physical activity helps people living with and beyond cancer and 67% of people who have had a cancer diagnosis are not sufficiently active. We have been working with Macmillan to try to engage people that have had a diagnosis of cancer and their family members to try the walking programme within their local community in and around Blackpool. Results from the pilot scheme will be in September 2015.

Drowning prevention is at the forefront of Aquatics throughout June linking to the national RLSS drowning prevention charity week, 20 to 28 June. Throughout the week, the delivery of water safety awareness was the focus for all primary school swimming and learn to swim lessons. The Blackpool Youth Games swimming event will also follow this theme by incorporating Rookie lifesaving relays.

On the 26 June, a new Rookie Lifesaving club for children 8 to 16 years took place at Palatine Leisure centre and it is hoped that this will soon be replicated at Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre.



Climbing and bouldering has seen a huge increase in patronage with 733 individuals utilising our facilities at Blackpool Sports Centre during April and May 2015.

The High Ropes has opened its doors to the public providing a new attraction for the residents and visitors of Blackpool.

A date for the Outdoor Revolution launch has been set for the weekend 11 and 12 July 2015. An opportunity to showcase the outdoor activities available, kayaking on the lake, challenge the High Ropes, Climbing and Bouldering in Blackpool Sports Centre and Orienteering and Geocaching in Stanley Park.

### **Parks and Green Environment**

The Parks and Open Spaces Service have submitted a bid for £20,000 in partnership with the Friends of Watson Road Park to the SITA Enhancing Communities Fund. This will enable the refurbishment of Watson Road Park playground. The funding would be used towards the cost of commissioning a specialist contractor to install new play equipment to a pre-agreed design plan and specification. A further £4,000 Section 106 money has already been secured towards the scheme.

The bid has followed a series of public consultation events where park users were invited to have their say on the existing playground as well as consider five differing playground design options to stimulate debate and ideas. The overwhelming view is that the current playground is in a poor state of repair and needs improved provision. Comments included that the playground lacks equipment, which stimulates imaginative play particularly for toddlers. People also commented that the current playground is unattractive, lacked bins, seating and areas for families to utilise.

The feedback obtained was fundamental in enabling us to pick a winning design option, which was presented to the consultees. It has been agreed that some items of existing play equipment in reasonable repair, including climbing units and swings, could remain and be renovated. However, a number of new items will be introduced to invigorate the space and ensure a more varied play experience.

Following the production of a joint design brief by United Utilities and Blackpool Council with regard to development works within Anchorsholme Park, a draft park master plan has now been produced ready for consultation in July. United Utilities is leading a five-year project from January 2015 aimed at improving bathing water quality on the Fylde Coast. The majority of Anchorsholme Park will be closed for the duration to allow engineers to carry out the work. These works include two phases, Phase 1 works a new storm water storage tank and connection into main sewer, Phase 2 works a new pumping station, screening chamber, 4.5 km outfall, pressure chamber and supporting buildings/ infrastructure. Once the works area is completed, the park will be refurbished and reopened to the public. The master plan shows how the park will look following the refurbishment. More detailed designs and specifications for new park buildings, play and sport facilities and landscaped areas will also be produced in due course.

### **Stanley Park and Showground**

A bid for funding by the Parks and Open Spaces Service in partnership with the Friends of Stanley Park to Yorkshire Banks Spirit of the Community Awards for the creation of Busy Bee Meadows, has been successful. However, the value of the grant will not be known until the announcement is made at an award ceremony in Leeds in early summer. Successful winners will either receive a payment of £10,000 or £5,000. The funding will enable the creation of Busy Bee Meadows on Stanley Park.

The projects 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. 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 and 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 meadow will facilitate and compliment a range of outdoor activities including pram and toddler walks, NHS linked health walks as well as nature study and Junior Ranger sessions. 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 was created in partnership and consultation with a comprehensive range of stakeholders including Natural England, English Heritage, Blackpool Civic Trust and local group Nature Watch. It outlines a clear need for implementing sustainable grassland management practices to develop a wildflower legacy, benefit local biodiversity in particular invertebrates, reduce uneconomical and labour intensive grass cutting regimes, enable conservation volunteer involvement and benefit local schools that will have a special place to undertake environmental education.

#### **Marton Mere Nature Reserve and Ecological Areas**

Construction of the new Marton Mere Visitor Centre has now been completed. The project team are now designing the building interior to include exhibitions, displays, flexible classroom space and office. It is hoped the building will be launched in early summer. The Sand Martin nesting bank, island remodelling works and bird hide installation is also complete. Upcoming summer works include footpath refurbishments, installation of new signage and the creation of a nature trail. A new friends group is also being developed and an event and activity programme is being drafted.

## CABINET MEMBER FOR REDUCING HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND ADULT SAFEGUARDING - COUNCILLOR EDDIE COLLETT

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### Cuts to Public Health Ring Fenced Grant

On 5 June 2015, the Government announced a further £3 billion of spending cuts to the current financial year. This included the Department for Health reducing its spending on public health grants to local authorities by £200 million. At the same time, the NHS budget continued to be safeguarded.

The decision to reduce funding for public health has come as a big surprise, not least because central government only announced the budget for 2015 / 2016 six months ago. There has been no indication from the Government prior to 5 June that such a proposal was being considered and Blackpool has successfully set a balanced budget, including full allocation of the Public Health Grant in 2015/ 2016, based on the information provided by the Government in the local government finance settlements and reiterated by the Chancellor in March's Budget.

Therefore, the Chancellor's announcement, within mere weeks, that the 2015/ 2016 Public Health Grant allocations would be re-opened and be reduced by a further £200m to contribute to the Government's national deficit is badly planned, ill-timed and potentially life-threatening.

These cuts are even more surprising given the Government's commitment to the NHS Five Year Forward View, which has prevention as a key element. Prevention is absolutely crucial if we are to overcome the major public health challenges of smoking, obesity and physical inactivity and we must accept that prevention costs money upfront. Investment in weight management programmes, in smoking cessation services, in physical activity schemes will save money in the long-term by reducing the demand on the NHS and social care.

Public health funding is vital to taking a preventative approach to health and without it, we risk overloading the NHS further. Investment in such programmes is essential to reduce the burden of preventable disease on the NHS.

The transfer in responsibility of public health services was a fundamental change to the role of local government. It is essential that the Government ensures that this responsibility remains fully funded and that any proposals regarding its distribution are fair and transparent.

The Statutory agencies (NHS, Council, Police, Fire and Rescue) and Voluntary Sector members of the Health and Wellbeing Board firmly believe that it is more important than ever that the distribution of available resources reflect the assessed needs of areas (i.e. levels of deprivation) and the ability to raise resources. Unfortunately, the latest announcement follows those of the past four years with the greatest impact of the cuts likely to affect the most deprived authorities, such as Blackpool, the most.

Given the recent announcement, the Blackpool Health and Wellbeing Board is extremely concerned about how the Public Health grant will be treated in the forthcoming Emergency Budget and Comprehensive Spending Review and in any future allocation formula.

The Blackpool Health and Wellbeing Board has called upon the Government to:-

- (i) re-consider its short-sighted and contradictory approach to the proposed cut in public health funding, when in actual fact it should invest more in prevention and health improvement, with allocations based upon need; and
- (ii) honour its previous commitments as set out in the local government finance settlement in March 2015.

**Tender outcome for the Provision of the ‘Smoking and Nicotine Addiction Prevention and Treatment Service’**

The aim of this tender was to commission provision of an integrated, safe, effective and most importantly, person-centred smoking and nicotine addiction prevention and treatment service, which is of the highest possible quality. The emphasis was on ensuring that the service contributes to improving the health of Blackpool’s population by reducing the harms caused by tobacco and nicotine addiction and reduces health inequalities.

The Smoking and Nicotine Addiction Prevention and Treatment Service in Blackpool will support individuals to quit smoking and make connections within communities in order to make quitting more accessible and achievable. The services’ expected outcomes are:

- A reduction in the number of smokers in Blackpool
- A reduction in health inequalities by ensuring the service is targeted at key priority groups (including: pregnant women, people with a diagnosed mental health illness, deprived communities, routine and manual workers, people with long-term conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease {COPD}, diabetes, coronary heart disease {CHD} and asthma).
- Delivery of an effective and efficient service that demonstrates value for money and is responsive to the needs of individuals and communities.

A formal tendering process took place between November 2014 and April 2015 with the aim for a new contract to be in place by 1 October 2015. This new contract will run for two years, with the option to extend for one plus one years.

Solutions 4 Health Limited reached the highest score against the assessment criteria and we have now entered into a formal contract with them. An initial meeting has been held between Public Health Blackpool Council and Solutions 4 Health’s Chief Executive, Public Health and Lifestyles Director and Business Manager in order to start discussions regarding the transition of the service from the existing service at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. All existing staff will be offered the opportunity to join the new provider under their existing NHS terms and conditions.

The new service will commence on the 1 October 2015.

Solutions 4 Health have many years of experience of delivering successful specialist stop smoking services and have experience of transferring services from the NHS. We are confident that Solutions 4 Health will deliver the innovation, community-led, patient focused outreach service that our Blackpool service model requires.

We have been given reassurance of their ability to offer a flexible service to meet the needs of our target communities, for example, workplace shift patterns. The organisation also offers extensive value for money in terms of a hub and spoke model so that there are robust systems in place to ensure continuity of service, including being contactable over a seven-day period.

### **Blackpool's Healthier Catering Award**

One in six meals is eaten outside the home, with those on lower incomes spending 8% more of their budget on eating out. Meals eaten outside the home are normally higher in fat, salt and sugar than those cooked fresh in the home. This contributes to a variety of health related issues such as obesity and cardiovascular disease.

The Healthier Catering Award is a free scheme available for Blackpool's food outlets with a food hygiene rating of three or above. The logo was designed by a student at a local high school.

The purpose of the award is to enable establishments to:

- Understand what a healthy, balanced diet is and its importance
- Reduce levels of total fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt across the menu through adaptations to cooking methods and offering smaller portions, whilst increasing fibre and fruit and vegetable intake
- Promote and support healthier choices
- Meet customer demand for healthier options

The Award has three stages:

1. Certificate of Commitment
2. Standard Award Level
3. Excellence Award Level

Guidance and support is provided by a Registered Nutritionist and a free accredited training course is provided by the Royal Society of Public Health (Level 1 in Healthier Foods and Special Diets).

Achievements to date include:

- A reduction of 6kg sugar per week available for hot beverages (the equivalent to the weight of a human head)
- Removal of 120g sugar (equivalent to 40 sugar cubes) from a rice pudding recipe.

Talbot and Brunswick Children's Centre:

- Introduced a higher fibre breakfast option to the range of cereals on offer
- Switching from 26% meat content to 65% meat content sausages (these also have a much lower fat content)
- Removing 499kcal, 23.8g total fat and 38.4g sugar from their flapjacks
- The counter now displays healthier snacks. A fruit bowl is now permanently on display on the counter and bananas are proving a very popular choice by the children
- Crisps have been removed
- Introduction of a salad counter
- Introduction of a children's meal deal (sandwich with salad/ choice of milk, water or fruit drink/ yoghurt and a piece of fruit)

The Manager of the Children's Centre has reported that, following making the changes to achieve the Excellence Award, they have started to generate an increase in profit levels.

### **Development of arts and health strategy**

Officers in the Public Health directorate are working with the Arts Service on the development of an Arts and Health Strategy for Blackpool. There is a growing body of evidence to show that participation in and exposure to the arts can help improve mental health and wellbeing. Blackpool residents

currently have access to an Arts and Health service commissioned by Public Health and delivered by Blackpool Council, which gives people with mild to moderate mental health conditions opportunities to improve their wellbeing through creativity. As part of the development of the Arts and Health strategy, this service will be evaluated to help inform best practice for the future. The strategy work will also entail mapping of other opportunities for creative activity, where there are gaps and a fundraising plan to help ensure sustainability and delivery of the strategy.

### **Integrated Sexual Health Tariff**

Officers in the Public Health directorate have identified savings by shadowing the Integrated Sexual Health Tariff to replace the existing GUM payment by results tariff and the block contract.

Payments are based on over 140 clinical pathways that cover the broad range of work carried out in Reproductive Sexual Health and Genito Urinary Medicine clinics, using the latest best practice and clinical standards required to deliver better health outcomes. Each element of care has been priced based on what it costs to deliver.

A six-month final road test was carried out to iron out any technical issues and to conduct a financial impact assessment review to inform our decision. The Integrated Sexual Health Tariff was implemented fully in April this year. This now allows us to receive the level of detail that ensures payment is based on activity and care given to our residents.

### **Work on Dementia**

There are approximately 670,000 people in England living with dementia and this number may double within the next 30 years. In Blackpool, there are around 2,000 people aged 65 and over predicted to be living with dementia, many of whom do not feel included in their community and face an ongoing struggle with their daily activities.

Officers in the Public Health directorate in conjunction with marketing has developed a plan to raise the profile of dementia across Blackpool. This aims of the plan are to increase the numbers of dementia friends across Blackpool, increase the number of local businesses to become dementia friendly and continue to raise awareness.

As part of the National dementia awareness campaign, the Council hosted the second annual 'Dancing with Dementia' event at the Tower Ballroom. Councillor Mrs Wright opened the event to a huge number of people living with dementia and their carers. The day was a great success with the guests and members of the public entertained by local dance groups encouraging people of all ages to dance and become more active. The event was supported by a number of services who provided essential information on the day. People were able to access information on dementia and where to access support.

The campaign will continue throughout 2015/ 2016 working closely with the Dementia Action Alliance and other partners to fulfill the actions and give people an understanding of dementia and the small things that they can do that could make a difference to people living with dementia.

### **Blackpool Health at Work Award**

Workplaces have a key role to play in improving our nation's health and quality of life. Healthy and well-motivated employees can have an equally positive impact on the productivity and effectiveness of a business. In 2011, approximately 131 million working days were lost due to sickness absences, resulting in a cost of £14 billion a year to the British economy. By making employees feel supported and healthier, workplace health leads to many positive consequences like reduced turnover and absenteeism, enhanced motivation and improved staff morale and productivity, as well as reduced absenteeism and staff turnover, as well as improving the employer's image as a positive and caring organisation.

The Blackpool Health at Work Award has been designed to support employers and employees to develop these themes in the workplace in a practical, logical and beneficial way. The Health at Work Award recognises the efforts and achievements of employers and their employees in building a healthy workforce. A commissioned workplace specialist, who supports employers to make positive changes in the workplace to help to improve employee's overall well-being, physical health, mental health, physical activity levels and improved eating habits, supports those taking part in the Health at Work Award. Qualified and experienced staff that can help employers will support workers on the programme and their employees reach realistic and achievable goals.

The Health at Work Award incorporates three separate levels of award Bronze, Silver and Gold and a maintenance programme. Each of the awards has particular criteria, which the workplace must achieve to achieve their award. Each workplace must also nominate a Health Champion to organise and deliver health and wellbeing campaigns and events with the workplace.

The potential benefits of the Health at Work Award are:

- Improved workplace health
- Improved corporate image
- Increased productivity
- Improved staff morale and loyalty
- Reduced absenteeism
- Reduced staff turnover
- Networking with other partners
- Assistance in legislation compliance

Overview of the Health at Work Award Achievements (2014/ 2015):

- Eight workplaces have achieved Bronze Health at Work Award
- Two workplaces have achieved Silver Health at Work Award
- Three workplaces have been working towards their two year maintenance plans, one has achieved their Silver maintenance award and one has achieved their Gold
- 14 Health Champions have been trained in the Royal Society of Public Health Understanding Health Improvement Level 2

### **The Care Act**

Among the early signs following the implementation of the Care Act in April of this year is an increase in informing carers approaching us for assessment, offering the opportunity for much needed help and support to be offered to people supporting their relatives and friends to manage day-to-day living.

There has been recruitment of a small number of new staff across a number of divisions to cope with increased demand and to ensure that people are not having to wait a long time for assessment.

Further details on the proposals for the funding reforms as part of the next phase of the Care Act are due in July, with an expected date in October for the statutory guidance.

### **Adult Provider Services**

#### Supported Living – Learning Disabilities

There is a Multi-Disciplinary Project Group leading the work supporting the transition of care packages from 'in house provision' to alternative care and support arrangements. This process is being supported by carers and family representatives of the people receiving the care and who are working closely with the MDT Project Group to ensure that any future care and support is tailored to meet the very particular needs of their family member.

The transition planning is moving forward and detailed transition plans are being developed for a number of people including engagement of family members and advocates with alternative providers. Up to three people will be supported over the next three months before moving forward with the remaining transitions.

The proposed completion date is the end of December 2015, however particular attention is being paid to ensuring the transition of care is done in a considered manner that reflects the very particular complex needs of the learning disabled adults, thus ensuring continuity of care is achieved now and in the future.

#### Commissioning Reviews

The Commissioning Reviews for the 'Phoenix Mental Health Crisis Service' and the 'Gloucester Avenue Mental Health Rehabilitation Service' commenced in June 2015. Engagement with service users, employees and other stakeholders has taken place to inform the review. The review recommendations and outcome will be received later in the summer.

#### Social Care Volunteers

It was Volunteers Week from 1 to 7 June 2015 and the Adult Departments Social Care Volunteers Service arranged a number of events to celebrate the contribution that volunteers make to the people of Blackpool.

A celebration event was held at Dahlia's Kitchen on the 8 June 2015 where certificates of achievement was presented to volunteers for their length of service, in one particular case a volunteer who has offered their time supporting many different projects to vulnerable people across Blackpool for 10 years.

#### **Adult Provider Services**

The Assessment and Rehabilitation Centre (ARC) received a visit from the inspectors from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to undertake their first inspection of the service under the new comprehensive assessment framework on the 3 June 2015. They spoke with residents at length about their experience of the service and observed their interactions with the staff team.

They also spoke with staff on duty to ensure they had a good awareness of dignity, support and safeguarding as well as seeking their feedback on the service as an employer.

A judgement outcome is not given on the day, as inspectors write their report, which is then subject to review and quality assurance before it is shared with the service and then published. However, the inspectors do give feedback on their findings on the day in relation to the five key areas that require evidence, which are Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive and Well- Led. The feedback was positive, with the inspector finding supportive evidence in each of these areas. The service is looking forward to receiving the report, sharing the outcome and learning from any areas identified as requiring further evidence.

#### **Adult Safeguarding**

In 2014/ 2015, 623 adult safeguarding "alerts" were raised with the Council. Many of the alerts raised concerned commissioned services, both well established and new. Strategies are in place to address the issues to support improved practice, service delivery and outcomes for the individual.

These strategic include weekly performance monitoring meetings between Adult Social Care and Contract Monitoring teams to ensure that all quality of care or performance issues are addressed and/or the involvement of the Care Quality Commission, a multi-agency risk summit approach and contractual sanctions where necessary.



New issues from April 2015 are a significant number of alerts arising from The Harbour (Lancashire Care Trust's new psychiatric facility) as The Harbour is within the Blackpool boundaries, therefore all their safeguarding alerts are raised with Blackpool Council. The Safeguarding Adults Team has started to work with The Harbour to support their approach to dealing with those issues.

**The Local Authority's current provision on the Deprivation of Liberty (DoLs) Safeguards applications**

From 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 the Council received 473 DoLs applications (almost a 10 fold increase). The referral rate continues to rise with over 170 applications received since 1 April 2015.

The Adult Social Care service uses its own in-house Best Interest Assessors (BIAs) who carry out the assessments wherever possible in addition to their casework. At least two full working days are required for one BIA assessment and each assessment requires the Council to pay for assessment by a doctor. Independent BIA's are being commissioned in an increasing number of cases in order to meet statutory timescales.

To facilitate greater partnership working, the Council has agreed to indemnify a small number of health colleagues who are BIA trained to carry out some assessments. The impact on Supervisory Body signatories is also significant, as each requires a number of hours' scrutiny/ discussion with the BIA before authorisation.

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## CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT AND CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING - COUNCILLOR JOHN JONES

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### Looked After Children and Children's Homes

The Annual Report from the Virtual School for the academic year 2013/ 2014 is due to be presented to the next Corporate Parenting Panel. Key themes will be discussed and performance will be reviewed in line with existing measures.

The number of looked after children in Blackpool still remains high in comparison with neighbouring authorities and national statistics. Decision-making systems are robust to ensure that the right children enter care and drift is minimized. Care plans and the plan for permanency (whether this be reunification or permanency away from the home) are implemented swiftly. There continues to be an improvement in performance in respect of health, dental, optician and immunisation with this cohort of young people and children.

The three established Residential Children's Homes continue to be inspected and regulated by Ofsted. The inspection of Bispham Road has rated the home as 'outstanding', with the interim inspection identifying that as a home it has sustained its effectiveness. Argosy continues to be rated as 'good' again with the interim inspection in March 2015 identifying it as a home which has sustained its effectiveness.

Hornby Road continues to be 'satisfactory' and the service manager is overseeing the actions identified to support the home to be rated as 'good'.

As a Host authority there are many children placed in Blackpool who are in the Care of Other Local Authorities (COLA). Regulations identify that before children are placed in Blackpool the Local Authority should be notified and the placement discussed. Blackpool has updated its 'service offer letter' and this is accessible on the internet to support other Local Authorities in advising us of children being placed in the area.

In order to enhance and support services to the independent sector, Children's Social Care in conjunction with the Commissioning Department are hosting an independent provider's Forum day to support the sector in their ability to care for our most vulnerable children.

The Improvement Plan continues to be a priority for Children's Social Care. There is evidence that the authority is responding proactively and embedding good practice across the service supported by partners.

A recent bid to become part of the "New Belongings" project to support the Care leaver's improvement plan was successful and Blackpool is presently working with the project to support a continued focus on improving the service and outcomes.

A key priority in moving forward continues to be the plan to align the Early Help and Children Social Care (CSC) divisions more closely, to support a robust model of "step up and step down" and ensure that families get the right service at the right time. To support this process an independent review of the Early Help offer and Front Door was commissioned which has now been completed. Alongside this Children's Social Care are undertaking a self-assessment of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) response to identify any gaps and ensure that there is adequate service provision across the Authority

to meet the needs of this vulnerable group. The establishment of a MACSE meeting (Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation) is now in place to coordinate and map the demographics, trends and patterns in order that services can respond accordingly and collaboratively.

Blackpool continues to be an authority with a high number of care proceedings and children subject to a child protection plan. There is good progress in meeting the 26-week timescale in court proceedings and the adoption team response, to those children with a plan of adoption, is excellent with 50 placed in 2014/ 2015.

Fostering fortnight recently took place with related activity which, as well as a celebration of the achievements of Blackpool's foster carers, also highlighted to the community the need to increase and attract more 'in house' foster carers.

The participation model is embedded and children views are regular sought. The Children in Care Council 'JustUz' is actively involved in interviewing applicants who wish to work in the field of social care within Blackpool Council.

The Department for Education (DfE) visited Blackpool Council for two days on 9 and 10 June to review the lifting of our Notice of Improvement in Social Care. We now await the formal Ministerial response, which is due imminently.

### **Safeguarding (Local Safeguarding Children's Board)**

#### BSCB Website

A new website is being developed that will host both the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards information. This new website was launched in June 2015 and will be more user friendly, presentation and navigation will be much improved.

#### Annual Report 2014/ 2015

BSCB is currently working on the 2014/ 2015 annual report, which will go to the Board for review on 14 July and will be fully signed off by the 9 September.

#### Serious Case and Concise Learning Reviews

BSCB has published two Serious Case Reviews since the last report in March 2015. Baby Q (March 2015) and Child BT (May 2015) which are now documented on the BSCB website.

#### Services around Schools/ Support/ Advice.

The School Improvement Service continues to provide support, advice and challenge in relation to category of need. On 20 May, eight Blackpool schools began a Lancashire based initiative 'The World Class Programme'. This is a programme designed to encourage Blackpool schools to work in triads with Lancashire schools on a journey towards Good and Outstanding. The second day took place on 30 June.

The Blackpool Challenge Board has been formed, chaired by Professor Sonia Blandford. The purpose of the Board is to work in partnership with all Blackpool Schools (Primary, Secondary, Special, PRU (pupil referral units) and Academies) and Local Authority leaders to lead a change management programme. The programme will focus on:

1. Improve outcomes in reading, writing, maths, science and technology
2. Improve behaviour and attendance in all schools
3. Improve parent and carer engagement with schools
4. Improve employability and employment prospects for all pupils

A launch of the Blackpool Challenge took place on 22 June at The Winter Gardens.

## **Pupil Welfare and Attendance**

Published data released by Statistical First Release (SFR) in March 2015 for the academic year 2013/2014, shows a significant improvement in both overall absence and persistent absence. The table demonstrates the improving Blackpool picture over the last few years. The gap between Blackpool and the national average requires ongoing attention especially with regard to persistent absence. From September 2015, persistent absence will be measured at 90% rather than 85% and data will be collected and published to reflect six terms.

### **Overall Absence**

	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>
England	6.5	5.9	5.8	5.1
Blackpool	7.5	7.1	7.8	6.2

### **Persistent Absence**

	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>
England	8.4	7.4	6.4	5.2
Blackpool	13.3	11	12.8	7.1

## **Inspection and Intervention of Schools**

Since the last report dated March 2015, the following schools have been inspected:

- Boundary Primary School: Full Inspection on 24 March with an outcome of Requires Improvement.
- Montgomery High School: HMI monitoring visit on 21 April with an outcome of 'Reasonable Progress'.
- South Shore Academy: Full inspection on 6 May. The report has not yet been published.
- Devonshire Primary Academy: Full inspection on 14 May with an outcome of Requires Improvement.
- Park Community Academy: Full inspection on 21 May with an outcome of Outstanding.

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

Educational Diversity continues to face pressures from a rise in exclusions from the secondary schools and academies across Blackpool. With 290 young people on roll, the pupil referral unit has become the largest in the country and the Head teacher, along with other senior leaders across the town are working collaboratively through the Blackpool Challenge Board to reduce the numbers of young people that are being referred to the Service and to raise attainment for all.

Plans are progressing rapidly at the new Pegasus site and it is hoped that our Key Stage 2 cohort can make the transition over to the new premises before the end of this academic year. This will provide essential stability and continuity as the students make the transition to the Key Stage 3 provision.

Educational Diversity is heavily committed to the Headstart programme and is involved in a number of pilots such as, Video interactive Guidance (V.I.G), Adaptive Resilience, Peer Mentoring, KOOH (on line counselling), Speech and Language through Speech Bubble and the Walk and Talk programme. Two Year 11 students are acting as Ambassadors for Headstart and have attended a number of conferences and presentations nationally representing the young people of Blackpool.

The service continues to work with Education London to enrich school improvement processes and have recently agreed a two-year partnership programme with Achievement for All, focussing on pupil attainment and parental engagement.

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## CABINET MEMBER FOR THIRD SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT – COUNCILLOR MARIA KIRKLAND

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### Fairness Commission

The Fairness Commission continues to be very busy, with five very active working groups currently delivering activity across Blackpool. Current priorities are:

- **Development of Community Farm** – Business Plan now completed and first phase of consultation work undertaken. Now moving on to identifying funding and second phase consultation work.
- **Development of Community Shop** – Plunkett Foundation have awarded a grant of £5,000 to aid the scoping and development of this project. Work is underway to look at models of good practice across the country and develop a robust business plan for Blackpool.
- **Fairtrade Town Status for Blackpool** – Considerable work has been undertaken on Fairtrade over the last 12 months and an application for Fairtrade Town Status will be made in September 2015. In the meantime, a Schools Conference will take place on 1 July 2015 to engage children with the principles of Fairtrade.
- **Social Isolation and Loneliness project** – This project is delivered in partnership with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and has been going very well on Grange Park since its launch last September. A second pilot will be launched shortly, which will target older owner/occupiers who can often be disconnected, socially isolated and lonely.
- **Dementia Action Alliance** – The Blackpool Dementia Action Alliance was launched on 19 May and is the over-arching group which helps to ensure Blackpool is a Dementia Friendly Town.

### Community Engagement

The Community Engagement Team is making final preparations for the next Council Couch Tour. This is a project where a Council Couch is placed in the heart of communities on a very local level and members of the Corporate Leadership Team are present to talk to our Citizens and hear about their hopes and aspirations for Blackpool, their compliments and concerns. Last year the Council Couch successfully engaged with over 400 citizens, most of whom, were not previously known to us. Feedback was extremely positive and the project was very well received.

### Equality and Diversity

#### Faith engagement and social action

In partnership with Together Lancashire and the local Faith community, a major exercise has been completed to map the extent of social and community support contributed by Blackpool churches and other faith groups.

When the database is finalised it will help to deepen cooperation between faith groups and Council services to work together on tackling poverty and social need. It is also hoped the project will lay the foundations for a new strategic Faith Covenant between the Council and faith leaders in the town, to build on the work of initiatives such as the Blackpool Food Partnership.

#### Blackpool Pride

The event was held on the weekend of 13 and 14 June. The event has progressively grown over recent years and is now a key event in the tourism calendar, celebrating diversity with top class entertainment.

### Easy read

Feedback from the Equalities Forum has identified a need for council and other public agencies to adopt more easy read principles in leaflets, documents and other means of public communication. Working in partnership with local charities Empowerment and Disability First, a pilot training seminar for relevant staff is being arranged in July.

### Disability conference

The Disability partnership is planning a conference later in the autumn, to bring local people together with key decision makers and representatives of disability charities to discuss the major issues facing people living with disability in Blackpool in 2015.

### **Consultation/ Residents Panel**

Whilst undertaking a recent survey, the Corporate Development Team asked people if they would be interested in giving us their views on Council services in the future. Of the 750 people we spoke to, over 500 said they would be interested. We are therefore developing proposals for a Blackpool Citizen's Panel, which will involve as many people as possible in the running of the Council and our decision-making processes. It is a fundamental change in how we shape services in line with people's views and hold ourselves accountable to the public.

We will be undertaking recruitment for the Citizen's Panel whilst consulting on the draft priorities and vision in the Council Plan this summer.

### **Provider Market Development and Planning**

This is an area that will be the focus of development work over the coming year, by looking at areas that in the future the Council may well no longer be in a position to fund, but where alternative market providers currently do not exist locally, or where there is preventive work that could be done to reduce future needs for assistance. This will include engagement with the Third sector in understanding what the possibilities are and what help is needed to ensure that local providers, employing local people, are in a position to compete for funding contracts in these areas.

### **Adult Respite/Family support**

At present, respite is mainly provided in contracted residential settings and formal day care, with a small amount of respite at home provided by Social Care volunteers and the Shared Lives service. Under the Care Act, more is required of us to support informal family carers in enabling them to continue their caring role without undue pressure. We will be working with third sector and others to understand what alternative respite/ family support will meet their needs and help alleviate informal carer pressures.



## CABINET MEMBER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO – COUNCILLOR IVAN TAYLOR

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### **Relationship with Police and Crime Commissioner**

The relationship with the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) remains strong, with regular representation at the PCC Forum for Local Authorities meetings. Recently the PCC has also requested to have regular meetings with the Community Safety Partnership managers and chairs, to discuss the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan locally, as well as the progress in addressing the local priorities identified in the Strategic Assessment.

From a financial perspective, it is pleasing that the PCC has agreed to provide again Blackpool Council with the Community Safety Grant in 2015/ 2016, which is pivotal to enable the local authority to continue its work in partnership with the Police to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as supporting the victims of these offences.

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Carmel McKeogh, Deputy Chief Executive
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 July 2015

## COUNCIL PLAN 2015/ 2020

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 22 June 2015 relating to the Council Plan 2015/ 2020.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To agree the proposed timeline for the production of the Council Plan 2015/ 2020.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Council Plan is a key element of the Council's corporate business planning framework and forms part of the Council's Strategic Policy Framework.

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:

There are no other options.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Plan relates to all existing Council priorities.

### 5.0 Background Information

5.1 The Executive at its meeting on 22 June 2015 considered a proposed timeline, proposals for consultation of the plan content and the separation of the associated performance data.

5.2 The Deputy Chief Executive and the Corporate Development Team, working closely with the Corporate Leadership Team to strengthen objectives and develop key actions and measures, will subject to approval of the timeline, lead the development of the Council Plan for 2015-2020.

5.3 The decision notice from the Executive meeting is attached at Appendix 6(a).

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 6(a) – Executive Decision Notice EX23/2015

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 None.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 The Equality Forum and the Disability Partnership will be consulted in July to ensure that the views of these groups are taken into consideration as part of the development of the Council Plan.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.,

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

- 12.1 In order to ensure that Blackpool Council consults fully with staff, residents, and external agencies and businesses a detailed and comprehensive consultation is proposed through the summer.
- 12.2 Initial views from residents on the Council's performance and their priorities had been sought via the Household Survey and considered in the drafting of the Plan. The consultation exercise to be led by the Corporate Engagement Team and Communications Team will build on this, maximising opportunities for engagement and feedback on the plan from both an internal and external perspective. An outline of the proposals was detailed in the Executive agenda.
- 13.0 Background papers:**
- 13.1 None.

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<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX23/2015
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Carmel McKeogh, Deputy Chief Executive
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	22nd June 2015

## COUNCIL PLAN 2015-2020

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To outline the proposals regarding the development and timeline for approval of the Council Plan for 2015-2020.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To agree to the proposed timeline for the production of the Council Plan 2015-20 and forward this report on for approval at Council.
- 2.2 To agree to the proposals for a consultation on the content of the plan over the summer 2015.
- 2.3 To agree that the performance data relating to the 2015-2020 plan be produced separately for consideration through Executive in September so as not to delay the consultation of the Council Plan.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Council Plan is a key element of the Council's corporate business planning framework and forms part of the Council's Strategic Policy Framework. The current Council Plan covers the period 2013 to 2015, and is therefore due to expire. A new Council Plan will be drafted to review progress on the 2013-2015 plan and refresh the Council's vision, priorities and values of the organisation for the next 5 years.

The purpose of the Council Plan is to provide a clear and concise summary of the Council's vision for Blackpool, and the key actions that the Council will take to work towards achieving that vision.

- 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:

None

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The Council Plan relates to all existing Council priorities.

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The development of the Council Plan for 2015-2020 will be led by the Deputy Chief Executive and the Corporate Development Team, working closely with the Corporate Leadership Team to strengthen objectives and develop key actions and measures. Due to the ever changing local and national context, particularly around the economic climate and pressure on the public purse, the focus of the refreshed plan will be bolstered towards the Council taking an earlier focus on intervention, value for money and delivering more for less. It will stress our commitment to making the best use of public funds, whilst continuing to realise our ambitions, and delivering services which are tailored to local needs.

5.2 Following the Leadership Team Away Day in October 2014 there was an agreement that the refreshed vision developed for the future of Blackpool and the priorities supporting its delivery should be bolder and outline a clear role for the Council in delivering its vision.

5.3 The Council Plan 2013-2015 focussed on nine key priorities for the Council, which were later translated into three dominant themes. In response to the LGA Peer Review feedback in November 2014, the development of the 2015-2020 plan will seek to streamline these priorities, delivering our messages in a more clear and concise language whilst defining specific actions and measurable targets. A longer term vision of five years with a more detailed narrative is supportive of the peer review feedback.

5.4 Some work has already been done to develop a draft vision and the supporting priorities for inclusion within the plan. It is proposed that the nine priorities within the 2013 plan be updated to focus on two key priorities within the next five year vision.



The draft priorities are:

- **PRIORITY ONE** - The Economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- **PRIORITY TWO** – Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

The draft vision for Blackpool is:

*The UK's number one family resort with a thriving economy that supports a happy and healthy community who are proud of this unique town*

The appearance of the plan and all associated material will use strong design concepts which are both on brand and supportive of the customer care images. We will make use of as many opportunities through the consultation period to make the plan more accessible and user friendly both for staff, partners and the public alike.

- 5.5 Details of the proposed consultation process for the new Council Plan are set out in section 12. The consultation outcomes will be published in a full report in August 2015; following this the Council Plan 2015-20 will be finalised.
- 5.6 Following publication there will be a communications strategy implemented to ensure that progress is reported regularly and key messages are reinforced. This will include an extensive marketing and campaigns plan which will deliver poster campaigns, consistent branded messages and images in line with the plan's priorities which will be strengthened further through varied communication methods and the use of social media.
- 5.7 Internally it is proposed that the key messages in the plan will be used as the basis of the annual internal staff conference in October. The staff conference will use the content of the plan to deliver key messages to staff and the outstanding service awards for staff will be presented through the refreshed vision and values of the organisation.

## Appendix 6(a)

- 5.8 The proposals for the development of the Council Plan is due to be shared with Council at its meeting on 8th July 2015. Following the summer consultation it is proposed that the final Plan will be approved through the same route in September 2015. Detail of the proposed timescales is included below.

Task	Timescale
Council Plan Corporate Leadership Team Report	8th Jun 2015
Council Plan Executive Report	22nd Jun 2015
Council approval	8th Jul 2015
Individual sessions with Lead Members	w/c 8th Jun 2015
Discussion with Cabinet	TBC
Presentation to Senior Leadership Team	3rd Jul 2015
Internal staff consultation – various methods	Jun – Jul 2015
Equality Forum and Disability Partnership	Jul 2015
Develop public and stakeholder survey consultations	Last 2 weeks in July
Run public survey	Jun / Jul 2015
Run stakeholder consultation	Jun / Jul 2015
Council Couch consultation at various locations / times	23rd Jun – 18th Aug 2015
Consultation outcome report drafted	Aug 2015
Mock Corporate Plan design completed	Aug 2015
Performance Management arrangements finalised	Aug 2015
Final draft approved by Corporate Leadership Team	7th Sept 2015
Executive approve recommendations to Council	14th Sept 2015
Council Plan approved by Council	15th Sept 2015
Staff conference and Outstanding Service Awards	19th Oct 2015

- 5.9 To ensure effective management and monitoring of the Council Plan, key measures will be identified to ensure that the Council is able to demonstrate how well it is achieving its objectives. These will be developed following the consultation period and will be aligned to the priorities and actions contained within the final plan.
- 5.10 During the summer recess the Corporate Development Team will work with colleagues within Governance and Regulatory Services to plan the cycle of Scrutiny Committees that will have a role in monitoring and challenging progress of the Council Plan and its associated indicators.
- 5.11 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No
- 5.12 **List of Appendices:**  
None

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 None

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 The Equality Forum and the Disability Partnership will be consulted in July to ensure that the views of these groups are taken into consideration as part of the development of the Council Plan.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None

**12.0 Internal/ external consultation:**

12.1 The 2015-2020 plan seeks to set a longer term vision for Blackpool. In order to ensure that Blackpool Council consults fully with staff, residents, and external agencies and businesses a detailed and comprehensive consultation is proposed through the summer.

12.2 Initial views from residents on the Council's performance and their priorities have been sought via the Household Survey reported to Corporate Leadership Team last month and considered in the drafting of the Plan. The consultation exercise to be led by the Corporate Engagement Team and Communications Team will build on this, maximising opportunities for engagement and feedback on the plan from both an internal and external perspective. An outline of the proposals is shown below.

12.3 **External consultation:**

- A four page leaflet outlining the draft vision and priorities will be produced for the purpose of the consultation. This will include a feedback form and survey questions for the reader to complete.
- Key local contact points such as Blackpool libraries will promote the consultation through the above literature.
- The Council Couch will be on the road from mid-June and will be promoting the consultation of the Council Plan and encouraging residents and local businesses to have their say.
- Face to face interviews with residents to seek their views and complete the survey throughout July.
- Online version of the survey published and promoted through social media in July and August.
- Use of social media and the Council website to promote the consultation and encourage feedback - using a 'different voice' and prompting debate.
- Attendance of the Corporate Development Team at key partnership and community interest and focus groups throughout the summer months.

12.4 **Internal Engagement:**

- Staff information sessions held at Bickerstaffe House, Municipal Buildings and South King Street.
- Individual briefings with Lead Members and discussion at Cabinet.
- Senior Leadership Team presentation in June.
- Departmental Management Team agenda items through July and August.
- News items on the Hub, Bickerstaffe screens and internal newsletters.
- Survey promoted through internal staff focus groups.

13.0 **Background papers:**

13.1 None

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?

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:

1. To agree to the proposed timeline for the production of the Council Plan 2015-20 and forward this report on for approval at Council.
2. To agree to the proposals for a consultation on the content of the plan over the summer 2015.
3. To agree that the performance data relating to the 2015-2020 plan be produced separately for consideration through Executive in September so as not to delay the consultation of the Council Plan.

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

The Council Plan is a key element of the Council's corporate business planning framework and forms part of the Council's Strategic Policy Framework. The current Council Plan covers the period 2013 to 2015, and is therefore due to expire. A new Council Plan will be drafted to review progress on the 2013-2015 plan and refresh the Council's vision, priorities and values of the organisation for the next 5 years.

The purpose of the Council Plan is to provide a clear and concise summary of the Council's vision for Blackpool, and the key actions that the Council will take to work towards achieving that vision.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1 Councillor Blackburn, in the Chair

Councillors Cain, Campbell, Collett, Kirkland, Jackson, Smith, I Taylor and Wright

Apologies were received from Councillor Jones who was elsewhere on Council business.

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Development and Jobs)
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 July 2015

## REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 22 June 2015 relating to the Statement of Licensing Policy.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy, as submitted to the Licensing Committee and the Executive.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Council, as Licensing Authority, is required by statute to produce and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy that sets out how it intends to exercise its functions under the Licensing Act 2003. The last full review of the policy took place in 2012 although amendments to the Town Centre Saturation Policy were made in 2013.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No, if approved the revised Statement of Licensing Policy will replace the existing one.

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

There are no other options.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priorities are:

- Safeguard and protect the most vulnerable
- Encourage responsible entrepreneurship for the benefit of our communities
- Create safer communities and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Executive at its meeting on 22 June 2015 considered a draft Statement of Licensing Policy following a formal consultation period approved by the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 16 December 2014. The last full review of the policy took place in 2012 although amendments to the Town Centre Saturation Policy were made in 2013.

5.2 The decision notice from the Executive meeting is attached at Appendix 7(a).

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 7(a) – Executive Decision Notice EX24/2015

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 Council must approve the statement of licensing policy before it can take effect.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The proposed statement of licensing policy will it is envisaged support the licensing



objectives and strengthen the enforcement of the objectives.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Formal consultation with licence holders, responsible authorities and other interested parties took place between 18 December 2014 and 12 March 2015.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 Consultation responses from the Director of Public Health, LR Law and The Property Partnership.

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<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX24/2015
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	CLlr Gillian Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Development and Jobs)
<b>Date of Meeting :</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2015

## REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Licensing Committee to approve the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve the content of the proposed policy and recommend it for approval to Council.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 In December 2014, the Licensing Committee approved a period of consultation on a revised Statement of Licensing Policy. The consultation is now complete and the results are before the Executive for its consideration.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No, If approved the revised Statement of Licensing Policy will replace the existing one.

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? No

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

The Executive may make alterations to the proposed policy before it is considered by the Council.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priorities are:

- Safeguard and protect the most vulnerable
- Encourage responsible entrepreneurship for the benefit of our communities
- Create safer communities and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Council, as Licensing Authority, is required by statute to produce and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy which sets out how it intends to exercise its functions under the Licensing Act 2003. The last full review of the policy took place in 2012 although amendments to the Town Centre Saturation Policy were made in 2013.

5.2 One of the areas of feedback from the Licensing Committee's hearing into the proposed Early Morning Alcohol Restriction Order in February 2014 was that better use could be made of existing legislation to deal with alcohol related problems in the night time economy. A review of good practice relating to licensing policies from other Authorities was undertaken which informed the development of the draft policy. Informal consultation took place with the Night Time Economy Working Group and the Responsible Authorities. The main changes to the draft policy were:

- Highlighting good practice by way of key messages
- The introduction of a framework of hours for licensed premises
- Extending the Town Centre Saturation Area to cover takeaway premises
- Confirming that the saturation policy will only be overridden in genuinely exceptional circumstances.

5.3 The Licensing Committee at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014 approved a formal period of consultation as required by the legislation.

5.4 Consultation took place between the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014 and 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The consultation was advertised using social media and the draft policy document was available on the Council's website. In addition the following were asked for their comments on the draft policy:

- The Responsible Authorities (The Police, Fire and Rescue, the Licensing

Authority, Environmental Protection, Health and Safety, Planning, Public Health, Social Services and Weights and Measures.)

- Persons/bodies representative of local premises licence holders
- Persons/bodies representative of local club premises certificate holders
- Persons/bodies representative of local personal licence holders; and
- Persons/bodies representative of businesses and residents in its area.

- 5.5 Comments on the draft policy were received from:
- The Council's Director of Public Health dealing with section 4.1 of the policy
  - LR Law on behalf of Lancashire Constabulary and the Licensing Authority suggesting revised wording to a number of sections of the policy including 4.4, 4.7 and 4.8.
  - The property partnership dealing with the problems of unsupervised children and making the observation that the customers that Blackpool has already should not be discouraged before sufficient others are persuaded to come to the resort.
- 5.6 The Head of Licensing Services at the Licensing Committee reported in more detail on the consultation responses, which were placed before the Committee in their entirety for consideration, but in the main the amendments proposed in these responses were incorporated when preparing the proposed policy at Appendix 3a, to the Executive report. The only exception to this is the request to extend the area covered by the town centre saturation area as this would require a further period of consultation.
- 5.7 The Licensing Committee met on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015, and subject to some minor amendments which have already been made in the attached document at Appendix 3a, to the Executive report. recommended the Statement of Licensing Policy for consideration by the Executive and recommendation to Council.
- 5.8 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No
- 5.9 **List of Appendices:**
- Appendix 3a: Proposed Statement of Licensing Policy.
- 6.0 **Legal considerations:**
- 6.1 The statement of licensing policy must be approved by Council before it can take effect.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The proposed statement of licensing policy will it is envisaged support the licensing objectives and strengthen the enforcement of the objectives.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Formal consultation with licence holders, responsible authorities and other interested parties took place between 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014 and 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 Consultation responses from the Director of Public Health, LR Law and The Property Partnership

**14.0 Key decision information:**

14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 4/2015

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: 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015 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 approve the content of the proposed policy and recommend it for approval to Council.

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

The proposed policy is in line with the Council's priorities and statutory requirements. It will allow the Council to take the action necessary to safeguard the Licensing Objectives outlined in the Licensing Act 2003.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1 Councillor Blackburn, in the Chair

Councillors Cain, Campbell, Collett, Kirkland, Jackson, Smith, I Taylor and Wright

Apologies were received from Councillor Jones who was elsewhere on Council business.

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1



<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Carmel McKeogh, Deputy Chief Executive Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 July 2015

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 22 June 2015 relating to the role of the Area Forums along with other forms of community engagement.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To agree the discontinuation of the Area Forums with effect from 1 September 2015.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Council at the Annual Meeting agreed not to schedule meetings of the Area Forums for the June/ July cycle, but wanted to look at other forms of community engagement and public involvement before considering their future. This report to the Executive sought to look at the different forms of community engagement currently in practice.

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| 3.2a | Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? | No, but the Area Forums are part of the Council's constitution and require a Council decision to disestablish them. |
| 3.2b | Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget?                  | Yes   |

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To continue with the Area Forums and not pursue the other forms of community engagement, either on a reduced meeting cycle basis or by the merger of the seven forums to a smaller number, as suggested by the community representatives.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is “Create safer communities and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour” and “Deliver quality services through a professional, well-rewarded and motivated workforce”.

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Executive at its meeting on 22 June 2015 considered proposals as to how to create greater public engagement through a variety of mediums.

5.2 The report considered by the Executive concludes that the pilot community engagement projects which had been undertaken were successful and effective. The Council Couch revealed that the majority of citizens were generally happy with the service they received. People liked the opportunity to talk to the Council, informally at a time and place that suited them, but they generally were not motivated to attend meetings (such as Area Forum meetings) or actively seek the Council out unless something concerns them.

5.3 It was considered that Area Forums had served their original purpose and in times of austerity could be seen as a less effective model of engagement which delivered limited returns for the amount of resource invested in them. The pressures on the organisation and on the community meant that a greater range of more responsive tools was required. The Executive was also reminded that in setting this financial year’s revenue budget the Council had agreed to cease the Area Forum ‘grant’ funding in the sum of £158,000.

5.4 The decision notice from the Executive meeting is attached at Appendix 8(a).

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 8(a) – Executive Decision Notice EX25/2015

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 The Area Forums are part of the Council’s Constitution and are appointed by Council and therefore it has to be Council which disestablishes them.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 There has been a full time officer in Democratic Governance and a full time officer in the Community Engagement Team who have both taken voluntary redundancy in this current financial year and will not be replaced. Both teams support the Area Forums and a reduction in staff will make the task of supporting Area Forums going forward extremely challenging if they were to continue. (Additionally, these two teams also lost a full time officer each last financial year, which led to the ceasing of the Area Panels, following consultation with the Community Representatives and the agreement of Council).

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 More options to engage with the community will ensure that less people will be disconnected with the Council and different methods of engagement will prevent discrimination and promote diversity and inclusivity for all groups of people.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 There will be a saving of approximately £18,000 from the Area Forum budget, which covers allowances to Community Representatives, hire of rooms, teas and coffees etc. Savings will also be made in terms of officer time and also in not replacing the two members of staff mentioned in paragraph 7.1 of the Executive report. There is budget available to pay allowances for Community Representatives up to the end of December to assist with the transition period as stated in para 5.7 of the Executive report.

9.2 The Council as part of its budget approval process this year has previously agreed to cease the Area Forum 'grant' funding totalling £158,000.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 Ineffective engagement will mean that the Council is making its decisions on unrepresentative information. The Council needs to be assured that the engagement and consultation it undertakes is as effective and representative as it can be.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The Council has to be accountable and act with integrity in regard to its decision making and effective and representative engagement will help achieve this.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 The Council has held a consultation event with the Community Representatives and 19 were in attendance on Monday 8 June. The Community Representatives on the whole acknowledged that Area Forums had to change but they still believed that they were a viable way to engage with the community. It was acknowledged that the other forms of community engagement, which had been introduced, recently added to the engagement process. Some of the options put forward by the Community Representatives were to merge the Forums, to have for example three Forums covering Blackpool or to rethink the Forum's agenda to make it more engagement focused, to see if this would be more relevant to local communities. There was also a common view that the Forums were not just about giving grants but sought to engage with local communities.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX25/2015
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Carmel McKeogh, Deputy Chief Executive Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2015

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 Following the decision of Annual Council, this report is to consider the role of Area Forums along with other forms of community engagement which had been explored in the last 18 months. To also explore the opportunities for public involvement, which allow sufficient opportunities to engage, consult and develop communities.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 That subject to Council approval, Area Forums are discontinued with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.
- 2.2 That the 'Council Couch'/Summits/Citizens Panel and Residents Survey are promoted as the routes to engage with the organisation.
- 2.3 That the Community Representatives be invited to be members of the Blackpool Citizens Panel and to invite them to assist in its formation and recruitment of Panel members, as set out in paragraph 5.7.
- 2.4 That Partners are consulted to identify further opportunities for joint working on consultation and engagement work to ensure a cohesive and joined up approach. (generally residents are not aware of the finer detail about which public sector organisation is responsible for their services and often it is not important to them).

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Council at the Annual Meeting agreed not to schedule meetings of the Area Forums for the June/ July cycle but wanted to look at other forms of community engagement and public involvement before considering their future. This report seeks to look at the different forms of community engagement currently in practice.

- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No but the Area Forums are part of the Council's constitution and require a Council decision to disestablish them.
- 3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To continue with the Area Forums and not pursue the other forms of community engagement, either on a reduced meeting cycle basis or by the merger of the seven forums to a smaller number, as suggested by the community representatives.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is "Create safer communities and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour" and "Deliver quality services through a professional, well-rewarded and motivated workforce".

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The creation of long-term, productive interactions between delivery organisations and citizens can be very challenging. Citizens often dip in and out according to the circumstances they find themselves in. This makes it difficult to create a shared vision and understanding between the local authority (and wider public sector) and the community. Naturally, citizens are more likely to see the benefits of engagement at times when they are at odds with the Council or relevant public sector organisation or feel dissatisfied with the service provided.

5.2 Generally unless people have a strong sense of civic responsibility and probably therefore are already engaged, they do not interact with public sector services. This often only changes if they need the Council or have cause to complain. As a result, historical methods have meant that the Council has had regular conversations with the few rather than the many.

In 2014, the Council started on a journey towards greater public engagement. A range of innovative and fresh ideas were introduced to help us engage with citizens more holistically. It was recognised that not all members of our communities want to attend formal meetings and some did not want to engage with the Council at all. This is completely valid, but it is also important to create a range of opportunities so that when they do want to talk to the Council, there is a mechanism in place to allow that conversation to take place.

### 5.3 **Area Forums** - sought to engage residents by aligning them to their local community.

Area Forums:

- are geographically spread;
- allow interaction between councillors, Council Officers, other public sector officers and the Public;
- are at a local level which allows issues pertinent to a particular locality to be addressed;
- are attended largely by people who already engage with the Council, or other public sector organisation via other means.

They have served a purpose and have engaged with a range of people during their life time. However, it is recognised their effectiveness as a community engagement tool is very limited. Generally the same people attend time after time and are in most cases already known to the Council and already engage via other routes. The number of community representatives has also reduced over time and there are now only 30 out of a possible 42.

A look back at attendance shows that they have been limited at attracting new audiences unless there are controversial issues for discussion. People who are regular contributors to the Blackpool economy, users of services but who are not already engaged in a conversation with the Council remain disconnected. This has possibly been an area which has been the most challenging and frustrating in seeking to make the Forums more effective.

### 5.4 **Pilot Projects - Engagement**

During 2014, the Council's Community Engagement Team undertook a number of pilot projects, many of which were delivered in partnership with Public Sector Partners. All of these projects proved to be highly effective at engaging with a wide range of people.

These are summarised below:

- **Council Couch** – Over 6 weeks the 'Council Couch' was located within the heart of different Blackpool communities. Chief Officers and the Community Engagement Team had conversations with over 700 people, most were not previously known to the Council. It was a highly effective tool for speaking to people in a relaxed and informal environment.

- **Summits** – There have now been two Children’s/Teenagers Summits and one Older People’s Summit. They have attracted a combined total of nearly 200 participants who have taken part in the events. This provided an opportunity for them to pose questions to the top five Public Sector Officers responsible for delivering the services they receive. These were highly effective events, which received very good feedback from everyone involved.

## 5.5 Consultation

In addition to the need to engage with people, to understand their priorities and enter into meaningful discussion about their town and their lives, it is also essential that the Council consults with them when shaping services and deciding priorities. In essence the more engagement there is, the more synergy there will be between their priorities and aspirations and the Council’.

Effective consultation can be achieved through:

- **Citizen’s Panels** – By creating and maintaining a group of around 1,000 residents who commit to completing regular consultation surveys via telephone, post or email on a range of topics, the Council can improve the quality, timeliness and representativeness of consultation undertaken. In the recent residents’ survey, 520 people (71% of respondents) expressed interest in being asked their views by the Council on an ongoing basis in line with the proposed citizens panel arrangements. This would also allow the Council to work with our public sector partners to include relevant topics of interest to them, reducing consultation fatigue and resource duplication. People will be able to opt-in to the citizen’s panel at any time should they want to get involved;
- **Residents Surveys** – These are a widely-used research tool and an essential counterpart to citizen’s panels and ensure findings which are representative of the population of Blackpool as a whole. Residents are invited to participate at random, answering questions which measure key public service performance indicators such as satisfaction with Council services, or which generate social research data – such as internet access, personal health and wellbeing and service awareness and take up.

## 5.6 Fairness Commission

The Fairness Commission provides many opportunities to engage with people and arguably this is one of the biggest strengths of the Fairness Commission. Currently the Fairness Commission is delivering a number of key projects which are essentially community engagement projects at their core:

- Blackpool Dementia Action Alliance
- Fairtrade



- Loneliness Project
- Buddy Project

5.7 **Community Representatives**

Even though the numbers have reduced, the greatest strength within the Area Forums is the dedicated number of Community Representatives. If the Area Forums are to be discontinued it would be a shame to lose the passion and commitment contained within this group – there is a definite role for them to play at the heart of the community. The proposed citizen’s panel arrangements will still allow these representatives to have a voice and engage with the Council on key issues which affect them or the area in which they represent. The Community Representatives have been appointed on a term of office which expires at the end of April 2016 and it is suggested that those representatives who wish to still be involved, be invited to work with the community engagement team to assist with the transition and help recruit citizen panel members between now and the end of December for which they will continue to receive allowances. This arrangement will also seek to ensure that Community Representatives are key in shaping the framework for future engagement in Blackpool. This work will also seek to include their views and recommendations on how the Council communicates and engages in feedback with residents more effectively.

5.8 **Conclusion**

The pilot projects were very successful and effective. The Council Couch revealed that the majority of citizens are generally happy with the service they receive. People would like the opportunity to talk to the Council, informally at a time and place that suits them, but they generally are not motivated to attend meetings or actively seek the Council out unless something concerns them.

Area Forums have served their original purpose and in times of austerity can be seen as a less effective model of engagement which delivers limited returns for the amount of resource invested in them. The pressures on the organisation and on the community mean that a greater range of more responsive tools is required. Members are also reminded that in setting this financial year’s revenue budget the Council agreed to cease the Area Forum ‘grant’ funding in the sum of £158,000. The issue of grants by forums was an important part of their role, which no longer exists.

5.9 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.10 **List of Appendices:**

None

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

- 6.1 The Council should seek to consult with people directly affected by any review and as such held a meeting with 19 community representatives on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The decision on the future of Area Forums will need to be taken by Council as it is that body which established them.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

- 7.1 There has been a full time officer in Democratic Governance and a full time officer in the Community Engagement Team who have both taken voluntary redundancy in this current financial year and will not be replaced. Both teams support the Area Forums and a reduction in staff will make the task of supporting Area Forums going forward extremely challenging if they were to continue. (Additionally, these two teams also lost a full time officer each last financial year which led to the ceasing of the Area Panels, following consultation with the Community Representatives and the agreement of Council).

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

- 8.1 More options to engage with the community will ensure that less people will be disconnected with the Council and different methods of engagement will prevent discrimination and promote diversity and inclusivity for all groups of people.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

- 9.1 There will be a saving of approximately £18,000 from the Area Forum budget which covers allowances to Community Representatives, hire of rooms, teas and coffees etc. Savings will also be made in terms of officer time and also in not replacing the two members of staff mentioned in paragraph 7.1. There is budget available to pay allowances for Community Representatives up to the end of December to assist with the transition period as stated in para 5.7.
- 9.2 The Council as part of its budget approval process this year has previously agreed to cease the Area Forum 'grant' funding totalling £158,000.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

- 10.1 Ineffective engagement will mean that the Council is making its decisions on unrepresentative information. The Council needs to be assured that the engagement and consultation it undertakes is as effective and representative as it can be.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The Council has to be accountable and act with integrity in regard to its decision making and effective and representative engagement will help achieve this.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 The Council has held a consultation event with the Community Representatives and 19 were in attendance on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June. The Community Representatives on the whole acknowledged that Area Forums had to change but they still believed that they were a viable way to engage with the community. It was acknowledged that the other forms of community engagement which had been introduced recently added to the engagement process. Some of the options put forward by the Community Representatives were to merge the Forums, to have for example three Forums covering Blackpool or to rethink the Forum's agenda to make it more engagement focused, to see if this would be more relevant to local communities. There was also a common view that the Forums were not just about giving grants but sought to engage with local communities.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

**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?

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:

1. That subject to Council approval, Area Forums are discontinued with effect from 1st September 2015.
2. That the 'Council Couch'/Summits/Citizens Panel and Residents Survey are promoted as the routes to engage with the organisation.
3. That the Community Representatives be invited to be members of the Blackpool Citizens Panel and to invite them to assist in its formation and recruitment of Panel members, as set out in paragraph 5.7, of this report.
4. That Partners are consulted to identify further opportunities for joint working on consultation and engagement work to ensure a cohesive and joined up approach. (generally residents are not aware of the finer detail about which public sector organisation is responsible for their services and often it is not important to them).

18.2 **Date of Decision:**

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

The Council at the Annual Meeting agreed not to schedule meetings of the Area Forums for the June/ July cycle but wanted to look at other forms of community engagement and public involvement before considering their future. This report seeks to look at the different forms of community engagement currently in practice.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1 Councillor Blackburn, in the Chair

Councillors Cain, Campbell, Collett, Kirkland, Jackson, Smith, I Taylor and Wright

Apologies were received from Councillor Jones who was elsewhere on Council business.

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 July 2015

## REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Standards Committee from its meeting on 23 June 2015 relating to the revised Code of Conduct for Members.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve the revised Code of Conduct for Members.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Code of Conduct has not been reviewed since its approval in June 2012. The proposed document is considered to be more succinct, provides greater clarity and is based upon legislation and recommendation from a joint workshop with the 3 independent persons, 3 members of Blackpool Council's Standards Committee and 3 members of Fylde Borough Council's Standards Committee.

3.2a	Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council?	No, but if approved will replace the current Code of Conduct for Members, in the Council's constitution.
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3.2b	Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget?	Yes
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3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To not agree the recommendations of the Standards Committee and maintain the current code or to make different changes to the Code. However, having the same/ very similar

Code of Conduct to Fylde Borough Council will help in carrying out reciprocal arrangements.

**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 Standards Committee at its meeting on 23 June 2015 considered a revised Code of Conduct for Members following a joint workshop comprising of members of the Standards Committee, Independent Persons and Fylde Borough Council Councillors.

5.2 Both Councils have had identical codes since the introduction of the Localism Act 2011. Fylde Borough Council has already had this revised code adopted by their Council meeting prior to the election, as the Council was updating its Constitution in preparation for moving to a committee system. Due to the timing of ordinary Council meetings, this is the first opportunity to present formally the revised code for approval.

5.3 The revised Code of Conduct for Member from the Standards Committee meeting is attached at Appendix 9(a).

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 9(a) – Updated Code of Conduct for Members.

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 Under the Localism Act 2011, every council must adopt a Code of Conduct, which must at least include disclosable pecuniary interests and any local additions.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.



**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 Having a clearer, more user-friendly code of conduct will hopefully assist with the understanding of it by elected members and the public and therefore it should mean there is greater clarity over its interpretation.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The Council has a value of being accountable and this revised code of Conduct will help embed the standards that elected and co-opted members have to adhere to.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Consultation has taken place with the joint working group between Fylde Borough Council, Blackpool Council and the three Independent persons.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

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<b>Code of Conduct for Members</b>	
<b>Effective from xxx</b>	<b>Approved by Council on xxx</b>

**1. Principles**

1.1 These principles underpin the Code of Conduct. Although they do not form part of the Code, it is expected that you will act with:

- Selflessness
- Honesty and integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Respect for others
- Commitment to uphold the law
- Leadership

**2. Application**

2.1 This Code applies to you whenever you:

- are acting in your capacity as a member or when you claim to act or give the impression you are acting in your capacity as a member
- act as a representative of your authority on another body.

**3. Sanctions**

3.1 Failure to comply with the provisions of this Code may result in a sanction being imposed:

- either by the Council (if it relates to the Code itself or a personal / personal prejudicial interest)
- through criminal proceedings (if it relates to a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest which may result in a criminal conviction and a fine of up to £5,000 and/ or disqualification from office for a period of up to 5 years).

**4. General obligations of the Code**

You must:

4.1 Treat others with respect.

4.2 When using or authorising the use by others of the authority's resources, do so in accordance with the authority's requirements and ensure that resources are not used improperly (including political purposes).

4.3 Have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

4.4 Have regard, when reaching decisions, to advice provided to you by the authority's Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer when they are acting in accordance with their statutory duties.

- 4.5 Give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any additional requirements of the authority.
- 4.6 Not do anything which may cause your authority to breach the Equality Act 2010 (or subsequent legislation)
- 4.7 Not bully any person.
- 4.8 Not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be:
- a complainant
  - a witness
  - involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings, in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with the code of conduct.
- 4.9 Not do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the authority.
- 4.10 Not disclose confidential information except where:
- you have the consent of a person authorised to give it
  - you are required by law to do so
  - the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person
  - the disclosure is reasonable, in the public interest, made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority
- 4.11 Not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which they are entitled by law.
- 4.12 Not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.
- 4.13 Not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to gain for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage.

## 5. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)**

- 5.1 This part explains the statutory requirements of the Localism Act 2011 (Sections 29- 34) in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs). These are enforced by criminal sanction.
- 5.2 A **disclosable pecuniary interest** is an interest of yourself or your partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners) of the descriptions set out at Appendix 1.
- 5.3 You must:
- (i) Notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within 28 days of becoming a member, or within 28 days of any change or becoming aware of any existence of a DPI.
  - (ii) Make a verbal declaration (at the beginning or as soon as you become aware of your interest) of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present where an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of the interest is under consideration.

- (iii) Comply with the statutory requirements to withdraw from participating in respect of any matter in which you have a DPI and comply with the Council's Procedure Rules by leaving the room.
- (iv) Cease further participation in the item (where acting alone outside of a meeting). This includes where an executive member makes an individual decision and becomes aware of a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being dealt with or to be dealt with by her/him, the executive member must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter.

## 6. Dispensations

- 6.1 The Standards Committee may grant you a dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

## 7. Offences

- 7.1 It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer of any disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election
- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the Register
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of a disclosable pecuniary interest that is not on the register that you have disclosed to a meeting
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest
- as an executive member discharging a function acting alone, and having a disclosable pecuniary interest in such a matter, failing to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the interest
- knowingly or recklessly providing information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a disclosable pecuniary interest or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

- 7.2 The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.

## 8. Personal Interests

- 8.1 You have a **personal interest** where:

- (i) A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association
- (ii) You are a member of any body or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority
- (iii) You are a member of any body (other than another local authority) exercising functions of a public nature, any body directed to charitable purposes or any body one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union), of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

8.2 You must:

- (i) Notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within 28 days of becoming a member, or within 28 days of any change or becoming aware of any existence of a personal interest set out in paragraph 8.1 (ii) and (iii) above.
- (ii) Make a verbal declaration (at the beginning, or as soon as you become aware of your interest) of the existence and nature of any personal interest at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of the interest is under consideration.

## 9. Prejudicial interests

9.1 Your personal interests would become **prejudicial** in the following instances:

- (i) Where a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interest AND where that business:
  - (a) affects your financial position or the financial position of a person or body through whom the interest arises or
  - (b) relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person through whom the interest arises.

9.2 You must:

- (i) Make a verbal declaration (at the beginning, or as soon as you become aware of your interest) of the existence and nature of any prejudicial interest at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of the interest is under consideration.
- (ii) Comply with the Council's Procedure Rules by withdrawing from any discussion of the matter at the meeting, and you may not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting.
- (iii) Cease further participation in the item (where acting alone outside of a meeting). This includes where an executive member makes an individual decision and becomes aware of prejudicial interest in a matter being dealt with or to be dealt with by her/him, the executive member must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter.

9.3 Where you have a prejudicial interest you may attend a meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise, and provided that you leave the room where the meeting is held immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence.

## 10. General dispensations

10.1 You may attend a meeting and vote on a matter where you have an interest that relates to the functions of the authority relating to:

- (i) housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease

- (ii) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members
- (iii) any ceremonial honour given to members
- (iv) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (v) Another local authority

**11. Registering interests, gifts and hospitality**

- 11.1 Any interests notified to the Monitoring Officer will be included in the register of interests. A copy of the register will be available for public inspection and will be published on the Council's website.
- 11.2 You must also register details of any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25 that you have received in connection with your role as a member of the Council and details of the donor.

**12. Sensitive interests**

- 12.1 Where you consider that disclosure of the details of a personal or prejudicial interest could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to violence or intimidation, and the Monitoring Officer agrees, the register will exclude details of the interest, but may state that you have an interest, the details of which are withheld.

## Appendix 1 – Categories of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority - (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) – (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either – (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (j) if that share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.



<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	8 July 2015

## **THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (STANDING ORDERS) (ENGLAND) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2015 – APPOINTMENT AND DISMISSAL OF SENIOR OFFICERS**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To consider the necessary changes to the Council’s Constitution in light of regulations recently published concerning disciplinary action against Chief Officers.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 To authorise the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services to amend the Chief Officer Employment Rules to reflect the changes, as described within the body of the report, relating to the new Regulations.

2.2 To agree to appoint a Disciplinary Panel to comprise of the three Independent Persons who have been appointed under the Members’ Code of Conduct framework (Section 28 (7) of the Localism Act 2011), as set out in paragraph 5.4 below.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 To make the necessary changes to the Council’s Constitution in light of new regulations.

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:

None – it is a requirement of the regulations.

#### **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 by law to adopt Standing Orders governing the recruitment, appointment and dismissal of its staff (and other matters) in accordance the Standing Orders Regulations. The Officer Employment Procedure Rules (set out in Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution) are the Standing Orders adopted by the Council for this purpose. As far as is relevant they provide that, amongst other things, no disciplinary action in respect of the Council’s Head of Paid Service, its Chief Financial Officer, or its Monitoring Officer may be taken by the Council other than in accordance with a recommendation in a report made by a Designated Independent Person appointed for that purpose under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001.
- 5.2 The 2015 Regulations, which come into force on 11 May 2015, amend the current position. The Constitution sets out the rules and procedures within which the Council operates. Within these, there is a Chapter relating to Officer Employment Procedure Rules, which set out the procedures for recruitment and appointment of Chief Officers, discipline and dismissal matters. Part of the current rules provide that in an instance where a Chief Officer is subject to disciplinary action, that no subsequent action can be taken other than in accordance with a recommendation in a report made by a ‘designated independent person’ (DIP). In practice, this would usually be someone external to the Council, such as an investigating officer appointed by the North West Employers Organisation. Their recommendation would be binding on the Council.
- 5.3 The new Regulations are intended to simplify the process, in particular by putting the decision fully in the hand of Council members who must consider any advice, views or recommendations from an independent panel. In practice, the matter would initially be considered by the Chief Officers Employment Committee, which would make its recommendation to Council after considering the views of the Panel, the conclusions of the investigation and representations from the officer concerned. The views, advice or recommendations of the Panel would also be reported direct to Council.
- 5.4 The Council is required to invite independent persons who have been appointed to support the members’ conduct framework to form the Panel. A consultation has taken place with the independent persons appointed under the standards mechanism, namely Mr Horrocks, Mr Ellwood and Mr Mozley. They have agreed that they will fulfil this role. This may well necessitate some training and this enhanced

role will require further consideration, in terms of their remuneration payment, from the Independent Remuneration Panel, as referred to elsewhere on the agenda.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**List of Appendices:**

None

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 state that an authority must amend its standing orders so that decisions in relation to dismissal of certain statutory officers must be considered by full Council, following a recommendation from an independent Panel.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 The proposals are in accordance with statutory procedures in relation to the dismissal of the Head of the Authority's Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 Consideration will need to be given as to whether the persons appointed to the Panel will receive any additional allowance. This would be met from the Members' Allowances Scheme.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 Adoption of the procedures will ensure that the authority complies with legislation in cases of dismissal.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Consultation has taken place with the three independent persons who currently support the Standards framework and the Standards Committee and they are willing to serve on the Panel.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	8 July 2015

## EXECUTIVE, AUDIT COMMITTEE AND COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPORTS TO COUNCIL

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider proposed changes to the Council’s Procedural Standing Orders on Executive, Audit Committee and Combined Fire Authority reports to Council.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To adopt a revised a procedural standing order for Council meetings to replace Council Procedural Standing Order 10 as attached at Appendix 11(a) to the report.
- 2.2 To reaffirm the processes for holding the Executive to account through the challenge of corporate, policy and strategic matters at Council and the performance of Executive and Cabinet Member areas of responsibility through the scrutiny process.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To take account of the new Executive and scrutiny structures and to ensure that the Executive is held to account at the appropriate levels.

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:

One option is to remain with the current reporting procedure or adopt an alternative.

#### **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 Following the recent restructure of the Executive and Cabinet Member areas of responsibility, it is considered appropriate to review how Executive reports are submitted to Council and how Executive Members are held to account.

- 5.2 The full Council has responsibility for corporate, policy and strategic matters and as such it is proposed that Executive Members are held to account at the Council meeting in these areas. More recently, there have been written responses to questions raised at Council relating to ward issues or where detailed technical information, which is not always readily known by the Executive Members, has been requested. This information is available through other channels and can be provided within a normal enquiry route to officers or Cabinet Members, without the need for time to be spent on these issues at Council meetings.

#### **5.3 Proposals**

In view of the above, it is proposed that Executive Member reporting at Council meetings, should comprise three Executive reports to Council at a senior level on corporate, policy and strategic matters. These would be presented by the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader and the Cabinet Secretary and which would cover the full range of Executive functions and would encourage question and comments of a corporate, policy or strategic nature.

- 5.4 The proposals also include provision for the Chairman of the Audit Committee to report to Council on an annual basis in a similar way to Senior Executive Members. This is in line with the revised powers and duties of the Audit Committee that were agreed at the Annual Council meeting on 22 May 2015.
- 5.5 The proposals for reports from the Combined Fire Authority representatives are in line with current practice and the process for operating would operate similar to the Chairman of the Audit Committee.
- 5.6 At Annual Council on 22 May, it was agreed that the two scrutiny committees would have an enhanced performance management focus around the two proposed Council priorities. This will help direct resources and ensure that targets are met. It is therefore expected that the members on the two scrutiny committees will hold the relevant Executive Members to account on the targets and performance within their areas of responsibility at each meeting.

5.7 The arrangements set out above, would mean that the process for holding Executive Members to account is strengthened through the challenge of corporate, policy and strategic matters at Council and the performance of their areas of responsibility through the scrutiny process.

5.8 A revised procedural standing order is attached at Appendix 11(a), which gives further details of how the reporting process would operate at Council.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 11(a) – Draft revised Procedural Standing Order

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 Any changes to the Constitution require Council approval.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The proposals ensure that Executive Members are held to account at the right level.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 One of the Council's values is accountability and these proposals help enforce this principle.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None



**Procedural Standing Order – Revised Number 10.**

**10. Executive Member and other Member reports to Council**

- 10.1 At each ordinary meeting of the Council, the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Secretary (Senior Executive Member) shall present a report to the Council. These reports will cover corporate, policy and strategic issues in their areas of responsibility.
- 10.2 On a twice a year basis, at an ordinary meeting of Council, consideration will be given to a report from the Council appointed representatives from the Combined Fire Authority. On an annual basis, the Chairman of the Council's Audit Committee will also present a report to Council on the work of that Committee.
- 10.3 Each Senior Executive Member, a nominated Fire Authority representative and the Chairman of Audit Committee will have a maximum of three minutes to present their report to the Council. The Mayor (or other person presiding) will then ask for questions and comments on each report. A period of not more than 15 minutes shall be allowed for oral questions or comments from members(including those from other Cabinet Members) on each report, at the expiry of which the persons set out above, shall be given a period of not more than ten minutes to answer. The Senior Executive Members may also request additional information from the Cabinet Members within their areas of responsibility or for Cabinet Members to respond on their behalf within the ten minute period.
- 10.4 With regard to the Senior Executive Member reports, questions and comments should relate to any corporate, policy or strategic issue within their portfolio. Questions of a ward specific, technical or purely operational nature may be disallowed by the Mayor, or the Senior Executive Member to whom such a question is directed may decline to answer or state that a written answer will be provided.
- 10.5 In deciding whether a question is ward specific, technical or operational in nature, as opposed to a matter of general policy, the Mayor and members shall have regard to any guidance issued by the Monitoring Officer.

- 10.6 In connection with the Combined Fire Authority representative or the Chairman of the Audit Committee, questions will be permitted on any area of their reports or of their responsibility.
- 10.7 No supplementary questions/ comments shall be permitted after the response has been given.
- 10.8 In the absence of a Senior Executive Member, the Leader of the Council will appoint another Executive Member to deliver the report and respond to questions/ comments.
- 10.9 A response may be given as set out in Procedural Standing Order 11.3.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	8 July 2015

## POLITICAL ASSISTANTS

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To consider the principle of political groups appointing political assistants within the framework of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and if agreed, to outline the arrangements for appointment of political assistants should any group decide to appoint one.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 To consider whether to approve the principle of appointing political assistants within the framework of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, or not. (Agreement to the principle would not commit the Groups, or in effect the Group Leaders, to making appointments, but would establish the framework within which such appointments could be made).

2.2 To agree that should the principle stated above at 2.1 be approved then one post be allocated each to the Labour and Conservative Groups and the procedure at paragraph 5.6 be followed, should a group wish to make an appointment.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 The Leader of the Council has asked that, as it is the start of a new term of office for the Council, then consideration be given by Council to such appointments.

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 options to be considered:

3.3.1 None – the Council is asked to consider whether it wishes to agree the ‘principle’ of appointing political assistants or not. There are no other options.

#### **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 Under section 9 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, a local authority may appoint assistants for political groups, subject to specific conditions including their remuneration. The key features of this statutory provision are as follows:

- the appointment is described as being “for the purpose of providing assistance, in the discharge of any of their functions as members of a relevant authority, to the members of any political group to which members of the authority belong”;
- any Council may have only three such posts at any given time, but appointments can only be made if posts are allocated to all of the groups who qualify (for Blackpool only two posts could be created);
- to qualify, a group must have at least one tenth of the total membership of the authority;
- the posts are fixed term and run until the Annual Meeting following an election (i.e. approximately four years); and
- the level of remuneration is controlled by law.

5.2 If an appointment to the post of a political assistant is made then the existence of the post is subject to continued endorsement by the Council, although in many instances this is achieved by the Council resolving to automatically renew the post (and in effect the appointment), unless the Council reviews the principle, or the entitlement of the particular group ceases. This approach is recommended.

5.3 There is no single job description for a political assistant, since councils and political groups vary greatly in their approach to the support they seek from an assistant. Common roles include:

- Researching and analysing information on behalf of the group.
- Preparing reports and attending meetings of the political group and undertaking follow up action.
- Drafting briefing notes/ policies for the group leader on new and emerging initiatives.
- Liaison with national party and party leadership
- Liaison with local and national bodies – e.g. LGA (specifically the relevant political group on the LGA), other Councils and their political groups,

government bodies (and relevant party contacts) and other networks.

- Liaison with local MPs and MEPs.
- Liaison with officers.
- Representing the group or the group leader, at relevant meetings within both the Council and external to the Council.
- Deals with the media on behalf of the group (when required).

5.4 Various types of council across the political spectrum have chosen to appoint political assistants since the 1989 Act came into force.

5.5 An appointment of a political assistant is dependent on the Council passing a resolution in support of the principle of appointing political assistants.

5.6 If the Council approves the principle of the appointment of political assistants, then the following procedural arrangements would apply:

- The relevant group leader would formally advise the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services that the group seek the appointment of a political assistant (this may be shortly after the Council meeting, or at some stage in the future).
- The appointment of a political assistant would be made by a panel comprising the relevant group leader together with a small number of councillors from the political group. The Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Governance and Regulatory Services (or nominee) would attend at and advise the appointments panel to ensure that proper recruitment procedures are followed.
- The appointment of any political assistant to run to the annual meeting of the Council after each election year (next one being 2019), such appointment to be automatically renewed so long as the relevant group remains entitled to the services of a political assistant, or until the principle of appointing political assistants is changed by Council (as set out in paragraph 5.2 above).
- That the remuneration for the positions be as set out in paragraphs 6.1 and 7.1.

5.7 Many councils employ political assistants within the framework of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to support groups across the political spectrum. Such assistants work directly for the political groups, rather than as mainstream officers within the officer structure of the council.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

None.

## **6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 Section 9 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the provisions for appointment of political assistants. The Local Government (Assistants for Political Groups) (Remuneration) (England) Order 2006 set out the maximum amount for remuneration of a political assistant post which is £34,986. In February 2008, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) undertook a consultation, which recommended that the remuneration be set at spinal column point 49 of the pay scale (similar at that time to the maximum amount). This would mean that the pay ceiling would then increase with inflation rises to pay. The results to this consultation supported this proposal and the DCLG indicated that an order would be made to bring effect to this, but no order was ever made and so the fixed amount remains. It is suggested that should legislation change then the Deputy Chief Executive review and determine the pay level for the position, taking into account the proposals and levels from other Councils and comparable positions.

## **7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 These are unique posts and have a set maximum salary, which has not changed since 2006. Research orientated posts, in local government are normally paid at a higher than the maximum salary and many councils have also fixed the salary at the maximum level. Therefore, if Council is minded to agree to the establishment of such posts, it is recommended that it is at the maximum salary as prescribed by legislation. If legislation changes then the Deputy Chief Executive would assess the posts, as suggested in paragraph 6.1.

7.2 As the appointment of political assistants is associated with the entitlement of the relevant political group to have such assistance and the employee is specifically linked to a particular group, should the political composition of the council change to bring them below 10% of the membership, the assistant's employment would be terminated, subject to any accrued rights in employment law.

7.3 The Executive and the Opposition Group currently have administrative support and these proposals would not change this. If the political assistant posts are created then they would be responsible on a day-to-day basis to the relevant Group Leader but on a line management basis to the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services.

## **8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 There are no specific equalities issues associated with this report.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 Provision for each post would come to £43,000 (including on costs) and can be met from the existing contingency budget.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	8 July 2015

## REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to a full review of the Members Allowances scheme, undertaken following an all-out local election.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 To consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, as set out at Appendix 13(a).

2.2 That subject to the decision of Council, the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services be authorised to update the Members' Allowances Scheme accordingly (if necessary).

2.3 That the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services be authorised to advertise for two additional members of the Independent Remuneration Panel following the vacancy indicated at paragraph 5.3 below and to liaise with the two Group Leaders in undertaking this recruitment and then to make recommendations to Council. The criteria for appointment being the same as previously applied.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 The Independent Remuneration panel has a duty to undertake a full review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and this report is presented following the all out local elections every four years. The Council has a duty to consider the recommendations of the Panel but may make its own decisions.

### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel was formed by the Council in 2001 and has a duty to provide the Council with recommendations on its scheme of members' allowances and amounts to be paid.

5.2 The Panel's terms of reference are to consider and make recommendations to the Council on the following:

**basic allowance** – the amount to be paid to all members of the Council.

**special responsibility allowance** – the roles for which this allowance should be paid and the levels of the allowance in each case.

**travel and subsistence allowance** – the duties for which this allowance should be paid and the amount.

**co-optees allowance** – whether this allowance should be paid and at what level.

**childcare and dependent carer’s allowance** – whether this allowance should be paid, at what level and how it should be calculated.

**backdating allowances** – whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of the financial year in the event of the scheme being amended.

**annual adjustment of allowances** – whether annual adjustments may be made by reference to an index, and, if so, how long such a measure should run.

5.3 The Panel has met on six occasions and has also met with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition Group in undertaking its review. Attached at Appendix 13(a) is the report of the Panel, including its recommendations.

5.4 Following the sad death of a previous panel member Mr Morris and the wish to add an extra person to the Panel in line with many other Panels, Council is asked to authorise the recruitment of two additional panel members.

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 13(a) – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 The Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent regulations set out the process to establish and maintain a Members Allowances scheme. The Independent Remuneration Panel appointed under that legislation has a duty to provide the Council with recommendations on its scheme of members’ allowances and amounts to be paid. The current Members Allowances Scheme is part of the Council’s Constitution at this link. <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/The-Council/Council-constitution-and-plans/Council-constitution.aspx>

6.2 If Council wished to agree to the recommendation for the payment of non-executive company chairmen and other non-executive directors, then the Chief Executive on behalf of the Council would need to instigate a process to make the changes (where necessary) to the articles of association of the companies.

**7.0 Equalities Considerations**

7.1 One of the roles of the Independent Remuneration Panel under the Local Government Act 2000 and associated legislation is to recommend what it considers fair and appropriate allowances in relation to levels paid to members working in comparable authorities.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 If the proposals of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to the Members' Allowances Scheme were agreed in full then this would amount to an extra £167,000 (in addition to the current budget of £507,000) which can be met from the contingency budget. If the proposals relating to payments for non-executive chairmen and other non-executive directors on the Council's wholly owned companies were to be implemented then the costs for these would come from the companies themselves.

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Report of: The Independent Remuneration Panel

To: Blackpool Council on 8 July 2015

## Review of the Members' Allowances Scheme

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel to advise the Council on the adoption of a scheme of members' allowances.
- 1.2 We have met on six occasions since November 2014 to undertake a full review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and have met with both the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition Group.
- 1.3 We sadly noted at our first meeting that the previous fourth Independent Panel member, Mr Philip Morris, had passed away since we had last met and placed on record our condolences.

### 2. Methodology

- 2.1 We were supplied with the following information to assist us in our work:
  - The Government's Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances published in July 2003
  - The Council's current Members' Allowances Scheme
  - A chart outlining the Council's political management structure
  - A calendar of meetings for 2015/2016
  - Research on levels of from unitary councils in the North of England and in the former Audit Commission Group of Councils (mainly seaside towns)
  - Details of Executive responsibilities of the Cabinet Members.
  - National Federation of ALMO Board Member Remuneration Survey 2010
- 2.2 We also met with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition to seek their views on the level of allowances.
- 2.3 The Director of Governance and Regulatory Services and the Head of Democratic Governance attended various meetings to answer questions from the Panel.

### 3. Basic principles – the overall Allowances Scheme

- 3.1 In undertaking the review of the Scheme, we were aware of and had regard to the following:
  - (a) That when the Scheme had originally been developed, the basic allowance for members had been used as a basis for determining the proportionate levels of special responsibility allowances. We acknowledged though that with mid-term reviews and different decisions by Council on our recommendations; that a review of how this was calculated needed to be undertaken.
  - (b) That following the local elections in May 2015, there had been some changes to the Council's Executive and committee structures, prompting some review to positions, the introduction of new positions and changes in committees.

- (c) The comments made by the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition at the Panel meeting in February 2015 that the Council's levels of basic allowance and special responsibility allowances were in their view, well below the unitary authority average. They also explained the reasons for this and acknowledged the Council's position when it made these decisions.
- (d) That overall, for various reasons, allowance levels in other comparable authorities had risen at a higher percentage rate than those in Blackpool's Allowances Scheme since 2007.
- (e) That the special responsibility allowance for Executive Members in particular was significantly lower than the unitary average and levels in comparable authorities.
- (f) That in many comparable schemes, the ICT allowance and the telephone allowance were now considered as part of the basic allowance and were not paid separately and we believed this should be the case for Blackpool's scheme.

#### **4. Ways of calculating allowances**

- 4.1 We wished to revisit the rationale for Blackpool's scheme and consider the way in which allowances were calculated and also consider certain appropriate comparatives. We looked at a number of councils and liked in particular a formula (used by some councils) based on hours worked per week and an average wage per week with a percentage deduction for public service.
- 4.2 We noted that a Members Survey in 2013 (completed by 40 out of 42 councillors) had determined that Blackpool councillors worked on average 25 hours per week. We recollected that in 2008 the national average for unitary councils had been 29 hours per week, so we accepted this as a workable figure. We saw other councils who had used average wages as part of a formula, but when we tried this approach we felt that the outcome was a figure not reflective of an average allowance (i.e. it brought out too high a figure). We noted though that there was a push for a living wage in Blackpool and considered that this figure may help provide a workable formula, together with a percentage deduction for public service.
- 4.3 We came up with the following formula:  
Living wage (£7.85 per hour) @25 hours per week, less approximately 12% for public service.
- 4.4 To test this figure we worked out the average basic allowance for all unitary councils in the north of England together with those in the former audit commission family group. This equated to £9,734 and the formula gave a figure of £9,000 (approx). We therefore decided that £9,000 was a fair basic allowance for Blackpool councillors and we could use this figure to help determine other special responsibility allowances.
- 4.5 We then took some common positions and worked out other formula based against our understanding of the level of the responsibilities for those positions (and similar formula used elsewhere), to compare against an average from the northern unitary councils, together with the former audit commission family group councils and these figures are shown in the table overleaf. Similar comparative data from a CiPFA benchmarking exercise with over 30 unitaries had come out with figures comparable to the northern unitaries average.
- 4.6 We believed that these calculations would give a proportionate figure for Blackpool allowances and the formula would 'test' the weight to be applied to the average figure from the comparable authorities.

**Appendix 13(a)**

	<b>Formula</b>	<b>Formula outcome/ recommended allowance for each position</b>	<b>Average Northern Unitaries plus former Audit Commission Family Group councils (if available)</b>
<b>Basic allowance</b>	Living wage (£7.85 per hour) @25 hours per week, less approximately 12% for public service	£10,205 less approx.12% = <b>£9,000 (rounded)</b>	<b>£9,734</b>
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	3 x basic	<b>£27,000</b>	<b>£27,053</b>
<b>Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Secretary</b>	60% of Leader of the Council	<b>£16,200</b>	<b>£17,867</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	45% of Leader of the Council	<b>£12,150</b>	<b>£13,000</b>
<b>Cabinet Assistant</b>	Same as Vice Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees – as per previous rationale	<b>£4,500</b>	Not enough information available to find an average
<b>Chairman of Scrutiny Committee</b>	1 x basic	<b>£9,000</b>	Many variations on how scrutiny committees operate – therefore no clear average to compare
<b>Vice-Chairman of Scrutiny Committee</b>	50% of Chairman of Scrutiny Committee	<b>£4,500</b>	As immediately above
<b>Chairman: Planning, Licensing, Appeals and Audit committees</b>	0.8 x basic	<b>£7,200</b>	<b>Chairman of Planning - £7,619 , Chairman of Licensing - £7,021</b> Variations on makeup of other committees – therefore no average for those
<b>Vice-Chairman: Planning, Licensing, Appeals and Audit committees</b>	50% of Chairman of Committees	<b>£3,600</b>	As immediately above
<b>Leader of Principal Opposition</b>	Same as Cabinet Member	<b>£12,150</b>	Many councils paid an allowance the same as a cabinet member, others used size of group as a factor to determine an allowance
<b>Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition</b>	50% of Leader of Principal Opposition	<b>£6,075</b>	As immediately above
<b>Mayor</b>	1 and a half x basic	<b>£13,500</b>	<b>£13,911</b>
<b>Deputy Mayor</b>	25% of Mayor	<b>£3,375</b>	<b>£3,374</b>
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Officers Employment Committee, Standards Committee – continue with no allowance for Chairman and Vice-Chairman</li> <li>• The recommended special responsibility allowances (SRA) for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Licensing Committee reflects that the person is expected to chair / vice-chair the Public Protection Sub-Committee – recommend therefore Public Protection SRA is removed from the scheme.</li> </ul>			

**5. Levels of basic and special responsibility allowances**

- 5.1 The Panel noted that the data showed significant ‘slippage’ in that Blackpool’s level of basic and special responsibility allowances fell behind the unitary average and those in comparable authorities. Given this and the comments from members, we feel that it was important to increase these allowance levels to a level that was comparable with these authorities, before further slippage occurred. Our proposal for an increase in basic allowance (inc IT and telephone) is 21% and this still brings it below the average for comparable northern unitary councils.
- 5.2 We felt that there were two key factors which had compounded this large difference. In 2007 we had recommended a 6% increase to basic and special allowances which was declined when considered by Council. At the full review of the members allowances scheme four years later in 2011, we recommended a 0% increase in basic and special allowances and the Council not only agreed this, but deducted a further 5% from all the special responsibility allowances. This meant now that Blackpool’s allowances were significantly behind the average for unitary councils. In our view this has heightened the problem of the now widening gap between Blackpool Council allowances and those of comparable unitary councils.
- 5.3 The reasons for these decisions as shared with us by the Leader of the Council and by the Leader of the Opposition were described as being ‘political’ and were taken to reflect the times of austerity and cutbacks. We do appreciate this. However, we also understand that our role is to undertake detailed research and compare against comparable authorities and recommend what we believe is a fair scheme of allowances. We are of the view that more decisions of the type described, from 2007 and 2011, would worsen the problem and that is why we are now recommending what we believe are suitable allowances for Blackpool councillors.
- 5.4 We were also informed by both the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition that there had been eight by elections between 2012 and 2014 due to three councillors standing down due to work commitments and the other five sadly due to those councillors passing away. The two Group Leaders also informed us prior to the election that they were struggling to recruit candidates to stand in the election, from a spectrum of ages and backgrounds. We were told that it did tend to fall to those with the time (e.g. retired, self-employed, or those with an understanding employer).
- 5.5 We totally understand that the allowances are not a salary. However, we do believe that if the allowances were at a fair level then this would help attract a more diverse range of candidates at election time and help strengthen the representative role of a councillor on the Council. It was commented that particularly more women and younger people (at least under 40 years of age) were groups under represented on the Council.
- 5.6 We also noted that since the last full review of the allowances scheme, national legislation had now stopped Councils contributing to a councillor pension scheme, thereby adding further pressure to the allowances and reducing the entitlement to councillors.
- 5.7 We first met in November 2014 to undertake this full review and debated at length about whether we should put forward recommendations which were reflective of the average for comparable unitary councils or just review key positions as there seemed previously to be no appetite to increase the allowances by the Councils, due to financial pressures. However, we were of the opinion that our role was to determine the relevant allowances for Blackpool and it was for the Council to decide whether to accept them or not. We were also mindful of the fact that Blackpool’s allowances were becoming further and further detached from those of comparable councils. We therefore decided to do a full root and branch review.



**6. Special responsibility allowance for Executive Members**

- 6.1 In 2007, we had recommended that the allowances for cabinet members fell well below the unitary average (Blackpool's then was less than half the national average). We felt that this presented a particular anomaly within Blackpool's scheme, given the responsibility placed on Cabinet Members, including that of individual Executive decision responsibilities, when compared with other authorities. We recommended an 18% increase to allow the gap to be narrowed, but this was turned down. In 2011 we recommended a freeze on this allowance but Council reduced it by further 5%. We noted in our research that Blackpool's cabinet member allowance was the lowest of all the comparable authorities and possibly one of the lowest, for a unitary council in the country. Our recommendation of over 100% increase still would mean that the allowance is below the average for comparable northern unitary councils.
- 6.2 On receiving the list of responsibilities for Executive members we noted that the positions of Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Secretary were at the same level. The Leader of the Council confirmed that he had appointed them on that basis and in his view held comparable responsibilities and duties. We understood that these two positions had been as part of a hierarchical structure within the Executive, to allow the holders of the two positions to act strategically and undertake a leadership role. It was noted that this had worked well at Sunderland Council where this approach had been in place for some time. We also noted that with regard to the seven Cabinet members who had been appointed, that they had differing responsibilities but we agreed that they should receive the same level of allowance each, as had been the case in previous years.

**7. Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group**

- 7.1 We came to the view prior to the election that based on the findings from other comparable Councils, the Leader of the Opposition Group should be at the same level as a Cabinet Member (at present there is not a huge difference) and the Deputy Leader should be also remunerated at an appropriate level. Prior to the election we did consider that the size of the political group may have some bearing on the remuneration paid (as was the case with some councils). However, following the election we finalised our view that the Leader of the Opposition Group's allowance should be at that level, as the group size was over 25% of the Council. This again will give an increase of over 100%, to bring this position in line.

**8. Committee Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Cabinet Assistants**

- 8.1 In previous reviews we had based our recommendation on the fact that for the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen, their allowances were greater than that of other committees as their roles were also important outside of the committee meetings and this was also backed up by examples from other comparable councils. We also noted that the Shadow Cabinet Member role was now also that of the Vice Chairmen of the two scrutiny committees. Accordingly, we considered that the Scrutiny Chairman and Vice Chairman positions should both be at a higher level than the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the other committees.
- 8.2 We also picked up from the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition Group that the scrutiny function was becoming an increasingly important one, with a greater focus on the element of challenge and performance management. We noted that the positions of Cabinet Assistants had been reappointed to and noted that previously these had been given the same level as the Vice Chairmen of the Scrutiny Committees and we agreed that this should continue.

## 9. Civic Mayor

- 9.1 In 2012 we had recommended Council that this position should be remunerated at a lower level and Council agreed that this be the case. Following the research undertaken again this year we have come to the conclusion that it is still on too high a level and recommend a further reduction. However, as it is now some months into this position for the current Mayor and Deputy Mayor and as costs relating to these positions are mainly occurred at the start of the civic year, we recommend that any reduction in allowance takes place from the beginning of the 2016/2017 Municipal Year.

## 10. Other Allowances and Uplifting of Allowances

- 10.1 We considered that the 'other allowances' in the scheme were on the whole correct and made the following recommendations:

**School Appeal Panel members** – remain same

**Area Forum Community Representatives** – remain same (we understand the Area Forums are currently being reviewed and if these positions no longer exist then they would be taken out of the scheme)

**ICT Allowance/ Telephone Allowance** – withdraw as proposals to incorporate these into the proposed basic allowance

**Withholding allowances/ Pensions** – to be taken out of revised scheme due to changes in the law

**Carer's and Dependents Allowance** – to remain the same

**Bus/ Tram Passes** – remain the same

**Car Parking** – remain the same

**Mileage allowances** – adopt casual user staff rates and this can then be uprated when staff rates are (annual uprating in line with NJC pay award therefore will not apply)

**Public and Other Transport** – no change

**Subsistence allowances and overnight subsistence** – remain the same

**Accommodation claims** – remain the same

- 10.2 We were also informed of the Carers and Dependents allowance where it was proposed to have more direct support for councillors with dependents. One suggestion was that through the Council's Adult Services team a list of carer's for young children/ vulnerable adults be kept of those who wished to undertake such work and the councillor pay for a carer to visit the councillor's home. The Panel saw no issue with this and with the councillor then paying the carer and claiming back from their allowance. Following our research we considered that the level of the current allowance for this role was fair. As this proposal had no effect on the scheme and no financial implication to the Council we supported the proposal.
- 10.3 We noted that since the Council had decided to publish third party payments separately, central government had brought in transparency rules which meant that every third party payment of £250 or more was already published through the Council's website. We also noted that it was a very resource orientated job to administer, not least as payments were often consolidated (e.g. cost of conference and overnight accommodation) and these could not be separated to give a realistic value. We therefore could not see any value in continuing with this separate payment schedule as it would not only be duplication but in some instances misleading and incorrect.
- 10.4 We were also informed that additional duties were to be given to Independent Persons on Standards Committees, in relation to the disciplinary and dismissal of certain statutory chief officers. We noted that this duty had only recently been introduced and as Mr Mozley serves as an Independent Person, we were of the view that this should be revisited when this Panel had increased its membership. (Mr Mozley on each occasion this was discussed declared an interest, left the room and took no part in the discussion and consideration of this item).

- 10.5 We recalled that in 2012 Council had asked us to review whether the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Service Pay Award was still appropriate at this full scheme review. From the research and feedback we received we believe that it should be continued.
- 10.6 We also noted that some clarity was required in the list of approved duties to include those events or meetings that were related to official Council duties including those outside of Blackpool. For clarification purposes, we recommend to insert into the schedule an approved duty to state 'Attendance at meetings held outside Blackpool by a councillor in connection with the role for which a special responsibility allowance is paid.' This would give clarity to approvals for example for an Executive member to attend a meeting at County Hall or a scrutiny committee member to attend a Joint Scrutiny Committee at Blackburn. We also recommend the deletion of the current duty in the scheme which indicates that members from different political groups should attend to qualify for an approved duty, as the above proposal would cover that.

## **11. Payments to Company Directors**

- 11.1 We were asked by the Leader of the Council whether there should be payments for the Chairmen of the Board of Directors of the Council's wholly owned companies (where this is a non-executive position) and possibly other non-executive company directors. We noted that in recent years in many Councils, particularly unitary and county councils, more and more functions and services were divested in council 'wholly owned' companies. This allowed those companies to act with some independence and also with greater powers and autonomy over income and business development. We were informed that the Council now had five wholly owned companies, with two being added in the last 12 months.
- 11.2 Under company law, we noted that any company directors can be paid. However, we also noted that the nature of any agreed payment cannot under local government law, be classed as a special responsibility allowance (for members allowances) as they are not special responsibilities in relation to the Council.
- 11.3 We were aware not only of the importance of the roles of Chairmen but also of the non-executive Directors appointed and the position and accountability their roles held. The Council and the companies had also sought to appoint independent directors to the relevant Boards and this had proved difficult given that no remuneration was currently paid for such roles. We noted that one council in particular (Cheshire East) was pursuing a commissioning role and had recently set up a number of companies and was paying both 'council' appointed directors and also independent directors. We believed that this was the right thing to do, although we did consider that the rates of Cheshire East Board members were too high. Instead we looked at Registered Social Landlords and ALMOs as a fairer comparator, giving some recognition of payment for the role and public duty. We noted through research and our own understanding that payments will help attract Board members with specific skills and improve commitment and improve performance of the company.
- 11.4 Taking these factors into account we recommend that there is the same payment for a non-executive chairman across all 5 companies (£2,500 per annum) and the same payment for other non-executive directors (£1,000 per annum). This is acknowledging the level of responsibility required with some deduction for public service. To also note that this is outside of the Members Allowances Scheme and councillors would therefore qualify for payment. We would also suggest these payments be uplifted in line with the National Joint Council for Local Government Pay award.

**12. Recommendations to Council**

- 12.1 That the basic allowance for members should be set at £9,000 per annum and backdated to the start of the current municipal year.
- 12.2 That the special responsibility allowances for members should be as set out in the table following paragraph 4.6 of this report and commence from the current date of appointment for the councillor concerned (except for the positions of Civic Mayor and Deputy Mayor).
- 12.3 That the special responsibility allowances for the Civic Mayor and Deputy Mayor should remain at their current level for the rest of this Municipal year, but be as set out in the table following paragraph 4.6 of this report from the date of the annual meeting in 2016.
- 12.4 That the 'other' allowances as set out within the scheme should be set as recommended at paragraph 10.1 and if the disestablishment of the Area Forums is agreed then the allowances for the Area Forum Community Representatives cease, at a time indicated by Council.
- 12.5 That the telephone and ICT allowances not continue as they would now be incorporated into the revised basic allowance.
- 12.6 That no separate allowance be paid to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Public Protection Sub Committee as these have historically been the same Chairman and Vice Chairman as that for the Licensing Committee. Accordingly these positions should be withdrawn from the scheme.
- 12.7 That in relation to mileage allowances, the rate for members should be the same as staff rates and uprated at the same time when staff rates are amended (annual uprating in line with NJC pay award therefore will not apply).
- 12.8 That for clarification purposes an approved duty can also be 'Attendance at meetings held outside Blackpool by a councillor in connection with the role for which a special responsibility allowance is paid', as stated in paragraph 10.6).
- 12.9 That the requirement to publish third party payments separately should be discontinued for the reasons set out in paragraph 10.3.
- 12.10 That the annual uprating to be applied to the Members Allowances scheme continue to be in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Service pay award.
- 12.11 That the Council notes that a review of payments to independent persons that support the standards framework should be undertaken at a future meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 12.12 That in relation to the five wholly owned Council companies, we suggest that the non-executive chairmen should be paid £2,500 per annum and that other non-executive directors on each company should be paid £1,000 per annum, these payments to be uplifted in line with the National Joint Council for Local Government Service Pay award on 1 April each year. This would acknowledge the level of responsibility required with some deduction for public service. We would also offer to review this in 12 months' time should it be required.

Mr P Whitehead, (Chairman) – Managing Director, Windmill Holdings Limited  
Mr A R Mozley – Retired Secondary Teacher  
Mrs B Parker JP – Retired Magistrate