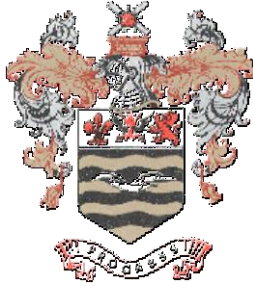


# Public Document Pack



## BLACKPOOL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 12 January 2016

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, 20 January 2016 commencing at 6.00 pm for the transaction of the business specified below.



Director of Governance and Regulatory Services

### **Business**

#### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

- (1) the type of interest concerned; and
- (2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

#### **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2015** (Pages 1 - 8)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 25 November 2015 as a true and correct record.

#### **3 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive official announcements from the Mayor.

**4 PUBLIC REPRESENTATION** (Pages 9 - 10)

To receive a representation from Mr Higgins, a spokesperson for the Blackpool Supporters Trust, in accordance with Procedure Rule 9 and a response from Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council.

**5 EXECUTIVE REPORTS TO COUNCIL** (Pages 11 - 34)

To consider the attached reports to Council from the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs) and the Cabinet Secretary (Resilient Communities).

Members are reminded that:

- Each Senior Executive Member has up to three minutes to present their report, after which there will be a period of no longer than 15 minutes per report for questions/comments (a green card will give a one minute warning, red for the end of the debate).
- There will be three minutes per question/ comment from any Councillor on anything within the portfolio and no limit to the number of times a Councillor can ask a question.
- There will be a period of up to ten minutes for a response from the Senior Executive Member (or relevant Cabinet Member) at the end of the questions/ comments for each report.

**6 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2016/ 2017** (Pages 35 - 46)

To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 7 December 2015 relating to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

**7 BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN PART 1: CORE STRATEGY** (Pages 47 - 50)

To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 18 January 2016 relating to the adoption of the Core Strategy.

**8 WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2016/ 2020** (Pages 51 - 54)

To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 18 January 2016 relating to the Workforce Strategy 2016/ 2020.

**9 LOCAL AUTHORITY DECLARATION ON HEALTHY WEIGHT** (Pages 55 - 58)

To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 18 January 2016 relating to the Local Authority's Declaration on Healthy Weight.

## 10 MAYOR ELECT FOR 2016/ 2017

To determine who should be invited to offer themselves for election as Mayor at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 16 May 2016 and agree that the meeting commence at 2.00pm, as it has in previous years.

**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 Advisor, 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:**

Councillor Callow (in the Chair)

### Councillors

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

### **In Attendance:**

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Alan Cavill, Director of Place

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

Adam Ogden, Communications Officer

## **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Blackburn and Campbell declared prejudicial interests in agenda item 11a 'Notice of Motion: Homeless Organisations in Blackpool' as both were employed by Bay Housing Association.

Councillors Critchley, Hutton and L Taylor declared personal interests in agenda item 11b 'Notice of Motion: Blackpool Tenants Right to Buy' as Council appointed non-Executive Directors of Blackpool Coastal Housing Ltd.

Councillor G Coleman declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 'Executive Member Report from the Leader of the Council' as he was a licensed taxi driver.

## **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 September 2015 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2015

### 3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor informed the Council that agenda item 11b 'Notice of Motion: Blackpool Tenants Right to Buy' would be considered prior to agenda item 11a. There were no other announcements on this occasion.

### 4 EXECUTIVE REPORTS TO COUNCIL

The Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Secretary presented reports to the Council on work undertaken in their own portfolio area and those portfolios under their responsibility.

The reports covered corporate, strategic and policy issues, together with work being undertaken in transforming services and with partners.

Questions, comments and debate were invited from all councillors on each of the report areas.

Notes:

- (1) Councillor Stansfield joined the meeting following consideration of the report from the Leader of the Council.
- (2) During debate on the report from the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Council agreed to extend the time limit for speeches by an additional three minutes.
- (3) In response to questions from members, Councillor Campbell agreed to provide a response for:
  - Councillor Clapham on the monetary value of contracts awarded to suppliers from both within and outside of the Borough.
  - Councillor Galley on whether the team enforcing the Public Space Protection Orders would also enforce Fixed Penalty Notices for littering.
  - Councillor Mrs Callow on whether the proposed introduction of a motorhome parking area at the top of Princes Way (Anchorsholme) would negatively affect bathing water quality.
  - Councillor Clapham to clarify the criterion and the number of high value properties that may be required for sale under proposals set out in the Housing and Planning Bill.
  - Councillor T Williams on the number of responses that had been received following the recent consultation on library opening hours.
  - Councillor Mrs Callow on the sale price for the Westgate House site and to Councillor T Williams on details of the purchase and whether the site would provide employment opportunities for Blackpool residents.
  - Councillor Mrs Callow on the age groups of those residents that had been identified as struggling with literacy and to Councillor T Williams on how they had been identified.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2015

### 5 STATEMENT OF POLICY AND PRINCIPLES UNDER THE GAMBLING ACT 2005

Members considered the recommendations from the Executive in relation to proposals for the revised Statement of Licensing Policy under the Gambling Act 2005. It was reported that a period of consultation had been undertaken and that the revised policy would be published as required, before it came into effect on 31 January 2016.

**Motion:** Councillor Campbell proposed (and Councillor Hutton seconded):

‘To approve the revised Statement of Policy and Principles under the Gambling Act 2005, as recommended by the Executive.’

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

### 6 COUNCIL PLAN 2015/ 2020

Members considered the recommendations from the Executive relating to the proposed Council Plan for 2015-2020, which set out the strategic direction for the Council and how it would improve the lives of local people as well as measuring progress.

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

‘To approve the Council Plan 2015/ 2020, as recommended by the Executive.’

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

### 7 GOVERNANCE REVIEW - COMBINED AUTHORITY

The Council received a report on the governance review that had been undertaken to explore ways to develop collaborative working across Lancashire Councils on economic related matters.

It was noted that the review contained a number of ambitions for Lancashire relating to investment in the area and co-ordinated infrastructure planning and housing provision. Members also noted that a number of governance options had been considered and that the Lancashire Leaders, at their meeting on 1 September 2015, had considered the principle of a Combined Authority as the preferred vehicle for collaborative working.

Members were aware that a Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill was currently going through the parliamentary process which aimed to broaden the scope of functions and powers that it was possible to confer on a Combined Authority.

Members noted that a six week consultation period with key stakeholders was proposed to take place in January / February 2016 and that a further meeting of the Lancashire Leaders would also take place, following which those authorities that wished to form part of the Combined Authority would submit a proposal to the Secretary of State for consideration. The Leader of the Council commented that the same report and recommendations were being considered by the other local authorities in Lancashire during November/December.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2015

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

- ‘1. To note the contents of this report.
2. To note the contents of the Lancashire Governance Review and recommendation therein.
3. To note the contents of the draft Scheme for a Combined Authority.
4. To agree to take part in the public consultation in January/ February 2016, which will seek views on the formation of a Combined Authority for Lancashire.
5. To agree to consider the feedback from the public consultation and note that following this, those authorities who wish to form a Lancashire Combined Authority will submit a proposal to the Secretary of State for consideration.
6. To agree that delegated authority be given to the Executive to give due consideration to the public consultation and the authority to agree in principle should it wish to, that Blackpool Council becomes a constituent member of a Lancashire Combined Authority (subject to ratification by the Council).
7. That at the Council’s meeting on 9 March 2016 final consideration to be given to becoming a constituent member of a Lancashire Combined Authority.’

**Amendment:** Councillor Mrs Callow then proposed (and Councillor Williams seconded) the following amendment:

‘That the matter be deferred to allow for debate to take place at a members’ briefing’.

Following debate on the amendment and prior to voting, five members of the Council requested that the vote on the amendment be recorded. The voting was as follows:

### Recorded vote on the amendment

**For the amendment:** Councillors Brown, Mrs Callow, Clapham, Cox, Galley, Maycock, Roberts, Robertson, Scott, Stansfield, T Williams - **total 11.**

**Against the amendment:** Councillors Benson, Blackburn, Cain, Campbell, D Coleman, G Coleman, Collett, Critchley, Cross, Humphreys, Hunter, Hutton, Jackson, Jones, Kirkland, Matthews, Mitchell, O’Hara, Owen, Ryan, Singleton, Smith, I Taylor, L Taylor, L Williams, Wright - **total 26.**

**Abstentions:** Councillor Callow - **total 1.**

**Amendment lost:** The amendment was therefore lost.



## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2015

Debate then took place on the original motion and prior to voting, five members of the Council requested that the vote on the original motion be recorded. The voting was as follows:

### Recorded vote on the original motion

**For the original motion:** Councillors Benson, Blackburn, Cain, Campbell, D Coleman, G Coleman, Collett, Critchley, Cross, Humphreys, Hunter, Hutton, Jackson, Jones, Kirkland, Matthews, Mitchell, O'Hara, Owen, Ryan, Singleton, Smith, I Taylor, L Taylor, L Williams, Wright - **total 26.**

**Against the original motion:** Councillors Brown, Mrs Callow, Clapham, Cox, Galley, Maycock, Roberts, Robertson, Scott, Stansfield, T Williams - **total 11.**

**Abstentions:** Councillor Callow - **total 1.**

**Motion carried:** The original motion was therefore carried.

## **8 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL AND STANDARDS INDEPENDENT PERSONS APPOINTMENTS**

The Council considered proposals for the appointment of two persons to the Independent Remuneration Panel and noted that interviews had been held with applicants, following which consultation had also been undertaken the political Group Leaders.

Members also noted that the terms of office of the three Independent Persons appointed under the Localism Act 2011 in relation to the standards regime, were due to end on 31 January 2016. It was reported that although there was no requirement to advertise the positions, it was proposed that in line with good practice, these appointments be re-advertised and that the current Independent Persons continue until 1 June 2016 unless the recruitment process was concluded in the meantime.

The Council went on to consider proposals in relation payment of non-executive directors and noted that although the principle of paying non-executive directors of wholly owned companies had been agreed by Council, the Transport Act 1985 precluded Blackpool Transport Services Limited from paying councillors direct for acting as a Director. It was proposed therefore for the payment to be agreed as an additional member allowance to those councillors that held the position in order to bring parity with other Council owned companies.

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

- '1. To agree to appoint Mr H Evans and Mrs H Hockenhill as additional Independent Remuneration Panel members.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2015

2. To agree to extend the term of office for Mr A Mozley, Mr B Horrocks and Mr R Ellwood as statutory independent persons pursuant to Section 28 (7) of the Localism Act 2011 until 1 June 2016 or a lesser period (agreed by Council), subject to the successful conclusion of the recruitment process and to note that any new appointees and re-appointments will be subject to Council approval.
3. To agree that the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme be amended to bring effect to the decision of Council on 8 July 2015 as set out in paragraphs 5.8 and 5.9 of the report.'

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

### 9 HONORARY ALDERMEN

Members received proposals for the title of Honorary Alderman to be conferred on persons who had rendered eminent services to the borough. It was recommended that the criteria for the title would be a minimum 15 years' service as a councillor and would only apply to those persons who had stood down from the Council, unless exceptional circumstances prevailed as detailed in the report.

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

- '1. To agree to adopt the award of Honorary Alderman of the Borough under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and agree the process and criteria as set out in section 5 of the report.
2. That invitations be extended to former Councillors Henry Mitchell, Val Haynes, Sylvia Taylor, Peter Evans, Joyce Delves and Brian Doherty to attend a special meeting of the Council in May 2016 to be awarded the title of Honorary Alderman.
3. That the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services be requested to arrange a Special meeting of Council in May 2016.'

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

### 10 CHIEF OFFICERS

Members considered the recommendations from the Chief Officers' Employment Committee meeting held on 16 November 2015 and in doing so noted that the Committee had agreed an updated senior management structure following a review from the Hay group but that a number of recommendations required Council approval, in line with the Pay Policy Statement and constitutional requirements.

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

- '1. That the current grade range of the Chief Executive, agreed by Council in July 2011, be reduced by three spinal column points as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2015

2. To note that the remuneration package for the Director of Public Health has not changed since the transfer to the Council on 1 April 2013.
3. To ratify the remuneration package for the new post of Director of People, as set out in paragraph 5.5 of the report and in line with the Council's Pay Policy Statement.
4. To confirm that Delyth Curtis be designated as statutory Director of Children's Services and Karen Smith statutory Director of Adult Services on a permanent basis.'

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

Note: Prior to consideration of the item, Neil Jack, Chief Executive, left the meeting.

### 11 BLACKPOOL TENANTS' RIGHT TO BUY

**Motion:** Having submitted notice, Councillor T Williams proposed (and Councillor Clapham seconded):

'It is reported this week that over 1000 housing association tenants are signing up each week to buy their homes.

A website dedicated to those who wish to buy has had 5000 individuals sign up in the first month.

Social housing tenants share the same hopes and dreams as everyone else. They live in same towns their children go to the same schools they have the same ambitions for themselves and their families. They should be given the same opportunities if they aspire to own their own homes.

The Government is soon to launch a ground breaking scheme giving all 1.3 million families in rented housing association accommodation properties the right to buy, offering discounts of up to 70% with terms and conditions on re-sales. The cost of the discount will be funded by Central Government.

The scheme will also be supported by a generous home owning ISA savings scheme where the Government will put in £50 for every £200 saved.

The Council is therefore asked to place on record its support for the families living in Blackpool Coastal Housing properties who wish to purchase their own home to actively support this Government scheme and to request Blackpool Coastal Housing to notify each tenant of the website, provide details of the scheme in the Association's newsletters and on the Council's website and that Blackpool Coastal Housing customer service staff are also trained to understand how the scheme works and provide full assistance to those who wish to partake.'

Discussion then took place on the proposed motion.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2015

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

Note: Prior to the item being considered, Councillor Stansfield declared a personal interest as a Council appointed non-executive director of Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited.

### 12 HOMELESS ORGANISATIONS IN BLACKPOOL

**Motion:** Having submitted notice, Councillor T Williams proposed (and Councillor Galley seconded):

‘Homeless organisations in Blackpool depend entirely on charity funding and Housing Benefit. No evidence is currently provided as to the ultimate results in terms of long-term re-homing or social integration.

Whilst it is agreed, they provide a most valuable service they should in fact, if successful in their outcomes, be self liquidating.

Since 2012, this Council has administered over £39 million pounds in Housing Benefit to Housing Associations, Registered Social Landlords and identifiable Landlords. Whilst a large proportion of this public money may be attributed to the Council’s own Blackpool Coastal Housing Association, it must be considered that other separate Homeless organisations are claiming a significant amount on an annual basis.

This Council therefore recommends that the Resilient Communities Scrutiny Committee, sets up a full and thorough scrutiny of the effectiveness of homeless shelters and organisations in Blackpool to ensure that their objectives are being met and that those who need their refuge are being successfully guided into a contributing social environment.

The exercise will also provide additional opportunity for the Council to confirm its commitment in regard to its position in deploying a most responsible position in the distribution of Housing Benefit to these sectors.’

Members then went on to debate the motion.

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

Note: Having declared prejudicial interests, Councillor Blackburn and Campbell left the meeting prior to discussion on the item.

### Mayor

(The meeting ended at 7.42 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)

Council:  
20 January 2016

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## PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

NAME	SUBJECT
1. Mr Andy Higgins (spokesperson for the Blackpool Supporters Trust).	<p>Mr Higgins wishes to speak on the following issue:</p> <p>“As matters on and off the pitch continue to deteriorate and tensions are becoming inflamed within the local community, this is increasingly a matter of grave local concern. The fact that this deteriorating situation is seemingly being actively encouraged by the actions of the club's owners is also something that cannot be ignored.</p> <p>To date relevant stakeholders with an interest in these matters (such as the FA, the Football League, the DCMS, all three local Members of Parliament and Government representatives up to ministerial level) have all expressed concern and a willingness to assist.</p> <p>I believe that the Council needs to show an interest, to get involved and to act in response to these concerns”.</p>

Response to be given by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Simon Blackburn

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

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20 January 2016

**LEADER OF THE COUNCIL –‘CORPORATE’ PORTFOLIO AREA  
COUNCILLOR SIMON BLACKBURN**

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The full details of the portfolio areas can be found on the Council’s website at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Your-councillors/Executive-members.aspx>

## **Corporate Issues**

### **2021 Census**

The Office of National Statistics is currently developing the methodology for the 2021 Census, which will be the first to be carried out online. As part of the preparations, they have combined administrative datasets such as GP registers and tax data to see if this could be used to estimate how many people live in Local Authority areas. They have identified Blackpool as one of a handful of places across the UK where their methodology does not give an accurate estimate.

It is important we get accurate information on our population, for both service planning, but also, as our funding is based on how many people live here. As a result, we have invited the Office of National Statistics to Blackpool to discuss their proposed methods and influence their approach, hoping to avoid the risk that they underestimate our population.

### **Changes to National Insurance rates due to introduction of flat rate State Pension**

A new single tier, flat rate State Pension is being introduced for people who reach State Pension age on or after 6 April 2016.

The new State Pension will replace the existing basic and additional State Pension. Employees who are members of either the LGPS or TPS are currently 'contracted out' of the additional State Pension and therefore receive a rebate on their National Insurance (NI) contributions.

This means that most employees are currently paying a lower amount of NI contributions. From 6 April 2016, they will no longer receive this NI rebate, which means they will start to pay a higher amount of NI contributions, an increase of 1.40 %. Likewise Employers will also no longer benefit from the contracted out rebate and will also see an increase in NI costs, an increase of 3.40%

### **Employee wellbeing**

As budget announcements are made, continuing to try to improve the wellbeing and resilience of our employees is paramount. Supportive measures such as Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Programme and Coping with Pressure Training are all in place. In addition to this,

almost 200 employees attended well-being events during November, participating in activities such as blood pressure checks, BMI checks, massage and benefiting from nutritional, alcohol, smoking and general health awareness.

### **Unpaid Leave**

The staff briefings, which took place across the Council in November, regarding the £20 million savings in 2016/ 2017, highlighted to staff that the proposals assumed that teams would continue to save the equivalent of five days unpaid leave per full time employee. Employees are aware that this is of significant assistance in helping the Council to mitigate the number of job losses as the money saved by employees taking five days unpaid leave is around £1 million and this equates to approximately 30 jobs saved from redundancy per year. Additionally, many staff have come to value the extra unpaid leave over the last few years and some have requested more than five days, which has been allowed where the service is able to accommodate this. The uptake and assistance offered by employees with regard to this scheme is very much appreciated.

### **Financial Monitoring**

The latest financial performance monitoring report for 2015/ 2016 was reported to the Executive on 18 January 2016. As at month 8 in-year pressures prevail in Children's Services, Strategic Leisure Assets and Public Health with estimated working balances forecast to fall by £3,408,000 against the budgeted position over the year. This fall is in the context of working balances at the start of the year of £6,188,000.

The Budget for 2015/ 2016 required total savings to be found of £25.2 million. As at 30 November 2015, 72% of the 2015/ 2016 savings target had already been delivered. The current full-year forecast predicts that 87% will be achieved by the year-end, which takes into account new in-year pressures and savings and work is underway to close this gap further with alternative savings plans.

The full-year effect of the 2015/ 2016 savings in 2016/ 2017 amounts to 85% of the £25.2 million target and reflects the planned replacement of non-recurrent savings such as the £2.5m contribution from earmarked reserves with recurrent savings.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer published the Government's joint Spending Review 2015 and Autumn Statement on 25 November 2015, setting out public expenditure plans for 2016/ 2017 to 2019/ 2020. The Council's Provisional Settlement for 2016/ 2017 was published on 17 December. The specific details and implications of these announcements will be contained within the Council's Revenue Budget 2016/ 2017 report and subsequent refresh of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

### **Benefit Claims, Council Tax and Sundry Debt Collections**

The Council Tax Reduction (CTR) Scheme 2016/ 2017 consultation has now ended, comments and responses have been added to the updated Equality Assessment.



The average days to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction claims and changes in circumstance has improved by six days since the last report and now stands at 25 days for November 2015.

The number of telephone calls received by Customer First reduced slightly to 11,231 during November 2015. This includes repeat calls and 46% of the total number were answered.

In-year council tax collection at the end of November was down by 2.7% when compared to the same point in the previous year (68.8% against 71.5%). Business rates collection was slightly up at 70.1% compared to 69.9% last year.

### **Electoral Services**

The Electoral Register for 2015/ 2016 was published on 1 December 2015 and there was an overall reduction of 2,632 electors, a major factor being the statutory removal of those electors who were unconfirmed after data matching and household canvass follow up. Work is continuing to be undertaken with partnership groups/ charities etc. to raise awareness of the forthcoming Police and Crime Commissioner election and possible referendum and the need to register to vote.

The Electoral Registration Officer is also working closely with colleagues across the Council in ensuring all new electors are registered at first point of contact. The number of postal votes remained static at 26% of the electorate.

### **Strategic Issues**

#### **Discretionary Awards**

The Council recently submitted written evidence in response to the Work and Pensions Select Committee inquiry into the local welfare safety net. The evidence provided comment and information on how Discretionary Housing Payments, Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Local Welfare Provision interact at a local level in Blackpool. The submission was published on the Parliament website and subsequently Jill Farrar, as representative of the Benefits Service, was invited to give oral evidence to the Committee. Blackpool's approach in combining the delivery of the Discretionary Awards within a single team was promoted as good practice in evidence given by other witnesses to the Committee.

#### **Counter Terrorism and Security Act.**

As a specified authority, Blackpool Council now has statutory duties under the new Counter Terrorism and Security Act. The expectation is that local authorities must:

- Co-ordinate preventative actions against terrorism using multi-agency groups.
- Assess risk of at risk adults and children being drawn into terrorism using Counter Terrorism Local Profiles.
- Develop an action plan to reduce risk to identified vulnerable groups.

- Identify and train staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism.
- Refer identified vulnerable adults and children where there is an evidence base of risk factors.
- Establish a responsible booking policy for public venues.
- Refrain from working with extremist organisations.

Blackpool Council has a small task and finish group which is coordinating the implementation of the duties, in which Risk Services have a key role. A briefing on the Act was held for all Elected Members on 20 January 2016.

## **Policy Issues**

### **Welfare Reforms**

The Chancellor announced a number of welfare reforms in the Autumn Statement. Although there is little detail on some of the measures yet, the proposed changes are currently being analysed to determine the impact on the residents of Blackpool. A briefing note will be provided to Members once more detail is known and understood.

### **Business Rates Relief scheme**

It has been announced that the full Small Business Rates Relief scheme will continue for another year, this is worth over £6m to 3,169 small local businesses.

### **Risk Issues**

The Risk Services team has recently reviewed the Council's Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Procedure and this will be taken to Audit Committee for consideration and approval in January 2016.

The Risk Services team arranged a training session for a range of Council services on the use of covert surveillance. This provided a lot of useful information, which will inform future policy development in this area.

## **Transforming Services**

### **Customer Services**

The Council has commenced the process of transforming its customer services strategy to ensure that it supports visitors about the standards of service that they can expect from across the Council. It will also ensure that the way that services are delivered fits with the vision, priorities and values of the Council and establish new monitoring systems so that service standards and customer care standards can be reviewed on a regular basis. It will further develop the process of making sure that services are available in the most appropriate format including wherever possible and practical digital.

The strategy once developed will be the subject of consultation and supported by an extensive training and development programme.

### **Financial Management Information System**

The Accountancy team continues to develop its Financial Management Information System and acquired the Collaborative Planning module earlier this year, which besides creating resilience in the Section allows more effective formulation of the Council's budgets than using unwieldy spreadsheets and enables scenario planning and sensitivity analysis to be undertaken in real-time for longer-term financial planning.

### **Working with Partners**

#### **Blackpool Museum**

Following Project Board approval of the RIBA Stage 2 plans, the Museum project team presented the project to the Heritage Lottery Fund on 30 November for a formal development review session. The review meeting was supported by Councillor Campbell, Senior Council staff and Michael Williams from Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited (BECL). It was also an opportunity to brief our new Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Trustee for the North West Region, Mr Jim Dixon. Written feedback from the HLF will be received in 10 days giving feedback on any areas for concern and development. The Museum project is viewed as a significant game-changing project by both the HLF and Council.

#### **Property Services**

The current joint delivery arrangements for the Property Services function of the Council and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals is progressing well since it was established. The arrangement is providing opportunities for economies of scale and is achieving savings via joint procurement, contract management and shared resources. Both organisations are benefitting from being part of a larger property delivery arrangement with increased resilience.

This is also developing joint asset utilisation and shared occupation of premises to reduce costs and joint rationalisation of the property portfolio to achieve greater savings.

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20 January 2016

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

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The Places area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Fred Jackson (Municipal Assets),
- Councillor Mark Smith (Business and Economic Development) and
- Councillor Wright (Housing, Procurement and Income Generation).

The full details of the portfolio areas can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Your-councillors/Executive-members.aspx>

## **Corporate Issues**

### **Blue Flag**

At the Council meeting of 25 November 2015, Blackpool's Bathing Water Quality results for the season were reported, with all four areas passing the stringent tests.

I am pleased to report that a meeting has been held with Keep Britain Tidy, who administer the Blue Flag Award and it has been agreed that Blackpool submits an application for the Blackpool South, which will be required to be submitted by 31 January 2016.

An international panel will consider the application in February 2016, with notification of the award or otherwise on 13 April 2016. If successful, the information would be embargoed until 19 May 2016.

### **Contracts and Procurement**

A total of 11 contracts with a total value of £2.6m have been awarded within the Council since my last report. Two very large contracts were awarded of £1.2m to AE Yates of Bolton for the Princess Street Bridge repairs and £0.8m to Insight Direct of Manchester for Microsoft Licence renewals, this explains why only 9% of contracts by value were awarded to local suppliers.

A new Commissioning and Procurement Strategy for the period 2016/ 2019 has been developed following a number of workshops with internal commissioners and the local supply chain. The Strategy was considered by the Executive in January 2016.

## **Strategic Issues**

### **Highways Asset Management Strategy**

The new Highways Asset Management Strategy is being developed and will be available to Members in the New Year for consultation and involvement.

A briefing session was held with Members on 10 December 2015, which provided details of Government policy changes in relation to Highways Asset Management Funding and also how Blackpool is responding.

As Blackpool is taking a pioneering approach in relation to Highways Asset Management, Mr Steve Berry, Head of Local Roads, Light Rail and Cableways at the Department of Transport travelled from London to address Members and be a part of the meeting.

### **Enterprise Zones**

It is a key element of Blackpool Council's strategy for jobs and growth to push for Enterprise Zones on the Fylde Coast and I can confirm that over the past few weeks we have secured agreement for two Enterprise zones on the Fylde Coast. The nature of the local economy is that jobs created anywhere on the Fylde Coast are likely to benefit Blackpool residents in terms of job and business opportunities, so we have given these schemes our full support even where they are outside the Borough. An Enterprise Zone brings a number of benefits in attracting businesses to the area, the most notable being the availability of Business Rate Relief of up to £275,000 over five years or the availability of capital allowances that can be offset against tax to support investment. These zones will help us attract everything from manufacturing to office jobs and in particular will seize upon the Fylde Coast's unique opportunities in the energy industry including renewables and off-shore oil and gas.

Over the next few weeks and before formal designation in April, I have asked officers to work with our neighbouring authorities to develop further our offer for these important areas of investment, which will bring thousands of new jobs to the area. We already have interest from a number of companies who want to move to the area and I hope to be able to bring you more information about these investments over the next couple of months.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014**

An injunction has been obtained in the Royal Courts of Justice, which forbids 13 named defendants from setting up an unauthorised encampment anywhere within the Borough and prohibits them from occupying land in the Borough for residential purposes. The injunction also forbids them to carry out various other activities, which include engaging in abusive, offensive or threatening behavior on open or publicly accessible land in Blackpool.

These travellers were particularly problematic, moving from place to place within Blackpool. It is believed to be the first time in the country that a local authority has used the new Anti- Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act, together with the Planning Act to secure an injunction against illegal travellers.

In addition, the injunction applies to 'persons unknown' and forbids such persons, amongst other things, from setting up an encampment on seven specific areas of land in Blackpool, namely Lawson Road Playing Fields, Common Edge Playing Fields, Mereside Park Clifton Road (both sides), Layton Recreational Ground, land at Langdale Road and South Shore Car Park, without planning permission and from the occupation of those areas of land for residential purposes, including in caravans.

Anyone who breaches the injunction may be imprisoned, fined or have their assets seized.

## **Policy Issues**

### **Business Growth Service**

The face of publicly funded business support is changing with the Government deciding (as part of the spending review) to wind down the national delivery of the Business Growth Service (incorporating Growth Accelerator and the Manufacturing Advisory Service) by the end of March 2016.

GrowthAccelerator was the principle service able to support growing retail and visitor economy businesses in Blackpool. The provision of extra resources to Business Growth Service components was also planned to be a key part of the revised Boost Business Lancashire programme (Lancashire Business Growth Hub). The initial Boost service engaged with 135 Blackpool businesses, 11% of the Lancashire total. The Growth Accelerator provided around £1m of support in Lancashire. The Government is providing some extra money for Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Hubs, £12m across the country, but this will not fill the gap left by the discontinued services. The LEP is now considering how to deliver the Boost service in light of these changes.

## **Transforming Services**

### **ICT Services**

ICT Services is currently supporting the Blackpool Challenge Partnership and Headstart Bid with the creation of new digital/ community portals to enable collaboration and sharing. The new Office 365 email system has now been rolled out 1,926 employees. Approximately 1,400 employees have been migrated to the new system in the last quarter.

## **Working with Partners**

### **The Skills, Training and Employment Partnership**

The Skills, Training and Employment Partnership met in November 2015, chaired by Councillor Smith, which brought together all the major employers in the town alongside employment support and training partners. Consideration was given to determining where the greatest areas of need are in the population in terms of creating employment opportunities in order to

ensure that the partnership can firm up its priorities. In addition, there was a commitment to ensure that commissioned work, where possible includes provision for local labour and there was an opportunity to share best practice and ideas.

### **Re- New Workshop**

Work on completing the Furniture Restoration Workshop is now finished. The work was being carried out in partnership with our third sector partners Calico and Ring Stones, the construction arm of the social enterprise.

Now complete, Calico will be working closer with another local charity, Shabby-to-chic, to promote the local circular economy by delivering restored furniture back in to the community while teaching local people new skills.

Plans are also afoot, in conjunction with Furniture Matters, for a redesign of the Council's kerbside textile recycling scheme. This would see the scheme ultimately being delivered by them thus increasing the capacity of the third sector to deliver Council services to local residents.

### **Rover**

After a very successful year, Rover (the Council's mobile recycling unit) continues to be a favourite among locals. Working in partnership with Helping Hands, a local Community Inclusion Company, Rover continues to lead the way in terms of innovation by potentially working on a new innovative project in conjunction with United Utilities (UU).

UU has identified Blackpool as an area where the drainage network suffers with significant grease and fat related issues. Rover will be adding grease and fat to its collection list in a bid to assist UU in addressing this. The off-take of this material will then be sent for bio-fuel. More information on this project will be available in the New Year.

### **SELNet Awards**

On Friday 27 November saw the annual Social Enterprise Lancashire Network annual award ceremony at the Hilton Hotel in Blackpool. Attended by Councillor Wright, Blackpool Council was highly commended in two categories for its partnership working with the third sector.

### **Queens Park Redevelopment**

We have now let the contract for Phase 2 of the Queens Park redevelopment. This will include the demolition of the remaining tower blocks hopefully in April 2016. This further work with our partners Lovell Homes will bring a further 99 quality new homes to the area and an investment of over £10m. I am pleased with the development that has been carried out to date providing fabulous new affordable homes for the people of Blackpool and I am sure that this next phase will at least equal that award winning achievement.



**Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL)**

The Council finalised a funding deal in September with SSE plc on behalf of all 15 local authorities across Lancashire. A launch event for the scheme was held at the Winter Gardens on 13 November 2015, with over 100 representatives from partner agencies attending. The first boilers and insulation measures have been installed and the scheme is seeing increasing interest from households, health providers and community groups now that the cold weather has arrived.

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20 January 2016

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

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The Resilient Communities area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Eddie Collett (School Improvement and Children’s Safeguarding),
- Councillor Amy Cross (Reducing Health Inequalities and Adult Safeguarding), and
- Councillor Maria Kirkland (Third Sector Engagement and Development).

The full details of the portfolio areas can be found on the Council’s website at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Your-councillors/Executive-members.aspx>

**Corporate Issues**

**Equality Impact Assessments**

Extensive work has been completed across a wide range of services affected by the 2016/ 2017 budget proposals to examine the potential impact on service users and residents. The work includes examining relevant data and research together with appropriate levels of consultation, for all key equality characteristics. This work has informed the decision-making in the budget process.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Members of the CSE sub group of the Safeguarding Board met to review service developments against the Ofsted inspection criteria and actions identified will be added to the Board action plan. The group has also redesigned the audit tool to have a stronger focus on outcomes and a number of cases will be audited against this over the next few months.

**Corporate Parenting Panel**

The Corporate Parenting Panel met for the second time in its new format on the 17 December. It has been agreed that the young people will “take over” the chairing and agenda setting for a number of meetings of this group. Those meetings will also be held at the newly completed Care Leavers Building (which will be called the Core) which opened on the 21 December with a formal opening to take place in January 2016.

**Corporate Parent Conference**

A hugely successful Corporate Parenting Conference was held on the 9 December with a request to all Heads of Service, Elected Members and Partners to pledge specific actions as Corporate Parents. The response was very positive and has resulted in concrete offers such as work placements for our children. These will all be followed up in the New Year.

## **Strategic Issues**

### **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

The Board has discussed the Director of Public Health's latest Annual Report, which called for an action plan to address health inequalities. As a result, it has agreed to incorporate this into a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which will run until 2020. The strategy, which will be developed and consulted on early next year, will address inequalities in health arising from three major issues the housing market, substance misuse and social isolation. A fourth priority, early intervention, will ensure we continue to move towards addressing the root cause of problems rather than simply managing their effects.

### **Children and Young People's Partnership**

The Partnership has recently become a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board, which will both strengthen its ability to focus on young people's health issues and link this to educational outcomes and aspirations. To do this effectively requires a new strategic approach, which will be described in a Young People's Strategy to be developed by the partnership in the New Year. This will ensure that major initiatives like Head Start and Better Start, plus our forthcoming Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Strategy are bound together to influence our systems and overall approach to young people across the whole public sector in Blackpool.

### **Volunteer and Social Action Strategy**

Volunteers are an integral part of delivering good quality public services, adding an extra dimension to what the Council does and ensuring an extra level of customer care in some of our frontline services. We want to look for opportunities to use their time more effectively across services and link with other public sector organisations to reduce duplication of effort. We also think that to make communities more resilient, we need to increase the numbers of people either volunteering or helping their communities to take action. The strategy will help us achieve this, whilst ensuring we develop a consistent approach to involving and supporting volunteers.

### **Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) Monitoring Visits**

Unity received a Monitoring Visit from HMI on 4 November that acknowledged that systems in place were appropriate and would, in time, impact upon results. South Shore Academy received their first monitoring visit on 3 December. The report is yet to be published, but the HMI recognised that the school had begun to address key issues and had also strengthened capacity.

Montgomery received a monitoring visit on 8 December, again, the report is yet to be published, but the judgements were positive overall.

### **School Improvement Processes**

The School Improvement team has carried out a joint desk top/ school evaluation exercise with maintained schools to enable an overall LA category and identification of appropriate support. This meeting involved both the Head teacher and the Chairman of Governors. This process has been Quality Assured for robustness and carried out in the majority of primary, secondary and special schools. The School Improvement team has since begun the autumn term visits, which follow up on the meeting outlined above and will provide an opportunity for school priorities to be challenged and supported appropriately.

### **30 hours free childcare**

From the comprehensive spending review, it is noted that:

- Increasing the free childcare from 15 hours to 30 hours a week for working families of three and four year-olds will go ahead.
- Criteria has been further confirmed for 30-hours of free childcare, parents must work 16 hours and earn less than £100,000.
- The first funding review report has raised national average rates to £4.88 for three and four year olds and £5.39 for two year olds, with a further review in the New Year <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-childcare-costs> linked to a schools funding review.
- National early years funding formula is to be set following consultation.
- There will be a fund for capital developments in early years.
- Up to £10,000 childcare costs could be tax-free for parents.
- If we are successful as an early implementer, the pilot will roll out from September 2016, which is a year ahead of the national rollout planned for September 2017.

### **Free entitlement grant for Two Year olds**

Take up of the grant is still increasing and reached 75% in the summer term 2015.

### **Adult Social Care**

Demand for Adult Social Care assessments remains high and the position will be reviewed over the first six months of the Care Act in January 2016, with a view to considering any further training needed, or system changes. A further cycle of training will be delivered over the first three months of 2016, including face-to-face sessions and webinars.

Development of a dashboard to aid analysis of service demand and spend trends is progressing well, which will enable real time monitoring of change at both team levels and across the whole service.

## **Policy Issues**

### **Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtc)**

All Academies, bar two, are purchasing the LOtc service from the Local Authority (LA) and continuing to seek LA approval for adventurous activities as well as residential and overseas visits. Additional training courses related to offsite visits were held this term due to direct requests from schools and academies. A full day Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) training course was held along with two twilight Visit Leader training courses. An EVC network meeting is planned for January to update all current EVCs.

The Council Policy and Guidance for the Management of Offsite Visits and Adventurous Activities is currently be reviewed and amended and there will be a draft put out for consultation at the EVC network meeting.

### **Child Employment and Entertainment Licensing**

The number of licences issued to employers and producers has continued to increase year on year. The last three months have seen an increase in the number of applications for child employment licences compared to recent years and this may be an indication that the local economy is improving. Due to the nature of the town, the number of entertainment licences issued remains high and all local amateur production companies have now been briefed in relation to the new Child Performance Regulations introduced by the Department for Education (DfE) earlier this year.

### **Highfield Day Centre (Adults)**

In December, following a recent tender and TUPE process the existing In-House day care service at Highfield transferred to Independent Living (North West). Independent Living (North West) also delivers day care services in the North of the town at Warren Manor. The Highfield day care service will continue to be delivered in the same location (Highfield Day Centre, Highfield Road, Blackpool), on the same days, by the same staff, with the addition a new overall Service Manager who will be dividing his time between the Warren and Highfield sites.

### **Transforming Care (for adults with a Learning Disability)**

Implementation of the transformational plan for Lancashire and the locality plan for Blackpool is underway. Nationally, there is a requirement for local areas to re-establish pooled budgets and the mechanism for transferring funding for individuals that will be eligible for a dowry is still under discussion. Since the time of my last report, Blackpool has established a transforming care steering group chaired by the Director of Adult Services to provide additional strategic leverage around implementation of the regional and local plans and ensure joint working across the Lancashire footprint as appropriate. The steering group will report progress to the Strategic Commissioning Group, Health and Wellbeing Board and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Governing Body and act as the interface with regional governance bodies including the Learning Disability Fastrack Steering Group for Lancashire and the Collaborative Commissioning Board.

## Transforming Services

### Specialist Stop Smoking Service Update

#### Background

Following a full tender process to commission the provision of an integrated, safe, effective and person-centered smoking and nicotine addiction prevention and treatment service, a contract was awarded to Solutions 4 Health Limited. As the successful bidders, the service launched as 'SmokeFreeLife Blackpool' on the 1 October 2015.

The new Smoking and Nicotine Addiction Prevention and Treatment Service in Blackpool will achieve expected outcomes, namely:

- A reduction in the number of smokers in Blackpool
- A reduction in health inequalities by ensuring the service is aimed at the key priority groups identified
- The delivery of an effective and efficient service that demonstrates value for money and is responsive to the needs of individuals.

Solutions 4 Health were awarded the contract as they demonstrated a great understanding of the aims and objectives of the service specification. They were able to demonstrate vast experience of how they engage communities in order to motivate quit attempts. They gave us reassurance of their ability to offer a flexible service to meet the needs of our target communities, for example, workplace shift patterns and seven day working. The organisation offers extensive value in terms of a hub and spoke model so that there is a robust system in place to ensure continuity of service.

#### Progress to date

- Solutions 4 Health Limited supported a smooth transition of staff from the previous provider, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, under TUPE arrangements.
- During October 2015, launch events were planned to coincide with Stoptober.
- An outreach coordinator was also recruited to implement the outreach service with support from the wider team. The outreach service, launched on the 6 October 2015, is delivered from a service branded mobile clinic, which enables the service to reach out into the heart of our communities.
- The service has also now purchased a service branded small car, which will enable the service to be more visible and more mobile using this vehicle to provide clinics in workplaces across Blackpool and provide home visits where appropriate (e.g. pregnancy and patients recently discharged from hospital).
- Attended GP Practice Managers forum and Intermediate advisor training dates confirmed, offered to GP practices to support delivery of the GP smoking cessation contract.

- Purchase of equipment and training underway for lung age health checks in the community.
- Partnerships built with Local Pharmacy Committee and Local Medical Committee.
- Figures for Stoptober: 222 Service Registrations and 240 Quit Dates set (some from GP's).
- Lead advisors identified for pregnancy and for primary care (GP Practices)
- The service is achieving the target of clients being offered an appointment within 48 hours of referral

### **Suicide Prevention**

This report outlines progress to date on the recent suicide audit the subsequent suicide prevention report and recommendations including stakeholder involvement. The report will also update on the development of an effective workforce able to deliver the ASIST model and prevent further suicides in Blackpool.

Public Health completed a suicide audit using data collected from the coroner's office, primary care records, secondary care records and custody. Due to relatively small numbers, the audit is completed by pooling data over a three-year period.

Blackpool has the highest rate of suicide of any upper tier local authority in England, for all persons, during the period 2011/ 2013. Blackpool has a significantly higher rate per 100,000 population (13.6 - 95% CI 10.2, 17.07) than England and Wales (8.8 - 95% CI 8.6, 8.9) as a whole

Throughout the UK, there are more suicides in males than females. In 2013, there were 3,684 male suicides (17.2 per 100,000 population) and 1,038 female suicides (4.6 per 100,000 population). The most common age of suicide for males in Blackpool was between the ages of 25-45 years, with a total of 33 deaths in this age group out of a total of 43 male deaths. The most common method of suicide is hanging/ strangulation in males, which accounted for 70% of the male cohort in Blackpool in 2011/ 2013.

Based within the final report are a number of recommendations, which have been made as a result of the audit. Some of the recommendations include:

- Real time surveillance of suicides
  - Currently we report on suicides retrospectively. This prevents the Council acting upon hot spots, copycat suicides whilst also supporting family members in real-time
- Flag system for 'frequent flyers' in Primary care
  - Over 50% of people who commit suicide had attended their GP in last month. A flag system would enable GPs to identify potential suicides
- Signs in hot spot areas
  - Erecting signs in public spaces directing people who may be suicidal to support i.e. Samaritans phone number



Recommendations will be overseen by the suicide prevention stakeholder panel and implemented during 2016/ 2017.

### **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)**

Public Health has commissioned two trainers to deliver the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) to deliver to all front line staff within Blackpool.

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is a comprehensive two-day course, which enables the delegate to become more willing, ready and able to help persons at risk of suicide. Developed in Canada and approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO), it is an interactive and practical course proven to help front line workers learn how to identify risk and intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide.

Both trainers have exceeded expectations in the initial delivery of ASIST for the past 24 months. Testimonials from those who have attended the two-day course are exceptional and we now have a waiting list of over 100 front line workers across Blackpool including Police, mental health, youth workers etc. wanting to complete the course.

### **Education Diversity and Support Units/ Service e.g. Pupil Referral Units, Elective Home/ Traveller Education**

It has been a busy start to the new academic year within Educational Diversity, settling into new premises for KS2 and KS3 provision, "Pegasus" formerly known as Christ the King Primary school. The first few weeks have been quite turbulent as two staff teams and two students groups have come together, but things are now beginning to settle. Learning walks completed by senior leadership team members, safeguarding officers and school improvement team colleagues have highlighted quality first teaching within safe and inspiring learning environments.

A new internal exclusion system has been developed to support students as a punitive sanction for failing to adhere to the positive behaviour policy. Students are often excluded to another centre where they complete behaviour reflection, alongside further curriculum work. This is allowing for continuity of learning as a young person is still being educated with an expectation that they have to attend for the duration of the exclusion period.

The Behaviour Partnership has been relaunched, led by the Deputy Head teacher and scheduled monthly meetings established. It is hoped that through this renewed collaboration with secondary colleagues, we can work together to share good practice and develop an inclusive philosophy, thus reducing the number of students placed within our service.

### **SEN and Disability**

With regard to the SEND Local Area Inspection Framework, the proposed Care Quality Commission (CQC)/ Ofsted inspection of a local area is likely to be more widespread than first envisaged. Pilot inspections have included Public Health, Housing and Community Safety.

Further to this, representatives from these agencies have been invited to the self-evaluation/ inspection preparation group. A series of storyboards about the work that has occurred are also being prepared for May when the first inspections are due and Blackpool may be one of the early inspections. A briefing will need to be given to senior managers and lead members following the final criteria being published in "late January". The work that has occurred around Blackpool's statutory SEN responsibilities is being praised and a recent invitation to present to West Midlands authorities on the work around Education, Health and Care Plans has taken place.

### **School Organisation and Buildings**

The team will soon be publicising the Council's School Organisation Plan. The plan sets out the Local Authority's current status with regard to school organisation, the number and types of schools within the borough, the approach to planning for pupil places and the forecast numbers as we move towards and into the next decade. More crucially, it flags the concern about the predicted shortfall in pupil places, particularly within the secondary sector and outlines options to accommodate these issues.

Building works commenced at the end of November at Westbury Lodge on Whitegate Drive. The property is being remodelled and refurbished to create a 16-19 year old special education needs facility for both Park Community Academy and Woodlands School. The facility should be completed by spring this year.

Aspire Academy and Highfurlong school are now in their new schools. Staff at the school have given some very positive feedback with pupils reacting well in their new surroundings. The old Bispham High School site, which had been occupied by Aspire Academy on a temporary basis, has now been secured and boarded up, whilst a decision is made regarding the future of the site.

The Council offers a number of services to schools under the 'Traded Services' agreements/ contracts. The offers for academic year 2016/ 2017 to both Academies and Maintained/ Voluntary Aided schools were sent out prior to the Christmas break, with a return sign off date set for the end of January for LA maintained schools and end of April for Academies.

### **14 -19 Strategy**

In Years 10/ 11 work has begun by Learning Advisers on supporting the most vulnerable future school leavers. This includes supporting statement young people with the Post 16 learning and careers element of the Education, Health and Care Plan along with supporting Looked After Children with their career ideas. The number of 16 to 18 year olds in learning (full time further education or work based learning such as apprenticeships) is 4558 (86.7%) at the end of November 2015 compared with 4442 (83.8%) at the end of November 2014. The Virtual Early Leavers Service (VELS), a web based service supporting young people who leave college early in a timelier manner to re-engage them back into learning, is in operation for the first time in the Autumn term, which traditionally is the peak term for early leavers. A total of 191 young people left the two main colleges early and were supported through the VELs service.

### **Adult Safeguarding**

Following a successful joint bid with Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group for funding from NHS England, a project centered upon Mental Capacity and its role in underpinning the safe delivery of care is in progress. The project aims to generate a greater understanding amongst regulated providers, paid carers and families about how they can contribute to the prevention of harm to vulnerable adults by using dignity and respect as the basis for care. Training, resources and assessment tools have been developed to support the ongoing impact of such work.

### **Working with Partners**

#### **Disability Summit**

Working with Disability First and the Blackpool Disability Partnership, the Council hosted the first ever Blackpool Disability Summit on 4 December 2015. A wide range of support organisations, charities and local people attended the event. Focusing on the theme of inclusion matters, the conference explored ways of attracting more people with disabilities into public life. The annual Disability Question Time with both local Members of Parliament (MP's) also featured in the programme.

#### **Faith and Social Action in resilient communities**

During November 2015, a joint event was held to bring together the Council and leaders in the local faith communities to explore ways of working closer together. The conference was hosted by St Mark's Layton and over 80 people attended exploring key issues. A new directory was launched, which has mapped over 60 social and community projects within Blackpool's faith communities that collectively serving thousands of our most vulnerable residents with an aggregate economic impact in excess of £1.5 million.

#### **Schools Safeguarding**

The Safeguarding Officer started in post on 1 October 2015 and has been involved in work with many schools in Blackpool, visiting 31 schools. Visits have included conducting audits, providing advice on Safeguarding or work on behalf of the Board. Alongside the more general school improvement work, he has been working with Highfield Humanities College looking at specific Safeguarding documentation and advising on processes and structures to ensure that Safeguarding is moving forwards quickly.

As a trainer for Blackpool Safeguarding Children's Board, the Safeguarding Officer has also delivered Prevent awareness training to a number of schools.

#### **Blackpool Music Service**

A total of 300 choristers from 23 schools performed live on the BBC's Children in Need. Blackpool instrumentalists have also performed live with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and 280 children have been entered for Arts Awards. 3,000 musicians have performed to capacity audiences in the last month, which has enhanced the musical aspirations of children in Blackpool.

### **Maternity Matters**

Each local health authority is required to have a functional and effective Maternity Services Liaison Committee (MSLC), which is an advisory group for parents and professionals working in partnership. The Blackpool group has its own identity and is known as 'Maternity Matters'. The group is supported by Commissioning within the Council on behalf of Blackpool CCG in partnership with Fylde and Wyre CCG. Maternity Matters has a key role in local commissioning and the successful implementation of maternity policy and an evidence based approach. One of its key functions is to seek the views of service users. In April 2015, a market stall event was held at Bispham Community Centre to seek views and opinions of local parents. Over 100 people attended the event and 60 mums completed the survey on their experiences of maternity services, ante-natally, during birth and post natally. A 'You said ...we did' document was produced, which is reviewed each time the group meets.

### **Continuing Professional Development, School Workforce and the City Learning Centre**

The new additional training brochure supplement has been completed and can be viewed at <https://goo.gl/38d3eL>. This is in addition to the annual brochure published in July 2015. The present active working parties and networks have set their priorities in line with the Council, Challenge Board and School Improvement priorities and are working on these developments.

Those priorities that are associated with the Challenge Board have been identified and are to be reported back to the Board. Those additional areas that are supporting school improvement are reported back to the School Improvement team meetings.

A co-ordinated Quality Assurance approach is to be set in place by the Challenge Board teaching and learning group to monitor the impact of this progress on a three to six month basis.

The pupil premium working party has identified three priority areas, student's self- reflection/ analysis, teachers working together and feedback through assessment for learning. All have been identified as key impact areas from national research. The new reading working party has begun to scope out a town wide approach to reading as a universal offer and specifically to target higher-level readers. It had the pleasure of distributing 40,000 books levered from Save the Children through the chair of the Challenge Board and the Head of libraries. This is part of a national campaign for "Read on Get on" to get every child to be a competent reader before the age of 11 by 2025. I hope to encourage Council members to be part of this.

### **Governor Services**

Throughout the Autumn Term, the service has continued to support schools with Training and Clerking through the two Service Specifications provided. Two schools have been supported in finding suitable persons to carry out reviews of Governance where this has been identified as a requirement following Ofsted inspections and two members of the team have been commended by external bodies for the outstanding quality of their minutes.

### **Adult Social Care**

The updated protocol between Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited and Adult Social Care to improve working arrangements and ensure regular operational meetings with staff from both areas to meet better the needs of social housing tenants will be launched in January 2016.

Adult Social Care has a responsibility to provide a Humanitarian Response in the event of an emergency, which affects local residents and displaces them from their homes. This work is supported by a team of employees who volunteer over and above their day-to-day roles to be called out to help people with emotional and practical support. Work is ongoing to extend the team of volunteers in going forward.

### **Blackpool Safeguarding Boards**

The Blackpool Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards are working more closely to bring about a greater degree of joint working and a consistent approach to safeguarding Children and Adults. Joint use of resources in this way brings about better information sharing, reduces duplication and makes best use of available resources. A joint Safeguarding Board website has also been developed for the benefit of the partners and the community.

### **Voyager Project PILOT - (Social Care Volunteers Team and Blackpool Coastal Housing)**

The aim of this pilot is to support and promote the wellbeing of tenants identified as being at risk of losing their tenancies, who may be socially isolated or need support and encouragement to develop their skills. The service will engage with individuals for a limited period of time to assist a person to maintain or regain the ability to live independently by providing practical support to help them gain confidence along with improved networks through various different means and increase the potential to support tenants to maintain their tenancies longer. The service will reduce levels of social isolation, low self-esteem and lack of confidence, which can occur as a result of poor support networks, bereavement, reduced mobility, or low socio economic status. It will support those tenants identified as vulnerable by the Tenancy Sustainment Officer where physical or mental health conditions indicate they may benefit from preventative interventions in order to maintain their independence or prevent crisis situations from arising.

The service will engage with tenants to understand their individual circumstances, interests and skills in order to inform and support them to re-connect with or develop new networks. Tenants will be encouraged and supported to establish networks, through neighbours, community groups etc. The service will take a holistic approach to engagement ensuring that tenants are safely signposted to statutory or voluntary and third sector partner agencies as appropriate in order to support them to manage their tenancies for as long as possible.

The service will promote independence and wellbeing among tenants referred in to the pilot. A range of information sources including Blackpool4me, leaflets and webpage resources will be used to convey information in the most accessible and appropriate format for each individual. Following initial contact and with the consent of the person the service will facilitate engagement and safely signpost to partner agencies wherever appropriate.

The service will aim to support a minimum of 25 tenants across the six month pilot period.

**Cremations**

I am happy to report the cremations service has worked to plan over the last 12 months (including moving from 30 minute to 45 minutes services) and coped well over the Christmas period in dealing with the unusual peak that this time of year unfortunately brings.

We wish to continue to develop the service and are hosting a discussion evening in late January with representatives from Funeral Directors and the clergy on how to extend the service further.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	20 January 2016

## COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2016/ 2017

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 7 December 2015 relating to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To agree that the Council continue to operate a Discretionary Discount Policy to be awarded in cases of exceptional hardship.

2.2 To agree that the reduction applied to Working Age claimants remains at 27.11% for the 2016/ 2017 Scheme and that the main elements and method of calculating awards previously agreed by Council on 22 January 2015 will remain the same.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme is approved by 31 January 2016 avoiding the financial risk associated with the Government imposed default scheme.

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 as the Council must approve a Council Tax Reduction Scheme each year.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council priority is "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

## **5.0 Background Information**

- 5.1 The Executive at its meeting on 7 December considered a proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/ 2017. The Executive was informed that the Government grant for Council Tax Reduction Scheme is equal to less than 90% of the Government forecast funding levels had Council Tax Benefits continued. This was expected to leave a shortfall in funding of £3.22million based on estimates of demand and assumptions regarding the basis of calculation for the central Government grant. The level of Government support is fixed and the Council adopted a self-funding Scheme under which all working age claimants had to pay at least 27.11% of their Council Tax in 2013/ 2014 and this remained the case in subsequent years.
- 5.2 The Blackpool Scheme incorporates the national pensioner scheme decided by Government. This ensures that support continues at existing levels for pensioners. In Blackpool, pensioners currently account for 38% of the caseload.
- 5.3 For working-age claims there is a means-tested assessment, predominantly based upon the former Council Tax Benefit rules, to establish entitlement. A percentage reduction is then applied at the end of the assessment.
- 5.4 Although the 2016/17 scheme will, as far as is possible, have the same design principles as that currently in operation a change to one element for 2016/17 is proposed. The Government has announced its intention to remove the family premium from housing benefit for children born after April 2016 or for new claims made after that date. The Council proposes to do the same for its Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/17 to keep this element of the scheme the same as housing benefit. This change will apply to working age claimants who are not in receipt of certain benefits such as Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance or Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance.
- 5.5 The value of the percentage reduction must be established each year. The percentage is determined by reference to the level of Government grant, caseload, growth / reduction in caseload. It is proposed that for 2016/ 2017 the value of the percentage reduction for working age customers should remain at 27.11%.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 6(a) – Executive Decision Notice EX/48



## **6.0 Legal considerations:**

- 6.1 A resolution by the full Council to adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme is required by 31 January 2016. The Scheme will take effect from 1 April 2016. The Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy has been clarified and updated to reflect recent government legislation and is attached at Appendix 2(a) of the Executive agenda.

## **7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

- 7.1 Existing staffing resources within the Council's Benefits service are used to administer the Council Tax Reduction Scheme; however, it is apparent that there has been a considerable increase in face-to-face and telephone contact, particularly when Council Tax bills are issued. The administrative and legal processes required to collect and recover substantial numbers of small amounts place an additional burden on available resource

## **8.0 Equalities considerations:**

- 8.1 The Equality Analysis that has previously been carried out for the scheme has been revisited and updated. This aims to mitigate the impact on protected groups and includes the continued availability of a discretionary hardship fund which has been made available through the adoption of a Discretionary Discount Policy. As part of their consideration of the scheme for 2016/ 2017 an updated Equality Analysis was attached at Appendix 2(b), to the Executive report.

## **9.0 Financial considerations:**

- 9.1 For 2016/ 2017, it is proposed that the percentage reduction made at the end of the assessment for working age claimants shall be 27.11%. A review of the Scheme must be carried out annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose taking account of ongoing changes in legislation, caseload and financial requirements. The Council will be required to approve the Scheme each year. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provides for a major overhaul of the benefits system. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme was implemented ahead of the commencement of Universal Credit. The new scheme of Council Tax Reduction will run alongside Housing Benefit during the transition to Universal Credit. Housing Benefit administration will then gradually diminish until 2017. Wider changes to existing benefits during the next few years will mean customers on benefits will have less money available to pay their Council Tax liability. Whilst there is still an ambition to achieve full collection, this is likely to take longer.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

- 10.1 As part of the overall project management leading to the 2013/ 2014 Scheme, a risk workshop identified a number of risks. Actions required to mitigate those risks have been identified and implemented where possible.
- 10.2 Council Tax collection costs have risen as approximately 15,000 households in Blackpool have to pay more Council Tax compared to the position prior to the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Some previously received full Council Tax Benefits and therefore were not liable for any Council Tax. Collection rates fell by approximately 2.4% at the end of 2013/ 2014 and a further 0.7% in 2014/ 2015 as a consequence of the Council trying to collect from low income households.
- 10.3 Demand on both face-to-face and telephones within the Customer Contact Centre has increased and this adversely affects the waiting times for customers and overall response times.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

- 11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

- 12.1 Extensive public consultation was undertaken during 2012 to develop the 2013/ 2014 Blackpool Scheme. Although the main elements and method of calculating awards will remain the same, further public consultation has taken place in respect of the proposed changes to the family premium. A summary of the public consultation response and the Council's response were included within the revised Equality Impact Analysis.

**13.0 Background papers:**

- 13.1 There are no additional background papers to this report.

<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX48/2015
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	7th December 2015

## COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2016/2017

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To seek approval for the proposals for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2016/17.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To recommend to the Council to agree to continue to operate a Discretionary Discount Policy for Council Tax to be awarded in cases of exceptional hardship as set out at Section 3 of Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.

2.2 To recommend to the Council that the reduction applied to Working Age claimants remains at 27.11% for the 2016/17 Scheme and that the main elements and method of calculating awards previously agreed by Council on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015 will remain the same.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme is approved by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016 avoiding the financial risks associated with the Government imposed default scheme.

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, a Council Tax Reduction Scheme must be approved by the Council in every year.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is

“Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefits (CTB), billing authorities were required to adopt a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

5.2 In 2013/14 the Government grant for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme was equal to less than 90% of the Government’s forecast funding levels had Council Tax Benefits continued. This was expected to leave a shortfall in funding of £3.22million based on estimates of demand and assumptions regarding the basis of calculation for the central Government grant. The level of Government support was fixed and the Council adopted a self-funding Scheme under which all working age claimants had to pay at least 27.11% of their Council Tax in 2013/14. The rate has remained the case in subsequent years.

5.3 Since 2013/14, the Government funding has become part of the Local Government Finance Settlement and is no longer separately identifiable; however, overall funding has fallen further.

5.4 The Blackpool Scheme incorporates the national pensioner scheme decided by Government. This ensures that support continues at existing levels for pensioners. In Blackpool pensioners currently account for 38% of the caseload.

5.4 For working-age claims there will be a means-tested assessment, predominantly based upon the former Council Tax Benefit rules, to establish entitlement. A percentage reduction will then be applied at the end of the assessment.

5.5 Although the 2016/17 scheme will, as far as is possible, have the same design principles as that currently in operation a change to one element for 2016/17 is proposed. The Government has announced its intention to remove the family premium from housing benefit for children born after April 2016 or for new claims made after that date. The Council proposes to do the same for its Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/17 to keep this element of the scheme the same as housing benefit. This change will apply to working age claimants who are not in receipt of certain benefits such as Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance or Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance.

- 5.6 At this point in time the Department for Communities and Local Government may still issue changes to the known position. Required changes will be incorporated into the final scheme presented for adoption at full Council on 20th January 2016.
- 5.7 The value of the percentage reduction must be established each year. The percentage is determined by reference to the level of Local Government Finance Settlement, caseload, growth / reduction in caseload. It is proposed that for 2016/17 the value of the percentage reduction for working age customers should remain at 27.11%.
- 5.8 The document at Appendix 2a, to the Executive report, also includes the Discretionary Discounts policy for those not in receipt of Council Tax Reduction and the Discretionary Discounts policy for Business Rates. It is not proposed to change either of these policies but to continue to include these in the one document for ease of use.
- 5.9 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**5.10 List of Appendices:**

Appendix 2a: Proposed Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy 2016/17 including the Discretionary Discount for those in receipt of Council Tax Reduction  
Appendix 2b: Equality Analysis

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

- 6.1 A resolution by the full Council to adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme is required by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016. The Scheme will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.
- 6.2 The Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy has been updated and is attached at Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

- 7.1 Existing staffing resources within the Benefits service are used to administer the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. However, it is apparent that there has been a considerable increase in face-to-face and telephone contact, particularly when Council Tax bills are issued. The administrative and legal processes required to collect and recover substantial numbers of small amounts place an additional burden on available resources.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 The Equality Analysis that has previously been carried out for the scheme has been revisited and updated. This aims to mitigate the impact on protected groups and includes the continued availability of a discretionary hardship fund which has been made available through the adoption of a Discretionary Discount Policy. As part of their consideration of the scheme for 2016/17. Members must read the updated Equality Analysis which is attached at Appendix 2b, to the Executive report.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 For 2016/17 it is proposed that the percentage reduction made at the end of the assessment for working age claimants shall be 27.11%.

9.2 A review of the Scheme must be carried out annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose taking account of ongoing changes in legislation, caseload and financial requirements. The Council will be required to approve the Scheme each year.

9.3 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provides for a major overhaul of the benefits system. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme was implemented ahead of the commencement of Universal Credit. The new scheme of Council Tax Reduction will run alongside Housing Benefit during the transition to Universal Credit. Housing Benefit administration will then gradually diminish. Wider changes to existing benefits during the next few years will mean customers on benefits will have less money available to pay their Council Tax liability. Whilst there is still an ambition to achieve full collection, this is likely to take longer.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 As part of the overall project management leading to the 2013/14 Scheme, a risk workshop identified a number of risks. Actions required to mitigate those risks have been identified and implemented where possible.

10.2 Council Tax collection costs have risen as approximately 15,000 households in Blackpool have to pay more Council Tax compared to the position prior to the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Some previously received full Council Tax Benefits and therefore were not liable for any Council Tax. Collection rates fell by approximately 2.4% at the end of 2013/14 and a further 0.7% in 2014/15 as a consequence of the Council trying to collect from low income households.

10.3 Demand on both face-to-face and telephones within the Customer Contact Centre has increased and this adversely affects the waiting times for customers and overall response times.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Extensive public consultation was undertaken during 2012 to develop the 2013/14 Blackpool Scheme. The overall response concluded that, whilst most people did not agree with the changes, the options proposed by the Council were, in the main, supported.

12.2 Although the main elements and method of calculating awards will remain the same further public consultation has taken place in respect of the proposed changes to the family premium. A summary of the public consultation response is given below. The Council's response to each comment has been considered and is included within the Equality Impact Analysis which is attached at Appendix 2b.

- 13 of the 14 respondents are Blackpool Council Tax payers, 6 are currently in receipt of Council Tax Reductions.
- Of the 14 responses to the consultation, 8 strongly agree or agree with the proposal whilst 4 strongly disagree with it. 2 respondents indicated that they neither agree/ nor disagree.
- Of those who disagree with the proposal, one suggested that the Council should focus on those not paying any Council Tax, one feels the Council should review staff salaries, another proposes a 'sponsor scheme' to cover Council Tax and rent if someone becomes unemployed and one respondent indicated that there was insufficient information to agree with the proposal and that the Council should look to renegotiate commercial agreements.
- Other comments about the proposal were mixed, with some feeling it would have a negative impact on struggling families and vulnerable people whilst others accepted that difficult savings need to be made. One comment suggested that the proposal would be fairer on those with fewer children and again comments touched on collection of Council Tax arrears and the impact of families moving to the area who are reliant on reductions.

12.3 Consultation has also taken place with the major preceptors as required by Department for Communities and Local Government guidelines.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 Existing Policy-  
<https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Benefits/Documents/Local-Council-Tax-Support-2015-16.pdf>

**14.0 Key decision information:**

14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 19/2015

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: 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015      Date approved:

**17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

17.1 None

**18.0 Executive decision:**

18.1 The Executive resolved as follows:

1. To recommend to the Council to agree to continue to operate a Discretionary Discount Policy for Council Tax to be awarded in cases of exceptional hardship as set out at Section 3 of Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.
2. To recommend to the Council that the reduction applied to Working Age



claimants remains at 27.11% for the 2016/17 Scheme and that the main elements and method of calculating awards previously agreed by Council on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015 will remain the same.

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

7<sup>th</sup> December 2015

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

To ensure a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme is approved by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016 avoiding the financial risks associated with the Government imposed default scheme.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

7<sup>th</sup> December 2015

**20.0 Executive Members present:**

20.1 Councillor Cain, in the Chair

Councillors Collett, Jackson, Jones, Kirkland, I Taylor and Mrs Wright

Apologies were received from Councillors Blackburn and Smith who were engaged 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>	Alan Cavill, Director of Place
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Gillian Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs)
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	20 January 2016

## **BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN PART 1: CORE STRATEGY - ADOPTION**

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

- 1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 18 January 2016 relating to the adoption of the Core Strategy.

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

The Executive will be recommended to recommend to Council:

- 2.1 To accept the Inspector's findings and his recommendations and adopt the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy with the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspector as set out in Appendix 2(a) (ii) and with the additional (minor) modifications to the Core Strategy set out in Appendix 2(b) and the amended Policies Maps at Appendix 2(c) (ii) on the Executive agenda.
- 2.2 To authorise the Chief Executive to undertake the necessary steps for the adoption process to be completed.
- 2.3 To authorise the Director of Place to make any final modifications to improve readability and the final presentation of the document, and to correct any factual matters or typographical errors.

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

- 3.1 To progress Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy, which forms part of the statutory planning framework, to adoption to support Blackpool's future regeneration and growth.

- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No, If the Local Plan is approved it will become the new Planning Policy document
- 3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

The earlier Issues and Options document set out a range of alternative strategic development options, which have been considered in detail. The Preferred Options document April 2010 also highlighted alternatives where appropriate on certain key issues.

#### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council priority is "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

The relevant Council Priorities are:

- "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"
- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

#### 5.0 Background Information

5.1 The Council is now at the Adoption Stage in the plan making process and the Executive at its meeting on 18 January will consider the Inspector's Report and his recommendations (Appendix 2a of the Executive report).

5.2 The Core Strategy is a key document, which forms part of the statutory planning framework for Blackpool, which will facilitate the physical, economic and social change and is seen by the Council and its partners as essential to Blackpool's future. It sets out where new development including housing and employment, retail and leisure should be located to meet Blackpool's future needs to 2027; identifies areas which will be regenerated, protected or enhanced; and sets out key development principles such as for design and affordable housing. The Core Strategy will be used to determine planning applications and priorities for the Borough over the next 12 years.

- 5.3 In developing the Core Strategy there were a number of stages that the Council were required to go through, each stage provided an opportunity for the community and other stakeholders to be involved in choosing the right planning policies for Blackpool.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Executive Decision Notice EX01/2016 – to be circulated after the meeting of the Executive on 18 January 2016.

A copy of the supporting documentation to this decision notice was submitted with the agenda for the Executive and can be found on the [Council's website](#).

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

- 6.1 The Core Strategy, when adopted by the Council, will be the key strategic spatial document forming part of the Council's statutory Local Plan. It would appear given the report of the Planning Inspector that the Core Strategy incorporating the modifications outlined in this report satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and therefore meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

- 7.1 The Core Strategy has been resourced by existing staff within the Development Plans and Projects Team.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

- 8.1 An Equalities Assessment has been undertaken during the preparation of the Core Strategy.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

- 9.1 The work has been undertaken within existing budgetary provisions.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

- 10.1 The Core Strategy is the key document, which will provide the statutory planning framework to enable and assist the delivery of Blackpool's future development requirements. Without its progress acquisition, land assembly and planning approval for key regeneration and development projects will be undermined and delayed. In

addition with the publication of the National Planning Framework in March 2012 there is an imperative to progress the Core Strategy through to adoption as quickly as possible to ensure the Council has a planning framework that is directing development within the Borough which reflects the community and elected members priorities and needs and to avoid national policy being the principle basis for making decisions. The latter could lead to an increase in appeals if applications are received proposing development, which is not in line with the priorities and needs of Blackpool.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Extensive consultation has taken place during the preparation of the Core Strategy as referred in paragraph 5.3 of this report. The outcome of the consultations has informed subsequent iterations of the Strategy.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 There are no additional background papers to this report.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<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>	20 January 2016

## WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2016/ 2020

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 18 January 2016 relating to the Workforce Strategy 2016/ 2020.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

The Executive will be recommended to recommend to Council:

- 2.1 To approve the Workforce Strategy 2016/ 2020.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Workforce Strategy is a key element of the Council's corporate business planning framework and is designed to provide direction for the current and future management and development of people across the Council. It is an over-arching document that informs business planning, workforce planning, employment policy development, procedures and practice.

The current People Strategy developed in 2010 is due to expire and a new five-year strategy has been developed by the Human Resources Team working in conjunction with the Corporate Leadership Team in order to identify key actions which will help us to ensure the workforce fits into the overall vision and priorities for Blackpool. The new strategy also reviews progress on the 2010/ 2015 strategy.

- 3.2 The Workforce Strategy is developed at a time of unprecedented change and funding cuts. The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that employees are developed and empowered to deliver their objectives, which are aligned to the Council Plan and Council priorities so that the Council can make a real difference to the lives of Blackpool residents.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No, if approved this strategy will replace the existing People Strategy

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

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:  
Not to approve the Workforce Strategy.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is

- “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”
- “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Executive at its meeting on 18 January will consider the Workforce Strategy that has been developed alongside the new Council Plan and is a five-year strategy setting out a vision for our employee. It has been designed to ensure that Council employees are supported and developed to deliver against the Council Plan and Council priorities.

5.2 Without the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience within the Council, it cannot deliver the Council plan. The Workforce Strategy will show how the Council will support employees to achieve success. The strategy describes the key actions required in relation to employee development to ensure the Council can deliver the its vision, whether this is through leadership development, skills development, recruitment and retention, pay and reward or employee health and wellbeing.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**List of Appendices:**

Executive Decision Notice EX02/2016 – to be circulated after the meeting of the Executive on 18 January 2016.



A copy of the supporting documentation to this decision notice was submitted with the agenda for the Executive and can be found on the [Council's website](#).

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 None.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 The strategy will set out the vision for employees and has been designed designed to ensure that Council employees are supported and developed to deliver against the Council Plan and Council priorities.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 All Human Resources policy is focussed on the core aim of mainstreaming good equality practice across the Council.

**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 Blackpool Council is committed to employee engagement and therefore already had a broad range of information to help inform the strategy refresh including:

- Investors in people accreditation
- Real World Leadership evaluation
- Collective 360 process and refresh
- IPA development need outcomes
- IPA process 'How was it for you?' feedback
- Induction and probation questionnaires
- Exit interview feedback
- 12 question feedback

- Children's and Adults Workforce Development group outputs
- Children's Social Work sub group
- Points of View

In addition to the above consultation has been undertaken with Corporate Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team, Elected Members, Trade Unions and employees.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 There are no additional background papers to this report.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Amy Cross, Cabinet Member for Reducing Health Inequalities and Adult Safeguarding
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	20 January 2016

## LOCAL AUTHORITY DECLARATION ON HEALTHY WEIGHT

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 18 January 2016 relating to the Local Authority's Declaration on Healthy Weight.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

The Executive will be recommended to recommend to Council:

- 2.1 To sign up to the Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight including both the national themes outlined in paragraph 5.2 and the local priorities outlined at paragraph 5.3 of the Executive agenda.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 Obesity is a serious Public Health problem for the town and contributes significantly to poor health. Not only does obesity result in an increase in chronic disease leading to distress and sickness, there are significant impacts for the broader economy of Blackpool through disability, unemployment and burden on the social care system.
- 3.2 The picture for the children in Blackpool is a major concern. The data from the National Child Measurement Programme for 2014/ 2015 shows that 26% of Reception children (approximately 2,600) have excess weight (overweight or obese) compared to 23% for the North West and 22% nationally. The children are also weighed in Year 6 and for the same year, 38% have excess weight compared to 34% for the North West and 33% nationally. Rates of overweight and obesity are increasing faster than the national average, which appears to be starting to level off.
- 3.3 High levels of sugar consumption, particularly in the form of sugary drinks, are increasingly being recognised as a key driver of obesity levels, but is also a major contributor to poor levels of dental health in children in Blackpool. We are seeing high numbers of admission to hospital for tooth extraction under general anaesthetic

amongst children in the town. In Blackpool, 1,168 children aged 0-19 years were admitted to hospital for a simple tooth extraction in the three-year period 2011/ 2012 to 2013/ 2014. Children in Blackpool are being admitted to hospital for tooth extraction at a younger age than the national average with three quarters of those admissions being under 10, compared to 57% aged under 10 across England.

- 3.4 In Blackpool it is estimated that there are approximately 83,500 Blackpool residents aged 16 and over who are overweight or obese. This is 72% of the Blackpool population compared to the North West 66% and England 63.8%.
- 3.5 There is a growing consensus that preventing childhood obesity is key to achieving healthy lives in adulthood and ultimately to reversing obesity prevalence. To achieve this we need to change our approach as a society to food, drinks and physical activity and prioritise the creation of 'healthy-preference learning environments' for children. Also highlighted is that a relatively quick way to reduce inequalities by enabling disadvantaged communities to express healthy food preferences by ensuring access to healthy food, skills and social support.

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:

Not to recommend Council to sign up to the Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight.

#### **4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council priority is "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

#### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Executive at its meeting on 18 January will consider the Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight that has been developed by Public Health, Blackpool Council and Food Active.

5.2 Food Active is a collaborative programme launched by the North West Directors of Public Health in November 2013. The purpose of the collaboration was to tackle the increasing levels of obesity. Focusing on population-level interventions which take steps to address the social, environmental, economic and legislative factors that

affect people's ability to change their behaviour. The three key objectives, which were agreed by the Directors of Public Health are:

- Sugary drinks duty
- Stronger national regulatory controls on junk food marketing
- Improved spatial planning measures

5.3 The declaration is a statement that the Council encapsulates a vision to reduce obesity/ improve the health and wellbeing of the population by being a responsible Local Authority by continuing to advance existing strategies. To sign the Declaration would mean the Council would show a commitment to reducing unhealthy weight in our communities, protect the health and wellbeing of staff and population and make an impact on health and social care.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Executive Decision Notice EX03/2016 – to be circulated after the meeting of the Executive on 18 January 2016.

A copy of the supporting documentation to this decision notice was submitted with the agenda for the Executive and can be found on the [Council's website](#).

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 There are no legal considerations in relation to signing the Local Authority Declaration.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 There are no Human Resources implications.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 Obesity and poor nutrition are significant contributors to health inequalities in the town and reducing the inequalities is a fundamental part of the strategy.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 There are no costs associated to signing up to the declaration.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 Sign up to the declaration is seen as a core aspect of the Healthy Weight Strategy going forward, therefore failure to sign up would compromise the future delivery of the Healthy Weight Strategy.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 A stakeholder event has been held with partners and further consultations are planned during 2016 with Council departments.

12.2 The Local Authority Declaration has been discussed at Corporate Leadership Team, Leadership, Senior Leadership Team and the Health and Wellbeing Board, who are all supportive of the Council signing up to the declaration.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 There are no additional background papers to this report.