

Blackpool Council



**MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING -
WEDNESDAY, 3 JUNE 2020**

The minutes of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board (EPB) meeting held on Wednesday 3 June 2020 via Zoom

EPB members present:

Councillor Simon Blackburn, Blackpool Council
Councillor Karen Buckley, Fylde Borough Council
Councillor David Henderson, Wyre Borough Council

Chief Executive Officers:

Neil Jack, Blackpool Council
Allan Oldfield, Fylde Borough Council
Garry Payne, Wyre Borough Council

Co-opted private sector representatives present:

Martin Long (Blackpool), Neil Farley (Fylde), Peter Worthington (Wyre)

Other Attendees:

Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, Blackpool Council
Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities, Wyre Borough Council
Andrea Wallace, Enterprise Zone Adviser, Wyre Borough Council
Paul Walker, Director of Development Services, Fylde Borough Council
Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Blackpool Council

No members of the public or press attending the meeting. The public parts of the meeting were broadcast via YouTube.

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1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

The Board considered the appointment of a Chairman for Municipal Year 2020/2021. The Board noted that the principle of rotation of this office round the three local authorities involved in the board.

Resolved:

That Councillor Karen Buckley, Fylde Borough Council, be appointed Chairman of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board for Municipal Year 2020/2021.

2 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The newly appointed Chairman welcomed Board members to the meeting. She introduced Mr Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Blackpool Council who would be providing the governance support for the board for the Municipal Year 2020/2021.

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Board considered the appointment of a Vice-Chairman of the Board for Municipal Year 2020/2021.

Resolved:

That Councillor Simon Blackburn, Blackpool Council, be appointed Vice-Chairman for Municipal Year 2020/2021.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Neil Farley, Co-opted member, Fylde Borough Council declared a prejudicial interest in the matter raised under Any Other Business the nature of the interest being that the proposed development would be connected to his employer.

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5 MATTER ARISING FROM THE 7 JANUARY 2020 MEETING

There were no matters arising from the meeting held on 7 January 2020.

6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE INFORMATION CIRCULATED INSTEAD OF THE 7 APRIL MEETING

The Board considered matters arising from the information circulated instead of the 7 April 2020 meeting.

Mr Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, highlighted one piece of clarification that the Fylde Coast Tram Loop feasibility study would consider a range of options including all forms of rail and light rail and would not be limited to the consideration of a simple extension of the current Blackpool tramway.

7 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 7 JANUARY 2020

The Board considered the minutes of the last meeting held on 7 January 2020.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the last meeting held on 7 January 2020 be approved as a correct record.

8 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved:

That the public and press be excluded from Agenda Items 10 and 11: Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone Progress Report and Hillhouse Enterprise Zone Progress Report as this includes the likely disclosure of Exempt Information under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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9 CORONAVIRUS AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The Board considered the issue of Coronavirus and Economic Recovery. It noted the significant help provided by central and local government under various schemes to help small business and the furlough scheme.

Mr Nick Gerrard and Mr Rob Green highlighted that a key development had been the uncertainty that the pandemic had placed on business development and expansion. There would therefore need to see steps taken to ensure that the Enterprise Zones did not lose out and in fact emphasise the key roles that Enterprise Zones could play as a driver for economic recovery.

The Board agreed with officers that central to the Enterprise Zones would be a request to government extend the period in which the 5 year business rates relief would be available from expiry in March 2022 to financial year 2025/26.

The board agreed to receive a further update and discuss the issue further at the next meeting.

10 BLACKPOOL AIRPORT ENTERPRISE ZONE PROGRESS REPORT

Mr Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, provided the board with an update on the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone.

The report started by outlining the programme for updating the Masterplan to reflect substantial changes to the physical development around the eastern gateway access, sports field re-provision revised airport proposals and the change of direction for the future of the Squires Gate Industrial Estate (former Wellington Bomber Factory). The revised interim delivery plan would be presented to Blackpool Council as Accountable Body in July 2020 before submission to Fylde Borough Council, the Lancashire Local Economic Partnership and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Mr Green provided further information on a number of development schemes within the Enterprise Zone including at the former Wellington Bomber factory site and the recent grant of planning permission to locate new sports pitches outside the area which would allow the

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relocation of existing pitches.

Mr Green then highlighted the work that had continued to support the installation of the new transatlantic fibre optic telecommunications cable, part of the North Atlantic loop from New York to Denmark, being developed by AquaComms. Cable ducting has been laid from the proposed landing point to the base station constructed at Blackpool Airport with a further expansion of the network under the Local Fast Fibre Network (LFFN) programme at the planning stage and the opportunities to link this with Fibre Blackpool and use as a further opportunity to bring high tech employers to the Enterprise Zone.

In conclusion Mr Green highlighted changes to the marketing of the Enterprise Zone with Marketing Lancashire having now engaged with Richard Barber and Co. to progress Phase 2 of the Enterprise Zone websites, phase 2 of the overarching Invest in Lancashire site and options around the integration of Evolutive.

Resolved:

That the update be noted.

11 HILLHOUSE ENTERPRISE ZONE PROGRESS REPORT

Mr Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zone presented an update on Hillhouse Enterprise Zone.

Mr Green initially highlighted work with the landowner NPL estates to encourage that organisation to bring forward proposals for an initial phase of speculative development totalling 6,100m². The project would also require some local enabling infrastructure, including site access road, utilities and in particular an extension and repair to Hillhouse's water ring main. An application had been in preparation for Growth Deal funding in anticipation of last minute resources becoming available.

This would necessitate an updating of the Business Plan which was already commenced and likely to be approved in September 2020.

Mr Green then spoke about the exploration the opportunities of utilising Hillhouse for the generation and storage of hydrogen with meetings continuing and the hope that this project's remit would in time expand to encompass all forms of renewable energy.

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12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Board considered as an urgent item a report about the potential for the Westinghouse site at Springfields near Preston to be designated as one of limited number of sites in the United Kingdom licensed to produce medical isotopes.

The location within an existing nuclear facility at Springfields was considered suitable and the Board's discussion highlighted the view that such expansion would benefit the area both in terms of ensuring the long term viability of the site and in attracting high-skilled jobs to the area.

The Board expressed support for the principle of the development and that it might perhaps generate synergy with the Enterprise Zones and agreed that the Council's Leaders would write in support.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 3.30 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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