

# Blackpool Council

26 February 2021

To: Councillors Benson, Mrs Callow JP, Campbell, Clapham, Galley, Hobson, Taylor,  
L Williams and T Williams

The above members are requested to attend the:

## **CHIEF OFFICERS EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, 9 March 2021 at 2.00 pm  
Via Zoom conference call

### **A G E N D A**

#### **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 either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

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 26 JANUARY 2021** (Pages 1 - 4)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 26 January 2021 as a true and correct record.

#### **3 FEEDBACK FROM THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

The Members' Panel (Councillor L Williams, Councillor I Taylor, Councillor T Williams and Councillor M Callow) and relevant officers will provide feedback to the Committee on the assessment process up to final interview.

#### 4 APPOINTMENT OF A DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

(Pages 5 - 26)

The Committee will be asked to consider making an appointment to the position of Director of Children's Services.

##### **Other information:**

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships, Tel: (01253) 477007, e-mail [mark.towers@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:mark.towers@blackpool.gov.uk)

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# Agenda Item 2

## MINUTES OF CHIEF OFFICERS EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 26 JANUARY 2021

### Present:

Councillors

Benson	Campbell	Taylor	T Williams
Mrs Callow JP	Clapham	L Williams	

### In Attendance:

Mr Neil Jack, Chief Executive  
Mrs Linda Dutton, Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development  
Mr Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships  
Miss Yvonne Burnett, Democratic Governance Senior Advisor

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Hobson and Galley who were engaged elsewhere on Council business.

### 2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

**Resolved:** To appoint Councillor L Williams as Chair for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

### 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2020

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 20 January 2020 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### 5 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/2022

Mrs Linda Dutton, Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development, explained to the Committee that the Council had an annual statutory reporting requirement to agree a pay policy statement before 31 March, which was consistent with the guidance from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Committee was advised that the proposed statement had been considered by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) at its meeting on 16 December 2020 and would be submitted to full Council on 10 February 2021 for final approval, subject to the recommendations of this Committee.

She added that the statement was identical to that approved last year with the exception of the introduction of the Exit Cap legislation, which had been introduced in November 2020.

**MINUTES OF CHIEF OFFICERS EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 26  
JANUARY 2021**

Mrs Dutton explained that if an employee left local government through redundancy or other severance means it could not cost the Council more than £95,000 including any pension contribution or it would breach the legal cap.

The Committee was informed that a number of judicial reviews had been lodged and were due to be heard in March 2021, but it was unclear what impact the outcome of those reviews would have on the payment cap level.

Mrs Dutton presented the Gender Pay Gap Report 2020, which would be published on the Council's website once approved. The Committee considered the report, in particular the Gender Pay Gap data (section 3), which was based on a snap shot as at 31 March 2020. This had identified a mean pay gap of -0.77% and a median pay gap of -5.40%, which Mrs Dutton confirmed meant that on average female employees were paid slightly more than their male counterpart. She reported that the mean and median gender gap data had been consistent over the last four reporting years.

She added that nationally, on average male employees were paid 15.5% more. The quartile pay band data presented in the report confirmed that within the workforce, of which 60% were female, there was a good range of female employees across all levels within the Council. This was believed to be due to the Council's family friendly policies, fair and transparent recruitment processes and access to learning and development opportunities.

In response to a question from Councillor Taylor, Mrs Dutton advised that the comparison was against all national employers, the information relating to other Local Authorities data would only be available once each authority had published its Gender Pay Gap Report. However, the Council had fared very well last year and a similar result was expected this year.

Mr Towers reported on a further recommendation to seek delegated authority to the Chief Executive in his role as Returning Officer to set the election fees for staff, although this would remain a published decision. He explained that normally the Election Fees would be agreed by Full Council prior to a local Election, but for purpose of the Police and Crime Commissioner and possible By Elections this would allow the Chief Executive some flexibility to vary election fees due to annual uprating and potential role variations needed at short notice. Mr Towers added that any decision regarding the Returning Officer's own fee would remain subject to Council approval.

**Resolved:**

1. To recommend Council to approve the proposed Pay Policy Statement as outlined in the report.
2. To recommend to Council to delegate to the Chief Executive in his role of Returning Officer, the revision of election fees to staff as set out in the report.

**MINUTES OF CHIEF OFFICERS EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 26  
JANUARY 2021**

**6 RECRUITMENT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Mr Jack presented the report to the Committee, which explained the intention in terms of the interim processes and the arrangements for an acting Director of Children's Services whilst a replacement for Mrs Booth, who had decided to retire and would leave the authority at the end of March 2021, was recruited. He added that the report also outlined the process for the recruitment of a new Director of Children's Services, which would be similar to the process adopted for Mrs Booth's appointment. Mr Jack explained that the assessment process would include screening, working with knowledgeable partners from across the LGA and partners from both the statutory and the voluntary sector on the Fylde coast. He reported that it was proposed to create a sub Group of the Committee to consider the feedback from the stakeholders groups and identify a preferred candidate(s) to the Committee for final interview.

The Committee was advised that it was proposed to recommend to Council the appointment of the current Assistant Director of Children's Services as an interim statutory Director for a period of three months. Mr Jack reported that a number of interim support mechanisms and resources had been put in place, particularly around the schools agenda.

The Chair commented that the report confirmed that a robust recruitment process was in place alongside support for the Assistant Director.

Mrs Dutton reported that a number of expressions of interest had been received and the deadline for applications was 7 February 2021.

**Resolved:**

1. To confirm that the Member representatives who will be asked to consider putting through a candidate/s for final interview by the Committee, as part of the assessment process would be:

- Councillor Lynn Williams
- Councillor Ivan Taylor
- Councillor Mrs Maxine Callow
- Councillor Tony Williams

2. That the Committee will then be requested to interview the short listed applicant/s for the post of Director of Children's Services and determine whether to make an offer of appointment.

3. To recommend to Council the appointment of the current Assistant Director of Children's Services as the interim statutory Director of Children's Services in accordance with Section 18 of the Children's Act 2004 and delegate to the Chief Executive the authority to assign that responsibility to the successful candidate for the permanent position should they commence employment with the Council in between ordinary Council meetings.

**MINUTES OF CHIEF OFFICERS EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 26  
JANUARY 2021**

**Chairman**

(The meeting ended 5.45pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships  
Tel: 01253 477007  
E-mail: [mark.towers@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:mark.towers@blackpool.gov.uk)

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Chief Officers Employment Committee</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Neil Jack, Chief Executive
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor L Williams, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Decision/ Meeting</b>	09 March 2021

## DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee will be asked to consider making an appointment to the position of Director of Children's Services. Mrs Diane Booth has decided to retire and leaves the Authority at the end of the month. When her retirement was announced the process for advertising for a replacement was started and the Committee met on 26 January 2021 and agreed a process for recruitment. A number of interviews and assessment activities are being held in the preceding week to this Committee and will involve various Stakeholders including children/parents, Partners and a Member Panel. As agreed at the last meeting, the Member Panel will consist of Councillor L Williams Leader of the Council/ Statutory Lead Member, Councillor Taylor, Councillor T Williams and Councillor Mrs M Callow. The Panel will be asked to consider putting through a candidate/s for final interview by the Committee.

1.2 In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Officer responsible for Human Resources or their nominated representative is required to notify all members of the Executive of:

- the name of the person to whom the Committee wishes to make the offer
- any other particulars relevant to the appointment which the Committee has notified
- the period within which any objection to the making of the offer is to be made by the Executive Leader on behalf of the Executive to the Chief Officer for Human Resources.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 The Committee will be requested to interview the short listed applicant/s for the post of Director of Children's Services and determine whether to make an offer of appointment.

2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, the Committee will be asked to recommend Council to designate the appointed candidate as the statutory Director of Children's Services

with effect from their start date of employment.

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

3.1 To appoint a Director of Children’s Services in accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules.

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:

To not appoint a candidate.

**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 post has been advertised as detailed at the last meeting and has resulted in a short list of four potential candidates being taken forward to the assessment process.

5.2 The Members’ Panel, referred to earlier in the report, will help to consider the feedback from the Stakeholder groups and will have also interviewed candidates and listened to presentations. Following this, the Panel will be requested to put through a preferred candidate/s to the Committee for final interview. Members of the Panel will update the Committee on this process on the preceding item to this on the agenda.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**List of Appendices**

Appendix 4(a) - Candidate Information Pack.

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 The Council is to have in place a number of statutory officer positions including a Statutory Director of Children’s Services (under the Children’s Act 2004).

6.2 The Director of Children's Services is responsible for the performance of Local Authority functions relating to the education and social care of children and young people. The Director is also held to account for the effective working of Children's Safeguarding Board by the Chief Executive and challenged where appropriate by the designated Lead Member.

6.3 Under the Council's Pay Policy Statement any position with a remuneration of over £100,000 needs Council ratification, this post was given such approval at the November 2015 Council meeting.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 The recruitment for this post has been undertaken in accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 This appointment will have been undertaken in accordance with Council Policies and Procedures, which meet all equalities matters.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 The remuneration for this post is already within the agreed General Revenue budget.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The lack of a Director of Children's Services in post is a concern in particular when dealing with Children's Social Care issues. That is why when the retirement of Mrs Booth was announced then interim arrangements were agreed by the Council on 10 February and recruitment was commenced as soon as possible. Should the appointed candidate commence employment before the next Council meeting then Council has given the Chief Executive authority to temporarily designate them as a statutory Director of Children's Services.

**11.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

11.1 Due to the partnership nature of the work of this post, a range of Stakeholders will be involved in the assessment process to help come up with a final recommendation.

**12.0 Background papers:**

12.1 None.

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# Director of Children's Services

## Candidate Information Pack



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# Introduction

When people think of Blackpool, the image that immediately springs to mind could be the Tower, the illuminations, the sand and the sea.

Our many tourist attractions, long beaches and coastal location are well known across the country, but there is a lot more to Blackpool than that.

Away from the bright lights of the Promenade, Blackpool is one of the most densely populated areas in the country, over 140,000 residents live within our boundaries, many of whom are families in challenging circumstances.

Blackpool may be a small Unitary Authority but it's on a fast track to radically improving outcomes and redesigning services to provide the very best for our children and young people.

Over the last few years, we have dramatically improved our services to children and young people and we are now working to embed improvement further and drive forward, innovation and ambition. We have committed ourselves to an ambitious timescale but believe it is the right thing to do to improve and maximise life chances, opportunities and outcomes.

We are looking for an outstanding leader who can take us to the next level. You will have to demonstrate passion, commitment and drive along with visible leadership and evidence of excellent partnership working.

An ambitious leader with an impressive track record of delivery you will be committed to delivering a better future for the children and young people and families living in the town.

Blackpool Council is an exciting and aspirational place to work with a strong ethos of partnership working to deliver the public sector offer.

This is both a challenging and rewarding job and there is tremendous scope to make an impact.



**Neil Jack**  
Chief Executive

# How to apply and timetable

For further information please speak to Diane Booth our current Director of Children's Services on 01253 476558.

All candidates must be qualified social workers, registered with Social Work England. To apply for this vacancy please visit / click here [www.blackpool.gov.uk/DCS](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/DCS) where you will be taken to our recruitment site Next Step Blackpool. Here you can access the application form as well as lots of information about what it is like to live and work on the beautiful Fylde Coast.

## Timetable

Activity	Date
Applications Close	7 February 2021
Interviews	Late February / March 2021



# Our Journey: Leading Blackpool to a brighter future

Undoubtedly tough times lie ahead following the coronavirus outbreak. However, throughout the worldwide crisis, Blackpool has continued to upgrade with an ongoing regeneration programme totalling more than £1 billion. This has seen both the seafront and town centre radically improved for the families who live here and the 20 million who visit every year.

In 2018 we welcomed the start of a £300 million development, 'Blackpool Central', which is set to bring world-class attractions to the resort's Golden Mile. Offering the likes of a flying theatre, virtual reality experience, new hotels, shops and restaurants; the project aspires to provide over 1,000 new jobs with an extra £75 million annual spend from additional visitors going into Blackpool's economy.

A dedicated museum, Blackpool Showtown, is also set to launch in 2022 as the UK's first museum to feature permanent displays on circus, magic, variety, and ballroom dance.

Alongside this, the Talbot Gateway regeneration scheme has entered its second phase, with plans to extend the existing tram route to connect the central business district with the Promenade and visitor leisure attractions. A new Holiday Inn Hotel will also be developed with a new underpass, making access to the town centre easier for its locals.

As Britain's most successful holiday resort, tourism, culture and heritage will continue to be fundamental to the town. More than ever our emphasis is bringing that modernisation of our town into local neighbourhoods and community areas, creating a brighter future for all.

With a year-round jam-packed event schedule, there is always something happening in Blackpool for both visiting and local families. Blackpool is known as a resort for all ages, and families are at the heart of everything we do. Continued development and delivery of projects is creating fantastic new job opportunities and putting Blackpool head and shoulders above in its vision to create a better place to live, work and enjoy.

In 2019, the council purchased Blackpool's main retail outlet - Hounds Hill Shopping Centre, which will become the home to a range of new retail and entertainment venues including an IMAX ready cinema. The historic Abingdon Street Market is undergoing refurbishment to include an updated hub for local retailers and a range of additions including street food outlets and areas for live entertainment. Progression and effort to protect and develop our libraries and learning services is a key element in our regeneration plan as we believe they play a vital role in supporting communities and developing reading and literacy for both children and adults.

There are a number of economic and social issues present in the town, specifically around improving housing supply and creating stable and sustainable neighbourhoods, as well as supporting the most vulnerable residents and providing high quality care.

However, we are determined to make Blackpool a place our families can be proud to call home, and there's endless focus and ambition in making this happen. A £7.84 million project launched in 2017 to upgrade a number of key roads - 20 businesses have already received funds to improve the external appearance of their properties through our £2.3 million Property Improvement Scheme. In addition, continued delivery of opportunities at the Enterprise Zone saw a lease agreement recently signed to ensure 100 new jobs in the town.

Additional investment projects include the recently awarded £39.5m 'Town Deal' funding in a new era of partnership working with the Government which will provide a huge boost to the town's regeneration and post-COVID economic recovery. Key areas include: investment in infrastructure, a local community sports village, a brand new 'Multiversity campus', and a Youth Hub to name a few.

It is no lie that Blackpool poses a number of challenges for young people across both educational attainment and life chances. This is partly driven by the existing high levels of poverty and social disadvantage in Blackpool alongside generational impacts whereby parents' difficulties create problems in the family and influence children's outcomes. However, here in Blackpool we have a vision through our council plan [www.blackpool.gov.uk/councilplan](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/councilplan) to maximise growth and opportunities, aiming to create stronger communities and build resilience whilst we continue to make these upgrades to improve the lives of families and communities across the resort.

For young people in Blackpool, there are a range of challenges across both educational attainment and life chances. This is partly driven by the existing high levels of poverty and social disadvantage in Blackpool alongside generational impacts whereby parents' difficulties create problems in the family and influence children's outcomes.

The town experiences one of the highest levels of population mobility of children and young people in the country with the annual turnover of pupils in some schools as high as 30% within a school year. In December 20, the council was responsible for 608 looked after children. Families with complex needs place additional pressure on health, school and social care.

Our most recent Ofsted inspection in December 2018 was rated 'inadequate', and we have been subject to commissioner intervention. The global pandemic has prevented re inspection but we are confident that when that when we are able to participate, we will secure an improved judgement. We believe the same to be the case in relation to the improvements we have made in our youth offending service delivery and outcomes.

We have participated in our final review with the government appointed commissioner and whilst we await formal notification, we believe the outcome will be positive.

In June 2014, Blackpool was awarded £45 million in Big Lottery Funding for the Better Start bid; this 10 year partnership led by the NSPCC working closely with the Council and NHS is offering pioneering family support, with specific attention given to diet and nutrition, social and emotional development, and communication and language. We have an award winning extended health visiting offer, which seeks to ensure that children are happy, healthy and ready for school giving our youngsters the best start in life.

In June 2016, Blackpool was awarded a further £10 million in Big Lottery Funding for our HeadStart programme aimed at increasing the resilience of young people aged 10-16 years with the long term aim of reducing the number of young people who develop emotional health and wellbeing conditions. We have made significant progress with positive outcomes and have developed sustainability plans to embed the learning. We are particularly proud of our focus on co production, which is reaping benefits in the success of embedding strategy into practice.

Despite austerity, the council has maintained a commitment to pioneering work. We have developed all age family hubs that support community development and resilience whilst maintaining a children centre offer across the town. Over 11,000 free breakfasts are delivered daily across primary schools in Blackpool under a scheme to reduce inequalities in the nutritional quality of children's diets. There has been significant capital investment in school buildings over the last fifteen years with £60m Building Schools for the Future funding being invested in two secondary schools.

We have developed with our school leaders a 2020-2030 Education Improvement Strategy. Our school led education improvement system focus is on Literacy and Inclusion, which is supported by our Children and Families Strategic Partnership, benefiting from Opportunity Area support.

We are facing difficult times in local government but we are committed to facing them together in the most efficient way possible for the benefit of our community and visitors alike.

It is vitally important that we plan for the future to ensure the Council's sustainability over the next 5 years and as a result, a corporate Medium-Term Financial Sustainability Strategy (MTFSS) has been developed.



# Children's Services vision

Our Children's Services Vision is outlined below and was co-produced with children and families who have experience of our services.

<b>Vision:</b>	Every Blackpool child to be happy, healthy, safe, go to a good school, get a good job and to have a voice and be listened to				Ensuring children and young people can effectively progress into adult life
<b>Objectives:</b>	Helping children to live in safe, supporting families and ensuring the most vulnerable are protected	Improving Educational Achievement across all school phases	Improving social, emotional, mental & physical health and well-being	Enabling all children and young people to make positive contribution to society	
<b>How are we going to deliver these objectives?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By developing and delivering more proportionate intervention - working well with Children and Families</li> <li>By improving literacy and all educational outcomes as the gateway to better life chances for all children and young people</li> <li>By Providing the right local support/provision to meet the needs of children and families in Blackpool</li> <li>By Developing strong, purposeful partnerships focused on delivering outcomes for local children and families</li> <li>By Developing better, more consistent, child and family focused professional practice                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Making Blackpool a centre of professional excellence and innovative practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>By providing excellent support to the most vulnerable                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A commitment to judge ourselves by how well we help the most needy and by the outcomes they achieve</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<b>Major Transformational Programmes</b>	Children's Services MTFs	Inclusion: SEND/AP review, SEND Action Plan	Youth Justice Service Improvement Plan		
	Social Work Improvement Plan	Literacy & Blackpool School Improvement Board 2020-30 Vision			
	Better Start				
	HeadStart				
	Opportunity area: inclusion raising attainment		Opportunity area: careers support		
<b>C&amp;YP Partnership Board Priorities</b>	Inclusion, literacy & improving the life chances of blackpool children & young people				

The vision is supported by our 'Blackpool Families Rock' model of practice and a Children's Services Medium term Financial Strategy.

# Blackpool Families Rock

Blackpool's families, children and young people are at the heart of everything we do. Our 'Blackpool Families Rock' Model of Practice has been co-produced with children, young people, families and foster carers who have experienced our services.



## Heart: Feelings



- We are all human
- We can all make mistakes
- Trusting relationships are important
- Respect each other
- Be kind
- Let's be brave together
- Never give up on me
- See me (I am unique)
- See the good things
- Share the power

## Hand: The doing of what we think and feel



- See our strengths
- Find out what works for us
- Show you've listened by your actions
- Be clear about expectations
- Get to know me
- Know who is important to me
- Support us to develop our own plans and solutions
- Have meaningful meetings
- Celebrate positive changes
- Make time for me
- Be honest

## Head: Knowledge, culture and thinking



- Don't be nosy (ask yourself if you really need to know this)
- Use plain language
- Share knowledge
- Take care in how you talk and write about us
- Share what you know about us
- Be non-judgemental
- Walk in my shoes

### Our agreed partnership approach:

- **Relationship Based practice:** creating trusting and honest relationships with families, which provide opportunities for them to change. Support families to understand our concerns for their children. Be respectfully clear with families regarding the impact of concerns on their child's daily life and their outcomes if changes in their life do not happen. Work in partnership with families to develop a plan for their family, which has their children as a central focus.
- **Restorative practice:** to improve and repair relationships within families and communities. The purpose is to build healthy families and communities, increase social capital, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and repair(ing) harm. Ensure we understand parents' previous trauma experiences, support them to restore this harm. This should positively impact on parents' capacity and commitment to safeguard and parent their children.
- **Systemic Solution Focused Practice:** Working as a 'Systemic solution focused family' at 3 levels;
  - **Support families** to develop a wider eco support system, which enables them to make the changes they need to thrive and succeed. If a child cannot safely live with their parents, ensure we analyse who within their wider family could offer them a safe alternative permanent home.
  - **Partnership staff** across Blackpool work as a solution focused system, a 'jigsaw of support' which fits together & nurtures family led sustainable change. Ensure we offer children and their families 'the right support at the right time'.
  - **Strategic leaders** across Blackpool operate as a Strategic Solution Focused Family, creating an environment which enables their workforce to implement 'Blackpool Families Rock' Practice Guidance Principles, which supports families and communities to achieve positive sustainable change.
- **Strengths Based Practice: emphasising strengths within the family and local community network.** It is a way of viewing adults and children as resourceful and resilient in the face of their worries. Support family led plans, which focus on children's aspirations and outcomes. Ensuring we balance this strengths approach with a good understanding of the concerns we share about the children's daily-lived experience and safeguarding children from experiencing significant harm.



# Medium term financial strategy

Over the next 5 years, we will seek to reduce expenditure on Children's Services by 33% from current levels, while improving the outcomes of local children and families.

To achieve this, we will support fewer children through statutory services, with more families supported by universal services and early help services. In particular, we will have fewer children in care; and more of those children will be supported by foster carers recruited and approved by the council, with fewer children in care living in children's homes and other residential provision.

## Underpinning Aims

### Over 5 years, we will:

- Reduce the total number of children placed in residential provision (rate per 10k) to national average levels - a reduction of 66% required
- Reduce the number of children placed in foster care with independent fostering agencies by 75% - a reduction of 120 children, based on those children currently placed with in foster homes with IFA carers
- Reduce the total number of children in care (rate per 10k) to the average of similar authorities - a reduction of 47% required.
- Reduce the total number of children with child protection plans (rate per 10k) to the average of similar authorities – a reduction of 44% required.
- Reduce the number of section 47 enquiries undertaken (rate per 10k) to the average for similar authorities - a reduction of 30% required.
- Reduce the number of referrals accepted by children's social care (rate per 10k) to the average for similar authorities - a reduction of 31% required.
- Reduce the total number of children aged 0-17 supported by Children's Social Care (rate per 10k) to the average for similar authorities - a reduction of 25% required.

We will also invest 15% of the savings achieved from the above in preventative services supporting Children and Families.

## Building Blocks already in place

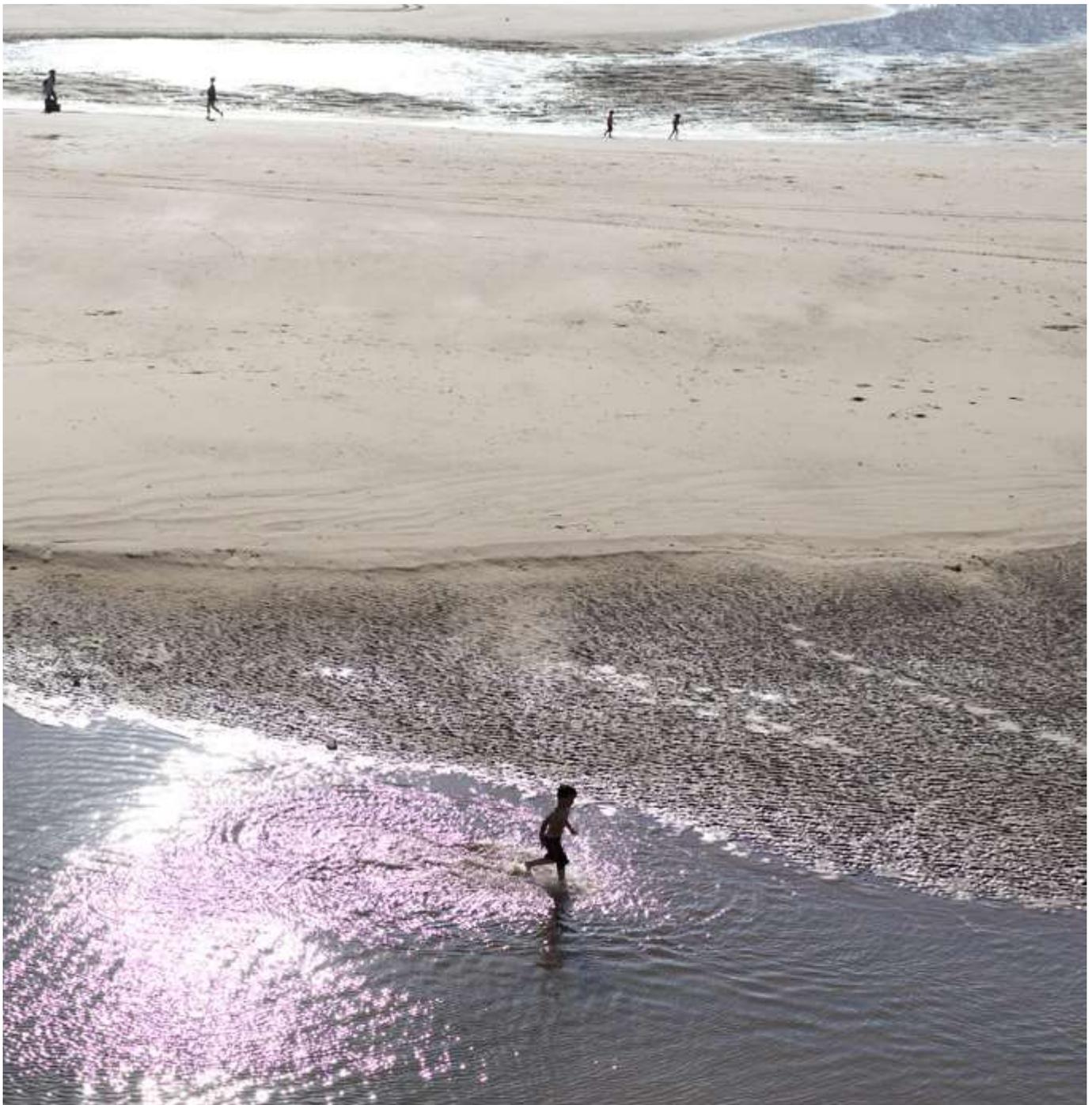
1. The most important recent change that should affect the MTFS is the implementation of the new approach to social work practice, 'Blackpool Rocks', which seeks to change the way that local services operate: building relationships with local families and children and adopting a more positive strength-based approach. Local professionals are being trained in this approach and the recording system is being amended to support the new approach to practice.
2. Tighter oversight of care planning in the Care Planning Senior Officer Panel; and greater senior oversight of children at critical periods in their care planning, especially those on the cusp of entering care (in Public Law Outline pre-proceedings); and those that have just entered care, either on a section 20 agreement, or on an Interim Care Order.
3. Closer working relationship with partner agencies, through the overarching Children's Partnership Board; but also through joint training, discussion and working with partners at critical parts of the children's social care system, such as Child Protection Enquiries, Conferences and Reviews; and in the Access to Support Hub (MASH), Awaken ( exploitation) and other partnership teams.
4. Creation of a Family Group Conferencing Team, working with extended family groups to develop robust family plans for caring for children, chiefly as a tool for preventing entry into care, but also as a means of stepping down children and young people from care.

**Broadly speaking, there are five component parts to the medium term strategy:**

1. A comprehensive review and transformation of the fostering service and payments to carers
2. Development of an Assessment Centre, with outreach support and Specialist Foster Carer Recruitment to support step-down from residential placements
3. A revised 'Edge of Care' Service
4. Continued application of the Dartington Service Design Lab methodology, building on the work already undertaken by Innovate Project Team, Legal Services and Supporting Our Children teams, seeking to mainstream the work, with support from the Corporate Delivery Unit.
5. Developing a semi-independent offer building on the Positive Transitions model that is currently working well, but directed at children in care, esp. those in residential placement.

In addition, there are a large number of supporting initiatives aiming to reshape the local market for placements and Blackpool's relationship to that market.

Blackpool Council has a clear commitment to providing high quality services through a professional well-rewarded and motivated workforce. Despite difficulties faced by employees our workforce is always looking for new ways to help and add value. Employees remain proud and ambitious for the town and its people.



# Our vision, priorities and values

In 2015, we reinvented our vision and priorities to communicate our values to residents and to promote what we stand for as a local authority.

**Our Council Plan 2019 to 2024 can be found here:**

[www.blackpool.gov.uk/councilplan](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/councilplan)

## Our vision

Blackpool Council's vision is to be the UK's number one family resort with a thriving economy that supports a happy and healthy community who are proud of this unique town.

## Our priorities

We will **maximise growth and opportunity across Blackpool** whilst **creating stronger communities and increasing resilience**.

These priorities go hand in hand – we simply cannot hope to deliver one without the other.

The time of a Council which simply delivers services to its residents has gone.

In its place is a leaner, more forward thinking organisation, which will listen to and work with every person in the town to create the Blackpool in our vision together.

## Values

The Council's values define the standards, behaviours and culture of the organisation.

- We are **accountable** for delivering on the promises we make and take responsibility for our actions and the outcomes achieved
- We are committed to being **fair** to people and treat everyone we meet with dignity and respect
- We take pride in delivering **quality** services that are community focussed and are based on listening carefully to what people need
- We act with **integrity** and we are trustworthy in all our dealings with people and we are open about the decisions we make and the services we offer
- We are **compassionate**, caring, hard-working and committed to delivering the best services that we can with a positive and collaborative attitude



# The Council

The Council is currently under the control of a Labour led administration, comprising overall 42 councillors, with two councillors for each of the 21 wards, serving for a period of four years. The Council operates a 'strong leader' model of governance with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet forming the 'Executive'.

**Councillors can represent a political party/ group or stand independently. In Blackpool, the current political make-up of the Council is:**

Labour: 22 councillors, Conservative: 14 councillors, Blackpool Independents: 2 councillors, Non-aligned independent: 2 councillors and 2 vacancies.

The role of Director of Children's Services reports directly to the Chief Executive of the Council, Neil Jack and Leader of the Council, Councillor Lynn Williams.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services is also Councillor Lynn Williams undertaking the statutory role of the Lead Member for Children's Services.



# Person specification

<b>Post Title:</b>	Director of Children’s Services
<b>Department:</b>	Children’s Services (including schools)
<b>Section:</b>	Management Team
<b>Reports to:</b>	Chief Executive

**Note:** E denotes essential criteria required / D denotes desirable criteria

Education and Qualifications	E/D
Qualified Social Worker and Social Work England Registered	E
A Leadership and management qualification	E
Relevant Post Graduate Qualification	D

Knowledge	E/D
Thorough understanding of the framework within which the public sector children’s services and education operates and an awareness of the challenges that face the public sector in general	E
Thorough understanding of the Government’s agenda in relation to integrated children’s services and education	E
Thorough knowledge and understanding of statutory responsibilities as Director of Children’s Services and the Council’s statutory responsibilities	E
Thorough knowledge and detailed understanding of current innovations and professional best practice as it relates to Children and Young People	E
Detailed knowledge of relevant legislation, regulations and best practice guidance	E

<b>Experience and Skills</b>	<b>E/D</b>
A track record of proven leadership and management in a directly relevant service environment including demonstrable experience of managing staff	E
Evidence of successfully managing programme of change to a successful conclusion	E
Proven experience of the formulation and implementation of strategic objectives and joint working with a range of partner organisations	E
Experience of operating successfully within political, corporate, policy and/or financial constraints	E
Evidence of commitment to corporate working	E
Think strategically and provide clarity of vision for the future of Children's services including education	E
Ability to shape the development of service policies and give direction in a period of change	E
Influencing skills with the ability to inspire confidence and engender agreement and enthusiasm, among elected members, board members, government departments, voluntary and community sectors, employees, trade unions and partners	E
Exceptional communication skills in order to be a credible and convincing advocate of the Council	E
Demonstrable ability to understand and manage change effectively in a political environment	E
Ability to analyse complex situations and produce effective and rational solutions	E
Ability to forge effective partnerships and be credible with all involved in the service area and work successfully in a democratically accountable organisation	E
Ability to lead by example and motivate teams and individuals	E
Creative and innovative with the ability to assess and balance risk	E
<b>Special Requirements &amp; Working Conditions</b>	<b>E/D</b>
Enhanced DBS	E

# Job outline

## Key purpose(s) of this job:

- Lead, direct and manage the strategic development, transformation and delivery of services to Children and Young People in Blackpool.
- Provide strategic advice to the Council on the needs of children and young people, and on a range of service issues to ensure all relevant Council plans and strategies are met.
- Act as the Council's designated "Director of Children's Services" in accordance with legislation ensuring the Council fulfils its statutory responsibilities in relation to Children and is appropriately positioned to meet Government and inspection requirements.

## Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Lead and co-ordinate the Council's functions as a Children's Services Authority as set out in the Children Act, in particular, building and leading the arrangements for inter-agency co-operation to improve the well-being of children and young people in Blackpool.
- Lead and direct the Council's Social Services functions within the meaning of the Local Authorities Social Services Act 1970, and any subsequent legislation, insofar as they relate to children, and the Council's functions for children and young people leaving care.
- Lead and direct any health related functions exercised by the Council on behalf of an NHS body under Section 31 of the Health Act 1999, and any subsequent legislation, insofar as they relate to children.
- Lead and direct any education functions exercise by the Council on behalf of schools and Academies in Blackpool.
- Lead the council's role as corporate parent to ensure the best possible outcomes for 'our children'.
- Provide effective professional leadership, exercising overall responsibility for the management and performance of Heads of Service, including their supervision of professional standards and competence, their management of individual performance and development and improvements to service delivery and practice.
- Lead the transformation of children's services by creating the conditions for others to perform and innovate and by robustly challenging ineffective working practices and poor performance.
- Maintain robust budgetary controls ensuring effective budgetary management is exercised by Heads of Service and that all resources are managed efficiently and effectively within finite resources.
- Ensure the existence of a common system of planning, monitoring, evaluation and review for the service group, complementary to the rest of the Council and consistent with statutory requirements.
- Maximise the availability of external partnership funding to enhance service development.
- Ensure the Council's functions are discharged in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people and the promotion of their welfare working closely with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and its independent Chair to co-ordinate Board activities ensuring that there are clear and effective arrangements to protect children and young people from harm.
- Promote the active participation of children, young people and their families in the development, monitoring and review of services to ensure that they are genuinely responsive to client needs and are continuously improving.
- Work closely with Elected Members on all major service issues to ensure they are fully equipped to perform their Member role.
- Consolidate, build and maintain effective relationships and effective frameworks for consultation with key partners, service providers, stakeholders and the wider community to facilitate high quality services, which meet service user needs.
- Ensure all data and information is recorded to high standards in a consistent way and is maintained, managed and utilised in a secure fashion consistent with legislative requirements and best practice.
- Play an active and constructive part in the work of the Corporate Leadership maximising opportunities for collaborative working.
- Work in partnership with the Director of Adult Social Care to ensure that effective services are in place to support young people with social care needs during the transition into adulthood.
- Promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination both within and outside the Council and ensure that all children and young people's services are focused on the needs of every child.
- Ensure the Council is able to demonstrate compliance with its statutory obligations, including meeting Health and Safety legislation.
- Promote good external relations by representing the authority at national, regional and local levels and promote the interests of the authority externally.

# Competences

The following competencies are relevant to any manager or leadership role, whatever their seniority or responsibilities. These competencies form an important part of your job. They will be discussed in Supervision and performance appraisal and they will be routinely considered for inclusion in your personal training development plan.

- **Leadership** – You will influence and facilitate the activity of others and lead by example. In managing others, you are more likely to adopt different styles of leadership behaviour to suit the situation or the circumstance.
- **Problem Solving** – Your problem solving activity must be information led, have a clear community focus, utilise partnerships and deal with the cause rather than the effects of problems. You consult widely on the nature of issues, seek advice and guidance from employees, management and the community. You use your own and others experience and knowledge to understand or identify current or potential problems and to look to implement long lasting solutions to the problems or concerns or the communities within Blackpool.
- **Performance** – You will evaluate working environments and processes to ensure that your services are efficient and effective. You will focus on performance and the achievement of goals and objectives. You will challenge established working practices and take advantage of emerging situations to improve your team’s effectiveness and efficiency.
- **Learning and Development** – You will adopt an inclusive approach to learning and development, providing equal opportunities for all employees. You will encourage others to take an active part in their own development, but will also ensure that team development activity is relevant and cost-effective. You will promote on the job development, provide regular reviews, give constructive feedback on performance and use best practice assessment methods in selecting staff fairly.
- **Communication and Relationships** – You will consult with others in a way, which encourages open and frank discussion, shows respect and maintains productive working relationships. You will recognise the importance of providing opportunities for others to discuss problems, ask questions and seek clarification. You will encourage this to happen by remaining visible and approachable. You will recognise the needs and feelings of others and appreciate conflicting demands will be necessary in considering when and how to respond. You will intervene and challenge inappropriate behaviour, communicate with others from diverse backgrounds and act professionally at all times.
- **Knowledge and Understanding** – You will have good knowledge of facts, procedures and people to help influence opinion, motivate others and achieve results.
- **Planning and Resources** – This competence concerns the efficient management of personal and team resources and includes monitoring and controlling the way in which resources are used, co-ordinating, facilitating and planning service delivery. It also involves you in using frameworks, which help thinking and generate positive changes to the way council services are delivered. You will work towards a clear vision of the future where all council activity is directly related to providing quality services and meeting the expectations of our community.

**Please note:** The post holder will be expected to work in the interest of the organisation. This may include undertaking other duties provided that these are appropriate to the employee’s background, skills and abilities. Where this occurs, there will be consultation with the employee. It is the responsibility of the post holder to comply with Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities at all times.

**Equality of Opportunity:** We do our utmost to ensure that there is no unjustified discrimination in the recruitment, retention, training and development of staff on the basis of their age, sexuality, religion or belief, race, gender or disabilities.

To ensure our services are accessible to all, documents prepared by Blackpool Council are available in large print, Braille, on audiocassette or computer disk upon request. We can also provide help for British Sign Language users and provide information in other languages. Please ask for details or telephone 01253 477117.

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**Recruitment and Safeguarding Team**

Recruitment and Safeguarding Team  
Chief Executive's Department, Blackpool Council  
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