

PRIORITY 6

WE WILL ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Lead Member / Lead Officer – Cllr Amy Cross & Steve Thompson

In **Priority 6** we say that we will **encourage responsible entrepreneurship for the benefit of our communities**.

Challenges 2013-15

Our focus this year will be to:

- Increase the number of start up businesses in Blackpool
- Increase the survival rate of start up businesses in Blackpool;
- Encourage entrepreneurship in the public sector and the third sector; and
- Ensure our contractors adopt responsible practices for the benefit our communities.

Current Activity

Increase the number of start up businesses in Blackpool:

Blackpool Council has been active in supporting new start businesses since 2007 when a successful bid for enterprise funds (known as LEGI) enabled a suite of projects to commence, including an externally commissioned start up support team called *Get Started*. That successful project ran for four years before being downsized considerably, running a further year under external contract. Since mid 2012 *Get Started* has been delivered in-house from its base at FYCreatives on Church Street and is co-funded by the Council and a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) project called *Start Up Lancashire*.

Get Started aims to assist a generation of new entrepreneurs to establish viable successful new businesses in Blackpool, capable of creating wealth and job opportunities for the local community. The scheme offers a professional and friendly service to entrepreneurs hoping to set up a new business in Blackpool, including:

- Quality business advice, training and mentoring in key areas such as financial planning, marketing and small business regulations;
- Support to unlock start up loans and other financial assistance on the back of credible business plans;
- Post start support and mentoring to improve chances of survival and growth; and
- Options for low cost, flexible business space.

Get Started has helped hundreds of local residents set up their own business since 2007. In 2013/14 some 328 people attended the initial 'Road to Enterprise' course, resulting in 81 new start businesses commencing trading.

The *Get Started* team also brokered an impressive amount of start up loans for new start businesses, from a combination of mainly national and government programmes (*StartUp Loans*, *XForces*, *New Enterprise Allowance*). In 2013/14 this amounted to £361k of approved loans, compared to £37k in 2012/13.

There is also a specialist organisation called Social Enterprise Solutions (set up in the LEI era) able to advise on all forms of social enterprise formation across Blackpool – part of the *Start Up Lancashire* offer. Get Started works alongside this offer.

Increase the survival rate of start up businesses in Blackpool:

In order to ensure that new businesses in Blackpool are able to grow and be successful, it is essential that they are aware of and can continue to access relevant business growth support services.

The Get Started service operated with a single (very busy) Small Business Advisor in 2013/14, (with back office support from the wider Business Support team). This will increase to 2 business advisors from 2014/15 as funds derived from ERDF are reinvested in the service.

The second Small Business Adviser will focus more on the post-start phase of support, as small businesses face the reality of selling their goods and services, promoting their business, and perhaps even taking on new employees. The first 3 years of business are crucial to survival and growth and appropriate mentoring is often needed.

Get Started brokers a range of external support where appropriate including Boost Business Lancashire (the Lancashire business growth hub). Boost aims to help businesses realise their potential by providing simple access to a range of funding programmes and specialist business support. This includes the Lancashire LEAP programme which offers a wide range of specialised support including coaching, financial, international trade, HR and mentoring support, available to new businesses (up to 3 years trading). An arrangement has been made between the Council and LEAP to ensure that clients accessing the Get Started service can be referred into the LEAP programme for ongoing support.

In 2014/15 Get Started will be monitoring the survival rates of businesses assisted since January 2013 as part of the Start Up Lancashire ERDF programme. A further development will be a specific range of post start consultancy and training for around 20 businesses, an intensive programme around marketing and promotion.

Work has also been underway to develop opportunities to “test-trade” new businesses using a variety of methods such as market stalls, pop up shops and exhibitions. For example, the 'Me & FYC Shop Boutique' pop-up shop opened in the former Hudz unit in the Winter Gardens on St John's Square between 5th – 21st December 2013. 17 designers were selected to provide stock and sales grossed £3,400 over 2 weeks - a 65% increase over the first year.

The Business Support team provided invaluable practical support to the 20 market traders affected by the closure of New Market in South Beach in early 2014. The Council initiated a small financial assistance package (covering legal, planning, 2 months rent and part contribution to fit-out costs) to encourage traders to take up vacant retail units on Bond St/Waterloo Rd and Lytham Rd. This proved a success with 9 traders choosing to take up this option, helping to revitalise the South Beach shopping experience.

Encourage innovation in the public sector and the third sector:

With reducing resources and rising demand for Council services, it has become increasingly important to encourage new ways of working both in the public and third sectors. For example:

- Enabling staff to put forward ideas for new ways of delivering services as part of the budget consultation. The consultation is open all year round and all employees are able to contribute.
- Collaboration between organisations such as shared services between the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group / Blackpool Victoria Hospital for ICT and building services.
- Looking beyond our own organisational barriers to provide services, for example, working with the Blackpool Food Partnership to provide food parcels for applicants to the Discretionary Support Scheme.
- Bringing arms length organisations back in house, such as the Sandcastle and the Winter Gardens, enabling the Council to benefit from different models of working.
- Reviewing existing contracts to see if they can be delivered at lower cost by other organisations, including those in the voluntary, community and faith sectors.
- Providing support to third sector organisations to deal with reductions in grant funding from the Council.

Ensure our contractors adopt responsible practices for the benefit of our communities:

The Social Value Act 2012 places a requirement on public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental wellbeing in connection with public services contracts. In response to this, the Council has implemented a number of measures to ensure that social value is embedded through our commissioning and procurement activities, as well as those of our contractors.

A Social Value Toolkit has been developed to support the Council and potential providers of services to embed social value through commissioning and procurement. Some practical examples of how organisations can maximise social value for the benefit of our communities include adopting the living wage; creating training opportunities through apprenticeships and work placements; encouraging ethical and fair trade purchasing; creating employment opportunities for the long-term unemployed and those not in education, employment or training etc.

To support the toolkit, we have also introduced a Sustainable Procurement Code of Practice, to encourage organisations to consider environmental and social factors when buying goods and services, and a Supplier's Charter, to encourage the Council's suppliers to make a positive contribution to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Blackpool. For example, by adopting the standard of paying invoices within 30 days to help the cash flow of smaller subcontractors, opting to use local suppliers to boost the local economy; refraining from using 'zero hours' employment contracts etc.

Challenges 2014/15

Our focus for next year will be to :

- Continue to provide high quality advice and guidance to new start businesses
- Renewed focus on post start mentoring and intensive support to improve survival and growth chances of businesses in first 3 years of trading
- Deliver a new young enterprise challenge for residents aged 16-24 ,
- Develop town centre studio space for aspiring artists and creatives
- Continue to encourage suppliers to the Council to utilise the Social Value Toolkit

Strategic Risks Related to this Priority

The following risks are being monitored through the Strategic Risk Register to ensure that the necessary controls are put in place to effectively manage each risk.




Strategic Risk	Type	Risk Level
Economic recession	National	High
Change in political priorities	National	High

Key Actions & Performance Indicators for this Priority

Details of the key actions and performance indicators for this priority can be found below.

Priority 6 Key Actions

Key – Overall Progress:

	On track		Not on track but being managed by the department to bring back on track		Not on track and needs support from outside the department to bring back on track
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Objective	Key Action	Milestones	Deadline	Dept	Team	Overall Progress
Increase number of start up businesses in Blackpool	Maintain support for new businesses via the Get Started service and support the development of mentoring for business owners	New mentoring scheme launched	Sept 2013	RTC	Economic Development	Green
		Review outcomes of continuous service of training, workshops and 1-1 advice on a quarterly basis	Mar 2014			
	Maximise take up of Council managed and small business space through flexible terms and added value business support	Launch of a combined phone-broadband tenant offer	Jun 2013	RTC	Economic Development	Green
		Refurbishment and promotion of business space at the Enterprise Centre, FYCreatives & 81 Central	Jul 2013			
Increase survival rates of start up businesses in Blackpool	Ensure Blackpool & Fylde Coast SMEs that are in a position to invest are aware of and able to access relevant business growth support services	Launch of Lancashire Business Growth Hub, associated customer relationship management system and related interventions	Jun 2013	RTC	Economic Development	Green
		Targeted events to promote awareness of business support (e.g. Accelerating Business Growth fund)	Jun 2013			
	Promote access to high-growth coaching, HR and expert support to SMEs with growth potential in the first 36 months of trading	New scheme to be launched as part of the Lancashire Business Growth Hub.	Jun 2013	RTC	Economic Development	Green
Promote young enterprise	Assist young entrepreneurs aged 18-30 to access the national Start Up Loan scheme	Monitor value of loans offered to Blackpool's young entrepreneurs and review on a monthly basis	Mar 2014	RTC	Economic Development	Green
	Promote young enterprise activities and facilities, and develop opportunities to "test-trade" new businesses	Designer maker pop-up shop held during Xmas in vacant shop, 20 designer makers involved, facilitated by FYCreatives	Dec 2013	RTC	Economic Development	Green
		Review options for arts-based studio & exhibition space	Mar 2014			
Establish enterprise pathways for 14-24 year olds	Consultation held with schools		Jul 2013	CS	Early Help for Children & Families	Amber

Objective	Key Action	Milestones	Deadline	Dept	Team	Overall Progress
		Enterprise Clubs for young people launched for 14-16 year olds	Nov 2013			
		Enterprise Clubs for 18-24 year olds launched	Jan 2014			
		Youth Enterprise Ambassador model bid submitted for external funding	Mar 2014			
		15 Business Mentors trained to work with schools				
Encourage innovation in the public sector and the third sector	Continue to encourage new ways of working across the organisation	Engage staff as part of the budget setting process	Ongoing	ALL	n/a	Green
		Review existing contracts to see if they can be delivered at lower cost by other organisations	Ongoing			Green
		Seek opportunities for collaboration with other organisations in delivering / sharing services	Ongoing			Green
		Support third sector organisations whose grant funding has been reduced	Ongoing	DE	Engagement	Green
Encourage responsible business practices	Respond to the requirements of the Social Value Act	Update Commissioning and Procurement Strategy	Mar 2014	TS	Procurement & Development	Green
		Launch the Social Value Toolkit (sustainable procurement)				
		Increase % of third party spend with local suppliers				

Priority 6 Performance Indicators

Key – Performance Trend:

- ✓ Performance is improving
- Performance is staying the same
- ✗ Performance is getting worse
- Data not due to be reported this quarter

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2013/14	Target 2013/14	Total 2012/13	Trend	Comments
Number of new business start ups (supported by the Get Started initiative)					81	N/A	72	✓	
Small business finance approved (with direct assistance from Get Started)					£361k	-	£37K	✓	Loans approved – via StartUp Loans, X Forces, NEA, banks – on back of credible business plan
Per cent new start businesses surviving 12 months (assisted by Get Started from Jan 13)						N/A	N/A		Data will become available during 2014/15
Invoices paid within 30 days	93.02%	91.37%	93.19%	90.62%	92.04%	93%	84.97%		