

## DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (PLACE AND TOURISM) – COUNCILLOR GILLIAN CAMPBELL

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The 'Places' area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Neal Brookes (Housing and Welfare Reform)
- Councillor Fred Jackson (Environment, Transport and Climate Change)
- Councillor Mark Smith (Business, Enterprise and Job Creation) and
- Councillor Maria Kirkland (Community Cohesion and Leisure)

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

#### **Securing a Wonderful Part of our Heritage: Olympic Gold Medalist Lucy Morton**

I am extremely pleased to confirm that the Council has bought the first Olympic gold medal ever won by a British female swimmer, together with other memorabilia. Lucy Morton grew up in Blackpool and went on to set world records for the 150 yard backstroke and 200 yard breaststroke before achieving Olympian glory in Paris at the 1924 Olympics.

The collection was at risk of being dispersed entirely, but the Council was able to secure 18 lots in total, with other items relating to her incredible swimming career including action photographs, swimming certificates, books, letters, programmes and newspaper articles. The total hammer price for all lots including the Gold Medal was £12,255 and was partially funded by a grant from Blackpool Civic Trust.

The archive will now be housed at the History Centre at Blackpool Central Library, which preserves and gives access to Blackpool's incredible heritage collections. The Blackpool Museum Project, which is developing Blackpool's first museum will also feature Lucy's story. She is an inspirational figure, who came back to Blackpool to teach local children to swim after her retirement and I hope these artifacts can inspire others to follow in her wake.

## Contracts Awarded

I can report the award of the following contracts since the last meeting:

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Provider (Locations)</b>	<b>Term (Including Extensions)</b>	<b>Contract Value</b>	<b>No. of initial bids</b>	<b>No. Of Bidders with an FY postcode</b>
Corporate Car Leasing Scheme	NHS Fleet Solutions (Newcastle)	4 years	Income of £500 per car per annum	Direct award	0
Practice Development Work with the Resilience Revolution	BoingBoing CIC (Hove)	2 years	£180,000	1	1
Water – Automated Meter Reading	HWM Water Ltd (Gwent)	5 years	£100,000	4	0
Coordination of the Time to Change Hub	Empowerment Charity Lancashire (Blackpool)	1 year	£17,000	1	1
Opportunity Area – Teach Blackpool – Coaching and Leadership Coaching (2 Lots)	Lot 1 – Ambition Institute (London) Lot 2 – Princes Teaching Institute (London)	1 year	Lot 1 - £137,999  Lot 2 - £74,830	4	0
Rate Review of Police Headquarters	Avison Young (Birmingham)	1 year + (1 year)	£15,000	Direct award	0
Exploring Opportunities for the Provision of Residential Care for Children and Young People	Hexagon Care Services Ltd (Preston)	Ad-hoc 8 weeks	£16,000	7	3

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Exploring Opportunities for the Provision of Fostering / Family Based Placements for Children and Young People	Barnardo's (Essex)	Ad-hoc 8 weeks	£9,000	4	1
Leisure Centre Swimming Pool Water Sampling	Waterman Environmental Services Ltd (Lichfield)	2 years + (1 + 1)	£20,000	6	0
Purchase of ICT Hardware Devices	Centerprise International Ltd (Basingstoke)	2 years + (2 years)	£400,000	5	0
Supply of Gas	Corona Energy Retail 4 Ltd (Watford)	3 years + (2 years)	Half-hourly charges – value dependent upon consumption	Direct award	0
Provision of a Council Radio System	Pennine Telecomm Ltd (Manchester)	5 years	£56,000	Direct award	0
Supply of Office Paper	Kingswood (Blackpool)	1 year + (1 year)	£80,000	Direct award	1
Consultant to Develop a Specification for Financial Management Information System / HR and Payroll Tender	Socitm Advisory Ltd (Northampton)	Ad-hoc 3 months	£34,000	11	0
DA MASH Triage Specialist Support	Fylde Coast Women's Aid (Blackpool)	Ad-hoc 18 months	£79,264	3	2

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Lightning Protection System	Central (High Rise) Ltd (Nottingham)	3 years + (1 + 1)	£13,370	9	0
Proposed Residential Design and Build Project for Troutbeck Crescent	RP Tyson Construction Ltd (Blackpool)	Ad-hoc 18 months	£10,000,000	3	1

### **Quality Corridors Taking Shape**

Members are aware that over the last two years significant highways and public realm improvements have taken place in parts of Church Street, Counce Street, Cookson Street, Dickson Road and Talbot Road in conjunction with the planned tramway works. Works are now on-site in Edward Street with Deansgate, Topping Street and Leopold Grove set to follow in the next year.

Local businesses and property owners in priority streets have also been assisted with capital grants to transform the external appearance of their properties and to encourage take up of vacant space. I am sure Members have seen this for themselves, but there are some excellent examples including Café Continental and the Mortgage Shop on Topping Street and Sunseekers, Deansgate Kitchens and Asia's Finest on Deansgate. Other property schemes are on-site with a pipeline of around 20 further properties that will be assisted from the Property Improvement Fund.

The Lancashire Growth Deal and the Council's Local Transport Fund funded the £7.34m Quality Corridors Project. Further information is available on the Council's website -

<https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Creating-a-better-Blackpool/A-better-Blackpool.aspx>

### **Switch On**

I was very pleased to welcome Coronation Street actor Lucy Fallon back to her hometown to switch on the 2019 Illuminations. Lucy, 23, pulled the switch in front of thousands of people on the Tower Festival Headland to become the youngest ever Switch-On star. The Switch-On was part of a four-hour concert, delivered in association with MTV and featuring performances from Busted, Diversity, Becky Hill, Nina Nesbitt, Sigma and R3Wire and Varski. There were also special guest appearances by the Flakefleet Children's Choir, who captured the public imagination with their joyous performances on Britain's Got Talent and by Sooty, the UK's most enduring children's TV character who was "discovered" in Blackpool and who, this year, has his

own sponsored section in the Illuminations display. Coverage of the Switch-On event spanned more than 150 media titles across the UK including extensive coverage in several national newspapers and on ITV news channels.

### **Lightpool**

Our award-winning Lightpool Festival is returning this October half term with two weeks of free entertainment. The festival, which will take place between 11 and 26 October, will provide a mix of live performance and light-based art installations including a replica planet Earth in The Tower Ball, the world premiere of a large-scale Sun in the Winter Gardens and a display of giant illuminated seesaws. The programme also includes the return of the Carnival of the Lights; illuminated children's football tournament; fire and light-based shows; 3D projections on to the front of The Tower building and a town centre art trail.

### **The Heart of Blackpool**

I am pleased to confirm that our wonderful Blackpool Tower has a brand new illuminated heart in its 125 birthday year. The giant heart on the front of the structure was rebuilt and re-fitted with new-style light nodes in time for the 2019 Illuminations Switch-On. It is part of a gradual replacement of the lighting on the Tower legs aimed at reducing the number of faults caused by exposure to extreme weather conditions and salt air. For the current Illuminations season, the west face of the Tower "stick" will be illuminated along with the Tower top and the heart. The replacement of lighting on all faces of The Tower will follow from next year subject to successful testing of the new nodes on the heart over the coming months.

## **Strategic Issues**

### **Future High Street Fund: We are Through to Phase 2**

Following the submission of an Expression of Interest bid into the Government's Future High Street Fund earlier this year, I am delighted to report to Council that Blackpool has now been shortlisted for the next phase of assessment, which involves the development and submission of a business case.

Council and local partners were asked to describe the key challenges facing their respective town centres and outline an indicative strategic approach to how they would reverse their fortunes with and without funding support. The Council's bid set out some of the issues facing the town centre including comparatively high levels of vacant units; a prevalence of low-value discount stores; a lack of higher quality independent restaurants and national chains and a poor-quality physical environment that deters new investment in some areas.

The submission followed consultation with a variety of public, private and community organisations including Blackpool BID, the Pride of Place Board and private sector companies. Within the submission, a range of additional interventions were outlined, which would support the major investment programme currently transforming Blackpool town centre through

projects such as the Talbot Gateway development, the tram extension, new hotels and Blackpool Central.

The further interventions are focused around:

- Fast tracking a development in the heart of the town centre with the potential to increase footfall and strengthen the night-time economy.
- Acquisition and land assembly to deliver high-impact schemes.
- Investment in physical infrastructure to radically reduce the number of vacant units in the town centre and introduce high-quality public realm and green infrastructure.
- Adapting the High Street for changing technology.
- Improvements to car parking and pedestrian access.

Discussions will now take place with Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to develop the business cases and there will be further consultation later this year. The fast-track scheme, which is being finalised currently, can be submitted in line with the deadline for “shovel-ready” business cases on 30 November, with the other elements to be developed as the basis for the second part of the business case being submitted on 30 April 2020.

The Future High Street Funds (FHSF) can only be used to develop schemes, which help to achieve the regeneration of the town centres and on the basis of the bid the Council submitted. As the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government confirmed in their offer letter:

“The Future High Streets Fund will renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that drives economic growth and sustainability and improves living standards. In progressing to this next phase of assessment you will need to develop a full business case for capital investment by the FHSF in your proposal”.

### **Historic England Heritage Action Zone Funding Success!**

Due to the hard work of the Council’s Growth and Prosperity team in partnership with Built Heritage, I am delighted to confirm that the Council has just had confirmation of the success of the bid for funding to Historic England under the Heritage Action Zone funding programme. The confirmed grant is just under £600,000 and must be used to improve historic high streets. As per our bid the money will be used to improve the street frontages of the Winter Gardens and Grand Theatre onto Church Street as well as a programme of activities to bring culture out of both buildings onto the street and encourage more people into the venues to experience two of the town’s finest listed buildings.

Community groups in the form of the Winter gardens Trust, Civic Trust and Friends of the Grand will all play key roles in the governance of the project and match funding will come from both Blackpool Council and The Grand Theatre. This is part of how the Council puts its communities at the heart of the heritage led regeneration programme in Blackpool and will pave the way for continued partnership and shared responsibility for preserving these unique buildings.

## **Stanley Park Golf Course**

Following the completion of the procurement process and their being announced as preferred bidder, Holmes Investment Properties (HIP) issued a press release detailing their proposals for Stanley Park Golf Course. These include improvements to the West side of the course to deliver a new golf offering, and development of the East side with a new indoor and outdoor family entertainment, multi activity David Lloyd Adrenalin World and up to 250 family lodges to enhance the offer for both residents and visitors.

We now expect to receive a planning application for the development later this year, which will be presented to the Planning Committee for consideration after appropriate consultation. As well as discussions with the golf club HIP also intend to hold discussions with the hospital who have expressed an interest in creating a memorial park on part of the site, and also with the adjacent Zoo regarding any potential to further enhance their facilities.

It is the Council's intention to contribute the money from sales over and above the recovery of costs toward a multi-million pound investment in our open space, focused on Stanley Park. This will include investment in the bandstand, lake, sports arena, children's play and security.

## **Transforming Services**

### **Progress on New Council Homes at Hoyle House and at Troutbeck Crescent, Mereside**

I am pleased to confirm that the development of 19 new flats, houses, and bungalows on the site of the old Hoyle House at Argosy Avenue, Grange Park has now been completed. The new Council homes will include eight one bedroom assisted living flats to help people with learning disabilities live independently and a mixture of bungalows and family homes.

Members may have noticed that the demolition of the old flats and bedsits at Troutbeck Crescent, Mereside is now underway to enable the construction of 75 new Council homes, all of which will be managed by Blackpool Coastal Housing and let at Affordable Rents. The development will comprise of 19 one-bedroom flats with their own front doors and storage/utility rooms on the ground floor and the rest of the accommodation on the first floor. As well as nine two-bedroom dormer bungalows, 27 two-bedroom houses and 20 three bedroom houses, of which two will be designed with a bedroom and wet room on the ground floor to accommodate households where one of the family members has restricted mobility.

Grant funding has been secured from Homes England and local building contractor, RP Tyson, has been appointed to build the new homes. Tyson's will be taking possession of the site in October, with construction work over two years providing opportunities for training and employment of local tradespeople.

### **Domestic Waste**

As Members will recall, the newly formed arm's length company of the Council Blackpool Waste Services Limited brought domestic waste under the umbrella of the Council from 1 July 2019, trading as ENVECO North West Environmental Services. This has allowed us to bring in a state-

of-the-art vehicle fleet with improved in-cab technology, whilst ultimately looking to deliver a more efficient service. I am delighted with the way this project has been managed over the last year, which has also involved the transfer of staff into the Council, along with investment and development of Layton Depot.

The delivery transition from Veolia Environmental Services the previous contractor to Blackpool Waste Services was seamless and I am confident our Company will go from strength to strength as they seek to increase recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

## **Working with Partners**

### **Blackpool Enterprise Week**

Timed to coincide with Global Entrepreneurship Week, the Council is once again facilitating a week of inspiration and advice for would-be entrepreneurs from the 18 to 22 November 2019. The week of events, entitled “Ignite Your Entrepreneurial Spirit”, is coordinated by the Council’s Business Support Team and aims to offer a series of free events for new and start-up businesses.

Workshops revolve around familiar, but essential topics such as business and financial planning, raising start up finance and creating an effective digital presence. Supported by Lloyds Bank and Google, participants will also hear from successful local businesses. Well over 200 people attended a similar programme in 2018 and we hope for a similarly positive turnout at venues including Blackpool Enterprise Centre and Central Library. Details can be found at <https://www.blackpoolunlimited.com/blackpool/enterprise/week>

### **Tourism Awards**

I am pleased to report that Blackpool is to host the 2019 Lancashire Tourism Awards later this year. The event, which will bring in more than 400 attendees, will be staged by Marketing Lancashire at the Pleasure Beach Arena on Thursday 7 November and marks the latest in a series of major business award events hosted here this year. The Be Inspired Business Awards (BIBAs) once again attracting around 1,000 attendees from businesses across the region to the Tower Ballroom on 13 September.

### **Strictly Highways**

The Strictly Highways National Highways conference returned to Blackpool on Wednesday 11 and Thursday 12 September 2019, with in excess of 70 authorities and more than 240 delegates. The conference was first held in Blackpool last year organised by the Council Roads Innovation Group (LCRIG). The conference is now the largest of its kind in the UK for Highways and supported by the Department for Transport (DFT). The Head of Highways for the DFT awarded a surprise special outstanding achievement award to Will Britain, Head of Highways and Traffic Management in Blackpool, for his contribution to the sector, in particular for setting up LCRIG, which is growing from strength to strength with member authorities from across the UK.



**Last, but certainly not least.....it's official, Stanley Park is the Best in the UK!**

I am very proud to report on an amazing evening on 12 September 2019, when I was with members of our Parks Team and the Friends of Stanley Park when the Fields in Trust announced that Stanley Park had been voted and awarded 'UK Park of The Year 2019'!

This is a huge achievement with Stanley Park up against 364 parks, with an unprecedented 36,832 votes cast for parks and green spaces across the UK. I would like to congratulate the amazing work and effort put in by our Parks Team and the Friends of Stanley Park who keep Stanley Park looking so fantastic for residents and visitors to enjoy alike. Long may this continue.