

Report to:	TOURISM, ECONOMY AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration
Date of Meeting:	28 September 2022

BLACKPOOL TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide an overview of progress on the various projects being undertaken to secure the regeneration of Blackpool Town Centre following the last update in February 2022, and to inform the Committee of planned future work by means of a presentation that will be given to the Committee.

2.0 Recommendation:

2.1 To note the progress being made and to identify any issues requiring additional scrutiny.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure constructive and robust scrutiny of the strategic approach to regenerating Blackpool Town Centre following a request by the Committee.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

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

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None

5.0 Council priority:

- 5.1 The relevant Council priority is
- “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”
 - “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

6.0 Background information

6.1 A presentation will be given at the Committee covering the following projects:

- Blackpool Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan (see para 6.3)
- Talbot Gateway
- Blackpool Central
- Winter Gardens Conference Centre
- Showtown
- Quality Corridors
- Heritage Action Zone

Getting Building Fund Projects

- Houndshill Phase 2
- Abingdon Street Market

Town Deal Town Centre Projects

- Blackpool Central Courts Relocation
- Multiversity
- Youth Hub
- Illuminations
- The Edge (Stanley Buildings)

Funding Bids Submitted

- Levelling Up Fund Round 2
 - Multiversity
 - Hotel Indigo – Former Post Office
 - Town Centre Access Scheme (TCAS)
- Shared Prosperity Fund
 - 13 Projects outlined, including specific Town Centre Interventions

6.2 Retail Comparison

In addition, information regarding Blackpool's retail offer in comparison to other centres was requested by Scrutiny Board in July 2022. As such, a retail comparison has been undertaken looking at how Blackpool's retail offer compares to those of Preston, Blackburn, Lancaster, and further afield in the centre of Manchester and at the Trafford Centre (as retail destinations in proximity to Blackpool). Due to the challenging manageability of a town centre-wide retail comparison being undertaken, as no comprehensive list of all town centre retailers is available at present, the Houndshill Shopping Centre has been used as a proxy for comparison purposes. Similarly, in other comparison centres, the key shopping centres in those locations have been used within the comparison. Information has also been collated outlining the retailers currently present in the Houndshill Shopping Centre, and where the next-nearest locations of chain brands are situated. These findings will be included in the presentation.

6.3 Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan

The Executive considered the Town Centre Strategy and Outline Action Plan at its meeting in May 2022 and resolved as follows:

1. To approve the revised Town Centre Strategy and outline Action Plan at Appendix 3a, to the Executive report, and note the role of this document in guiding the future direction of strategic development in the town centre, coordinating action and in supporting the development of future funding bids and business cases relating to activity within the town centre boundary.
2. To refer the Town Centre Strategy and outline Action Plan (TCSAP) to the Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.
3. To confirm that the Town Centre Strategy and outline Action Plan (TCSAP) will be used as the basis of having further engagement with key partners to finalise the Action Plan including the identification of owners and timelines and to agree appropriate governance arrangements for overseeing its effective implementation
4. To agree that the Action Plan be updated annually in a process lead by the Executive members and reported to the Executive and that the Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee be consulted each year in advance of the Executive meeting and this to start with the 2022 action plan.
5. For an associated communications plan to be prepared to make it clear that the Town Centre Strategy and outline Action Plan has been prepared to build on the successes of the Growth and Prosperity Programme currently delivering major change in the Town Centre.

7.0 Appendices

7.1 Appendix 7(a): Town Centre Strategy and Outline Action Plan – Executive Summary

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 Each of the developments referred to have significant financial implications for which individual business cases are prepared and factored into the Council's budget. This includes securing significant levels of private sector investment and grant funding.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 Most of the developments referred to either do or will include individual legal agreements to protect the Council's investment and to secure the planned outcomes.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 Each of the developments, including those included in Levelling Up Fund bids, has a business case which includes a review of risks.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 The implementation of the Council's £1bn+ Growth and Prosperity Programme is designed to create extensive opportunities for employment and economic benefit to Blackpool residents and businesses.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 Whilst sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations are not a key focus of the majority of the outlined projects, each project has its own business case that will look to address sustainability and the environment where appropriate and its potential contribution to the Council's commitment to achieving net zero. In the case of the Shared Prosperity Fund application, three of the outlined projects that were put forward in the Investment Plan had a specific focus on sustainability, climate change and the environment.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 Both formal and informal consultation has been and will continue to be a key part of the implementation of such an extensive programme of improvement. Engagement has also been undertaken around the Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund bids.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.