

## DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (TOURISM, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOBS) – COUNCILLOR GILLIAN CAMPBELL

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The Places area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Fred Jackson (Municipal Assets),
- Councillor Wright (Housing, Procurement and Income Generation) and
- Councillor Mark Smith (Business and Economic Development).

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

#### Award of Contracts

A total of 16 contracts have been awarded within the Council since the last report with a total value of up to £4.2m and 55% being awarded to local suppliers.

Procurement has also acted on behalf of Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited in awarding four contracts (value £151,000 of which 66% local) and one school in awarding one contract (£27,000 out of area).

#### Town centre

A number of decisions relating to major developments were taken over recent weeks. These include the relocation of the Police Station to enable development of the Central Station Site and also to agree to keep the Town Centre Policing right in the heart of the town. The Housing Company Limited has now gone live and has been focusing on the first properties that will see the benefit of improvement, but also start the process of stabilising these communities working with many other Council services. Work on further improvements to the Town Centre is being championed by the Cabinet Member for Business and Economic Development, which will build on the established and recent development announcements we have seen to further improve the reputation of the town for entertainment, eating and shopping. A consultation into the provision of car parking to service the town centre and the tourism industry has commenced and I will be reporting on the outcome of this at a future meeting.

#### Bridge Funding

The Council has been successful in seeking funding from two sources to enable essential repairs and reconstruction of ten strategic bridges to be undertaken at a total estimated cost of £11.365m.

The funding is comprised of £4.23m from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, via a strategic outline business case for Growth Funding and the remaining £7.135m, which includes £1.5m from the Local Transport Plan funding, from the Department for Transport.

The Executive meeting in October will consider a report detailing the programme of works in relation to the ten bridges, with the first to be upgraded being Princess Street bridge post the Illuminations.

### Public Space Protection Orders

On 20 October 2014, the Government implemented the Anti-Social behaviour and Policing Act 2014 ("the Act). The purpose of the Act is to give local authorities and the Police more effective powers to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB), providing better protection for victims and communities.

Amongst these new tools and powers are Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO's), which are designed to stop individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour in a public space. It is for each individual Council to determine what behaviour(s) they want to make the subject of a Public Space Protection Order.

A consultation exercise has been carried out regarding the implementation of PSPO's in the town centre and promenade, and involved in excess of 1,000 people through either face to face interviews, online or paper responses. As a result, draft PSPO's for the town centre and promenade have been produced and will be considered by the Executive in October, with Parks following later in the year.

### Travellers

The month of August was a particularly challenging period in relation to travellers entering Blackpool. A large number accessed South Shore car park, with smaller groups entering public land on Lawson's Field, Collingwood Avenue and Mereside. In all instances, Environmental Protection, Street Cleansing, Parks, Legal Services and Parking Services addressed the situation immediately, acting in conjunction with the Police. The appropriate notices followed by orders were issued and presented to Court in terms of compliant and summons. Going forward, a review will take place with the Police to strengthen intelligence gathering, aiding in better planning and management of the situation.

## **Strategic Issues**

### Queens Park

The Queens Park Compulsory Purchase Order 2014 Vesting Declaration has now been made, vesting lands in the Council from 19 August 2015. Only possible rights to compensation remain for affected owners.

### New Housing Company

The 1 August 2015 was a significant date in the establishment of the Blackpool Housing Company Limited with Council staff formally TUPE'd to the new Company and the new Company Director, David Galvin starting work. The Company is overseen by a new Board, chaired by Councillor Ivan Taylor and is planning its first property acquisitions. Initial capital funding and Service Level Agreements between the Council and the new Company are currently being agreed.

### Visits from Heritage Lottery Fund Chairman and Arts Council England Chief Executive

Through the improvements to the Tower, Winter Gardens and the Illuminations and the introduction of new products such as LeftCoast (Creative People and Places) and the

Museum, the Council has been working to reposition Blackpool nationally as a must-see cultural destination and creative town as part of its approach to driving economic growth. This work has now been recognised and took another step forward recently when we hosted two visits from the Chairman of the Heritage Lottery Fund followed by the new Chief Executive of the Art Council.

#### Highway Asset Strategy

A new Highways Asset Strategy is being developed, which when approved will set the way forward for a Highways Asset Management Plan. This plan is to be based on the future aspirations for the town's highway network.

The Strategy and Highways Asset Management Plan is now a statutory requirement placed on every local highway authority and forms part of their new funding model.

In 2014, the Department for Transport (DfT) undertook a review of capital funding for highways maintenance and as a result there will be a move from 2017 towards incentivising Council's to adopt long term strategic planning via their respective Highways Asset Management Plans. From 2017, these plans will be scored and categorised into Bands One, Two and Three (Three being the best score) denoting the DfT's assessment of the quality of each plan. Based on this scoring funding will be calculated.

### **Policy Issues**

#### Collections Management Framework

We are currently working on a Collections Management Policy Framework for later this year for the Council's historic collections. It will be considered for formal approval by the Executive. This is a structured method for improving the way we develop, care for and make our heritage collections accessible. The framework is essential if we are to retain accredited status.

#### Tattoo Rating Scheme

A scheme of inspection and rating has been introduced and rolled out to all Tattoo and body treatment businesses in the borough. The scheme is aimed at driving up hygiene standards at these type of premises and been welcomed by the industry. The scheme has attracted huge regional press coverage to date. The results of the inspection are displayed in the window of each shop and also published online.

#### Selective Licensing

In the Claremont area, the team has visited 2,632 properties in the last 12 months and issued to date 1008 licences. There is a proposal to introduce selective licensing in the Central area and the consultation for this started on 17 July 2015 and will last for ten weeks. This area is as big as both the previous areas put together. There are eight events within the proposed area for landlords and tenants with a presentation followed by a question and answer session and they have been well attended so far.

## **Transforming Services**

### Cultural Services

We have been consulting with the public and ward members about the best use of the library resource. With fabulous new state of the art IT equipment being rolled out to our libraries it is important that we understand fully how people want to access libraries and that we open at the best times we can for this. Clearly we need to take into account the resources that we have but we know that we can improve accessibility to these critical services by making some tweaks to the opening times and other operating systems.

I have also been looking at the overall governance in Cultural Services to see if there are any better models out there that either improve the services offered and/ or reduce the costs to the Council. This is an ongoing process and will report before then end of the year.

Positive Steps into work will be launching a recruitment service for employers in the next couple of months. We have been trialing this with some employer partners and the service has been very well received. The service will use all of the skills the team has picked up running the employment contract and will help us to target job opportunities to residents in the most need.

Tomorrow we will launch EC<sup>2</sup> Virtual Office Services aimed at businesses that would benefit from having an office presence without the full cost of renting. This should be particularly helpful to small, start-up and self-employed businesses.

### Street Cleansing/Domestic Waste

Closer working practices are being considered between Street Cleansing and Domestic Waste, the latter of which is operated under a contract with Veolia. The aim will be to consider how bringing the services together can provide service improvements and efficiencies.

Seagull proof sacks are currently being trialed in areas that receive a weekly black sack collection. This is an attempt to combat the sacks being ripped open and strewn across the street. Initial findings are that they are proving an effective deterrent and are well received by the residents and the refuse collection teams. Rollout across other areas is currently being considered.

Domestic Euro Containers are also being rolled out to certain black sack areas and poor performing wheeled bin areas. The aim again is to keep the area clean and tidy and assist residents to manage their rubbish in the most effective way, making it easier to do the right thing.

Both of the above initiatives are proceed by a leaflet drop and door-knocking campaign to inform and educate residents.

## **Working with Partners**

### Cosy Homes in Lancashire

The Council is the lead authority for 15 local authorities across Lancashire for the Cosy Homes in Lancashire project and is currently finalising contract documentation with prospective funder(s).

### Joint Working with the Health Trust

Partnership working arrangements between Property Services and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals continue to progress well and an initial expression of interest to bid for up to £250,000 of 'One Public Estate' funding has recently been submitted to strengthen joint working with other public sector bodies on a Fylde Coast footprint through the development of the Fylde Coast Asset Management Forum and development of a data mapping exercise to identify the collective public sector estate for the area.

### The Enterprise Zone and Business Development

We have been working with colleagues in Fylde and Lancashire to develop the case for an enterprise zone and I am pleased to confirm that we have met the business case requirements set by Treasury and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the new zone is set to be announced later this year. The Enterprise Zone (EZ) will go live from 1 April 2016 and run until 2037. There is much work to be done between now and then to make the EZ operational.

There is increasing national attention on what can be done to help people with permanent or temporary health conditions to gain employment in theory this situation affects more than 11,000 residents in Blackpool. The Council is leading the way by integrating employment and health support. A £2.1m programme, using money won from the Government, will offer specialist employment support alongside parallel therapies to around 1,000 unemployed residents working with Blackpool Teaching Hospitals.

Following much work with existing owners and a forward thinking developer I am pleased to report that we have approved a planning application for a 130 bedroom hotel on the site of the existing Palm Beach Hotel. It is hoped that this development will also deal with the adjacent property which was the Warwick Hotel. With developments underway or planned on the majority of the properties in the South Shore Crescents we are sure this lead to a significant change in appearance of that area in the coming months.

### Schools Culture Hub

Blackpool is one of only six 'Culture Hub' pilot projects/ areas to be supported. The investment has been targeted in areas of low engagement where groups of children and young people are at risk of missing out on experiencing a high quality cultural offer. We have received funding of £150,000 over two years, with more to follow, based on our performance to date. The Blackpool Culture Hub partnership includes Blackpool Cultural Services – libraries, arts and heritage, Children's Services, Blackpool Music Hub, Grundy Art Gallery, Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation, Grand Theatre, LeftCoast and Blackpool Schools' Partnership.

### Highway Consultative Forum

The Highway Consultative Forum is proving extremely successful, enabling local people to be a part of the decision making process in relation to highways and traffic management.

Key stakeholders of business, visitor economy, transport, Police and disability groups are inputting in to the forum. In relation to disability groups, Low Vision and N-Vision have publicly thanked the Council for involving them and listening to their concerns and views.

### Rover

The mobile recycling unit, Rover, is delivered by our third sector partner Helping Hands and services those residents with no access to a car, which is in excess of 50% in some areas of Blackpool, won the 'Letsrecycle.com' National Award for Excellence in waste management and recycling.

### ReNew Workshop

The ReNew workshop continues to go from strength to strength, delivered in partnership with third sector partner Furniture Matters. The facility opened in June 2014 and has begun training courses in IT and white goods repair and refurbishment and is on target to reach 72 people completing an accredited course in the first year.

In addition to IT and white goods, a furniture restoration unit has been developed within the footprint of the warehouse, which will contribute to the sustainability of the overall project and provide increasing numbers of training opportunities for local people and increased items for resale in the HWRC shop and distribution through the Social Fund.

Over 200 items have been repaired and refurbished to date, with weekly nine volunteers and six placements, with the following courses being delivered:

- Domestic appliance repair and PC build both at Level 2
- 10-week courses for adults aged 18+ not currently in work
- Four day tester training for young people under 18
- 17-week traineeship programme for young people NEET aged 16 years to 18 years.

### Bulky Matters

Bulky Matters operates in partnership with third sector group Furniture Matters and has made 1090 collections so far this year, collecting 5,184 items, 388 of which have been reused and 2,365 recycled, achieving a recycling rate of 55%.

### Watch out for scams

Criminals worldwide are sending letters and making phone calls which trick millions of people into parting with billions of pounds every year. Blackpool Trading Standards have been working with the Citizens Advice Bureau to promote awareness of scams to local residents and have attended several events during National Scams Month in July. We have also made a number of visits to residents who have been the victims of scams and in some cases were able to return monies paid out by the victims.

### Night Time Economy Working Group

The Working Group met earlier in the summer to pull together its final report. Amongst its outcomes has been the production of a new manual, which has been distributed to licensed premises, setting out key information and sample documentation. The objective is to underpin expected standards in licensed premises and provide consistent information to all our premises. The manual has been endorsed by the British Institute of Innkeepers (BII).

The Working Group has also supported the Council's Public Health team, which has provided funding to train all bar staff in the town, with 160 staff already completing the BII Accredited training. The objective is to raise the standards and knowledge of all the staff working in the night time economy. The Group also welcomed and supported the recent re-introduction of

the CCTV in the Town Centre and had done some research on a proposed late night levy. With regard to the late night levy, it was noted that further work was required before a view was taken and this would be an issue for the Licensing Committee to consider.