

Report to:	CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Clare Nolan- Barnes, Head of Coastal and Environmental Partnership Investments
Date of Meeting	7 February 2024

PROGRESS ON OCEAN RECOVERY

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To provide a basis for the Committee to consider the actions to date for the delivery of the Council’s pledge for Ocean Recovery as set out in the report to scrutiny on 5 December 2022.
- 1.2 This report will provide a brief summary of the outline objectives (themes) to date that have been developed in Partnership and the draft action plan is appended to this report.
- 1.3 Members are asked to note that the action plan is still in its development stage (with Partners) in some areas.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To scrutinise the delivery of the Councils draft Action Plan for Ocean Recovery to date and also to consider the objectives and challenges and highlight any areas for further scrutiny.
- 2.2 To report to scrutiny at a later date to further update on the actions under development with Partners.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To ensure constructive and robust scrutiny of the report and draft action plan and provide confirmation that the Council is delivering its duties in respect of ocean recovery.
- 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

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

None

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”

6.0 Background Information

6.1 Following the declaration for Ocean recovery in December 2022 at the the Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, it was agreed that an action plan would be developed to address the challenges faced in respect of ocean recovery and to provide a report relating to progress on ocean recovery at a future Scrutiny Committee.

6.2 In order to achieve an action plan for ocean recovery, the Council hosted an Ocean Recovery Workshop with Partners to help inform and take ownership of actions in the plan. External Partners at the workshop included the Wildlife Trust, Liverpool and Lancaster University, United Utilities, Environment Agency, Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock (CIEL), Sea life Centre, Left Coast, Ocean Generation, West Lancashire County Council, Wyre Council, Fylde Council, NHS. In respect of internal participation, there was representation across all Directorates of the Council.

6.3 The action plan provides details of the work to date and recognises that there is more work to do with partners to achieve our objectives of ocean recovery.

6.4 Objectives

6.5 Following the workshop in October 2023 objectives have been identified and grouped into eight themes (described below) to enable ocean recovery.

The workshop identified that there were some challenges to achieving the objectives and as a result, the action plan is being developed in Partnership to establish if the challenges can be overcome.

6.6 Theme 1 Health and wellbeing through utilization of blue spaces, Decrease health and wellbeing vulnerability associated with seaside towns through boosting access to positive benefits provided by blue recovery.

- 6.7 Theme 2 Sustainable blue economy, tourism and coastal regeneration, increase opportunity for building blue skills, using ocean recovery to increase employment and reduce deprivation.
- 6.8 Theme 3 Education and engagement to grow ocean literacy and marine citizenship in the Blackpool, including ensuring All pupils are given the opportunity to have a first-hand experience of the ocean before leaving primary school - striving to include home-schooled children - and promote sustainable and equitable access to the ocean through physical and digital experiences for all residents.
- 6.9 Theme 4 Coast Protection and Climate Change to increase resilience to climate change impacts caused by proximity to the ocean through innovative solutions including impact on bathing waters.
- 6.10 Theme 5 Biodiversity protection and restoration increase the health of blue habitats in and around Blackpool in relation to the green and blue infrastructure strategy.
- 6.11 Theme 6 waste and pollution reduction to decrease inland pollution and decrease single use plastics impacts
- 6.12 Theme 7 Research and development to embed ocean based solutions as part of the Councils' operations and net zero 2030 approach
- 6.13 Theme 8 Collaboration with partners locally and Across the North West increase opportunity to on habitat management and increase awareness and appreciation of our North West Coastline and its assets.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

Appendix 9(a): Draft Ocean Recovery Action Plan

8.0 Financial considerations:

- 8.1 One officer is funded to embed, oversee and monitor the actions in the Ocean Recovery Action plan on behalf of the Council.
- 8.2 Further funding will be sought through the Partnership as the action plan develops
- 8.3 Blackpool Council needs to retain the expertise and resource to deliver the ocean recovery action plan.
- 8.4 In order to remain resilience, we will continue to extend the expertise and ensure

that Council has a flexible workforce; during 2024, training will be provided across the Council to enable better understanding of Ocean recovery and to assist in delivery of the action plan.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 Failure to implement ocean recovery could lead to unquantified and unmanaged risk to ocean water quality, loss of opportunity to work in a wider partnership to address environmental and climate change impacts.

11.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people

11.1 Consideration of equality and inclusion has and will be considered further throughout the process and will include engagement with residents and visitors.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 Sustainability and climate considerations form a key part of the main body of this report and its appendix.

13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 Blackpool Council have consulted with all internal directorates and external partners including the Turning Tides Partnership.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.