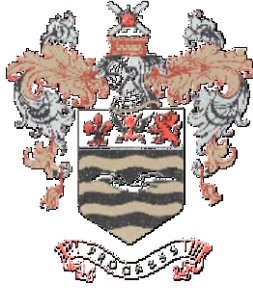


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**BLACKPOOL COUNCIL**

Tuesday, 20 June 2023

To: The Members of Blackpool Council

Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of **Blackpool Council** to be held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Blackpool on Wednesday, 28 June 2023 commencing at 6.00 pm for the transaction of the business specified below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Lewis".

Director of Governance and Partnerships

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## **Business**

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

**2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 24 MAY 2023** (Pages 1 - 6)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 24 May 2023 as a true and correct record.

**3 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive official announcements from the Mayor.

**4 PUBLIC REPRESENTATION** (Pages 7 - 8)

a) To receive a representation from a member of the public in accordance with Procedural Standing Order 9.

A response will be given by the Leader of the Council.

**5 AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 9 - 16)

To consider the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2022/2023.

**6 SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 17 - 30)

To consider the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2022/2023.

**7 EXECUTIVE AND COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPORTS TO COUNCIL** (Pages 31 - 36)

To consider proposed changes to the Council's Procedural Standing Order on Executive and Combined Fire Authority reports to Council.

**8 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL** (Pages 37 - 56)

To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to a full review of the Members Allowances scheme, undertaken following an all-out local election.

**9 HONORARY ALDERMEN** (Pages 57 - 60)

To consider, under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, whether to make arrangements for a Special meeting of Council to confer upon recently retired councillors, who, in line with the criteria agreed by Council and wish to be put forward, to receive the title of 'Honorary Alderman'.

**Venue information:**

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building.

**Other information:**

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Sarah Chadwick, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser, Tel: (01253) 477153, e-mail [sarah.chadwick@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.chadwick@blackpool.gov.uk)

Copies of agendas and minutes of Council and committee meetings are available on the Council's website at [www.blackpool.gov.uk](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk).

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### **Present:**

Councillor Benson (in the Chair)

### Councillors

Baker	Critchley	Jackson	Sloman
Bamborough	Ellison	Jones	M Smith
Boughton	Farrell	Marshall	S Smith
N Brookes	Fenlon	B Mitchell	Taylor
P Brookes	Flanagan	C Mitchell	Thomas
S Brookes	Galley	D Mitchell	Walsh
Burdess	Hoyle	Roberts	Webb
Campbell	Hugo	Roe	Williams
Cartmell	Humphreys	D Scott	Wilshaw
Cooper	Hunter	Mrs Scott	

### **In Attendance:**

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Sarah Chadwick, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

### **1 THE ELECTION OF THE MAYOR OF THE COUNCIL**

It was proposed by Councillor Burdess, seconded by Councillor Williams and

**Resolved:** That in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Gillian Campbell be elected Mayor of the Borough of Blackpool for the municipal year 2023/2024.

Note: The meeting adjourned briefly to allow the mayoral investiture to take place.

### **2 THE MAYOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Campbell made a Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Mayor according to the requirements of the law and then took the Chair.

### **3 THE APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR OF THE COUNCIL**

It was proposed by the Mayor, Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor L Williams and

**Resolved:** That in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Adrian Hoyle be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Blackpool, for the municipal year 2023/2024.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 24 MAY 2023

### 4 THE DEPUTY MAYOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Hoyle made a Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Deputy Mayor according to the requirements of the law.

### 5 THE MAYOR TO PAY THANKS IN RESPECT OF THE SERVICE OF THE EX-MAYOR

The Mayor paid thanks to Councillor Kathryn Benson and in doing acknowledged her service including the events attended throughout the year, the significant royal occasions and support her mayoral charity Streetlife.

Thanks were also given to the Mayoress, Mrs Therese Clark, Deputy Mayor, Councillor Peter Hunter and to the Deputy Mayoress, Mrs Anne-Marie Hunter. Political group leaders and other councillors also expressed their thanks to the ex-Mayor for her service.

Following presentation of the past mayor's medal, Councillor Benson spoke in reply and thanked those who had supported her during her mayoral year.

### 6 THE MAYOR'S ADDRESS

The Mayor, Councillor Campbell, addressed the meeting in relation to her forthcoming year. Speeches of congratulations were then made by the political group leaders along with a letter of congratulations from Oberbuergermeister Tischler on behalf of the people of Bottrop, the Council's twin town in Germany.

### 7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 8 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2023

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 February 2023 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

### 9 ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements made.

### 10 ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**Motion:** Councillor Taylor proposed (and Councillor Hugo seconded):

'That Councillor Lynn Williams be appointed Leader of the Council, to serve for a four year term of office until the Annual Council meeting in 2027.'

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

## 11 SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBER

Members considered the report on the role of Scrutiny Lead Member and chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and proposals to appoint Councillor Paul Galley to the role as Leader of the Principal Opposition Group.

**Motion:** Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

‘To agree to appoint Councillor Paul Galley, in his capacity as Leader of the Principal Opposition Group, as Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board.’

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

## 12 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Members considered a report on the appointment of committees for the 2023/2024 municipal year which had been proposed in accordance with the Council’s Constitution and Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and associated regulations.

The report highlighted that in late 2022 revisions had been made to the national Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Local Authority Chief Executives - National Salary Framework and Conditions of Service Handbook which outlined a revised structure for dealing with employment matters for Chief Officers. Members noted that the Chief Officers’ Employment Committee would be asked to appoint three standing sub-committees in line with the handbook and considered revised terms of reference for all committees dealing with staff employment matters and appeals.

The report went on to outline proposals for the establishment of four scrutiny committees that closely aligned with the Council’s key priorities under the direction and management of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and debate took place on appointment of those committees. The appointment of other Council committees whose powers and duties would remain unchanged was also considered.

Although not subject to political balance rules, it was recommended that appointments to the Licensing Committee would be on a politically balanced basis and that the Committee would also appoint the Public Protection Sub-Committee.

**Motion:** Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To appoint the following Council committees, with powers and duties as set out in the Council’s Constitution:
  - Audit Committee
  - Planning Committee
  - Standards Committee.
2. To appoint the following committees with the powers and duties as set out at Appendix 12a to the Council report:

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 24 MAY 2023

- Appeals Committee
  - Chief Officers' Employment Committee.
3. To appoint the following scrutiny committees with the powers and duties as set out at Appendix 12b to the Council report:
    - Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
    - Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee
    - Levelling Up Scrutiny Committee
    - Climate Change and the Environment Scrutiny Committeeand delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Partnerships to amend the responsibility areas if Cabinet Member responsibilities are changed.
  4. To appoint a Scrutiny Leadership Board, with the powers set out in the Council's constitution and for the Board to have an adjusted political balance membership of four Labour, six Conservative (to be made up of the Chairs, Vice Chairs of the four scrutiny committees, the Chair of the Audit Committee and also to add the Principal Opposition Group Leader as Chair of the Committee in line with the recommendation of agenda item 11).
  5. To agree the political balance attached at Appendix 12c to the Council report and appointments to the above committees at Appendix 12d and to delegate authority to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee to confirm appointments to co-opted positions throughout the year.
  6. To reappoint the Licensing Committee with the powers and duties as set out in the Constitution (equating to a membership of 12 and a composition of eight Labour and four Conservative).
  7. To request the Licensing Committee to re-appoint the Public Protection Sub-Committee, with the powers and duties, as set out in the Constitution including the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
  8. To request the Chief Officers' Employment Committee to appoint the following standing sub-committees:
    - Chief Officers' Appointments Sub-Committee
    - Chief Officers' Disciplinary Sub-Committee
    - Chief Officers' Appeals Sub-Committeewith the powers and duties, as set out in Appendix 12a to the Council report including the appointments of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs and to add in the powers and duties of the Independent Panel (Statutory Officers) as referred to in paragraph 6.2 of the Council report and also set out in Appendix 12a.
  9. To agree that any membership changes to committees or sub-committees during the course of the Municipal Year be reported to the Director of Governance and Partnerships by the relevant Group Leader for implementation.
  10. To agree to the memberships of the committees of the Council and their Chairs and Vice Chairs as set out in Appendix 12d to the Council report and that delegated



## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 24 MAY 2023

authority is given to the committees themselves to determine changes to Chairs and Vice Chairs, in line with the principles set out in this report should the need arise for change during the municipal year.

11. To confirm the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board with the powers and duties as set out in the Constitution and the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board as set out in Appendix 12d to the Council report.
12. To agree that the Director of Governance and Partnerships be authorised to amend the Constitution accordingly’.

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

### 13 CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION / SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Council considered whether to make any changes to the scheme of delegation for which the Council had responsibility.

Members also noted that reports would be brought back to the Council for consideration in relation to Honorary Aldermen and presentation of Executive reports to Council meetings.

**Motion:** Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To agree that no changes are made to the scheme of delegation for which the Council has responsibility.
2. To note that reports will be brought back to the June meeting on procedural matters referred to in the report.’

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

### 14 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2023/2024

Members considered the programme of meetings for the municipal year 2023/2024 and noted provisional meeting dates for May to July 2024.

**Motion:** Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To approve the calendar of meetings for 2023/24 as attached at Appendix 14(a) to the Council report.
2. To agree that meetings commence at 6pm as usual (set out at the end of the calendar of meetings at Appendix 14(a) to the report)’.

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 24 MAY 2023

### **Mayor**

(The meeting ended at 3.11 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance  
Tel: 01253 477127  
E-mail: [lorraine.hurst@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.hurst@blackpool.gov.uk)

Council:  
28 June 2023

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## PUBLIC REPRESENTATION - SPEAKER

NAME	SUBJECT
1. Ian White	<p>Mr White wishes to speak on the following issue:</p> <p>“I wish to address the council on the issues of Problematic empty properties and their impact on the communities. Significantly the impact of the regular discovery of cannabis farms and the severe disruption that follows. There are also the issues of the criminality that surrounds these properties with some significant examples. Also with properties being empty for significant periods i.e. in excess of 5 even 10 or more years. It is appreciated the council has a problematic empty property team but as yet we have seen no results and nothing which can be scrutinised.”</p>

A response will be given by the Leader of the Council. No other Councillors are permitted to speak on this item.

**NOTE:** The representative will be able to speak for up to a maximum of five minutes.

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Tracy Greenhalgh, Head of Audit and Risk
<b>Relevant Member:</b>	Councillor Jason Roberts, Chair of Audit Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	28 June 2023

## AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2022/2023.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To receive the Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/2023 and to ask the Chair of the Committee questions relating to the report and the audit function.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Audit Committee Annual Report sets out the work undertaken by the Committee during the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

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 priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

**6.0 Background information**

6.1 The Chair of Audit Committee, Councillor Jason Roberts, will present the Annual Report to Council. The annual report highlights the work undertaken during the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

6.2 The annual report builds on the previous reports provided to Council and forms part of the reporting arrangements identified and agreed by Council.

6.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 5(a): Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/2023.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 None associated with this report.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 There is no legal requirement to have an annual report, although it is considered best practice.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None associated with this report.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None associated with this report.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None associated with this report.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

# Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/2023



## **Overview**

I am pleased to provide this report to the Council on the work of the Audit Committee over the last Municipal Year.

During the 2022/23 Municipal Year the Committee was chaired by Councillor Paul Galley and I would like to extend my thanks for his work in developing the role of the Committee during his tenure as Chairman since 2015.

During 2022/23 Audit Committee has continued regular meetings and undertaken key pieces of work in ensuring that the Council has adequate provisions in place to address its areas of risk. In doing this the Committee has ensured that senior officers and external partners have continued to be adequately challenged and held accountable.

Training and support has been provided via the Audit Academy, which aimed to ensure that the Committee maintained its high quality of member questioning and levels of engagement, whilst also developing a greater breadth of knowledge of the wide range of issues falling within the remit of the Audit Committee. This will continue into the new Municipal Year to ensure the development of new members and improve existing members' knowledge. The Committee will also continue to raise its public profile and further encourage engagement from members of our wider community.

During 2022/23 the Committee also wished farewell to one of its Independent Members, Stuart Green, and has welcomed a new member, David Swift who brought a new perspectives and provided insightful question and expertise to the new role.

Councillor Jason Roberts  
Chair of Audit Committee



## **Work Undertaken**

### **Strategic Risk Register**

The Committee has continued to focus upon the Strategic Risk Register and has received regular attendance from risk owners in order to provide challenge on the work undertaken to mitigate risk. The Committee adopted a new format for the Risk Register and the deep dive process, which has allowed clearer cohesion between risks and allowed for greater identification of key areas for further consideration and investigation. Over the course of the year the Committee undertook deep dives into the following strategic risk areas:

- Reputational
- Security
- Strategy
- Legal
- Commercial
- Financial

In March 2023 the Committee approached the new risk appetite process which links to the introduction of target risk scores on the Strategic Risk Register to further improve the monitoring of outcomes.

### **Annual Governance Statement**

The Committee received the Annual Governance Statement 2021/2022 at its meeting in July 2022, which provided adequate assurance that public money was safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively, whilst also providing a reflective review of the past twelve months. A mid-year review of the Annual Governance Statement was considered at the January 2023 Committee meeting. At this meeting, progress against the actions to date was considered and answers sought from relevant officers where further clarification was required.

### **Risk Services**

Members of the Committee have reviewed reporting on Risk Services on a quarterly basis and have requested Chief Officer attendance, as appropriate, to provide assurance of adequate progress, or explanations where progress may have been delayed. The Committee has provided specific challenge on a number of matters. With regards to overseeing specific internal audit reports, the Committee has continued to request attendance from operational level officers in order to respond to internal audit follow-ups on a number of areas, including:

- Management of the Council's Investment Portfolio
- Care at Home
- Management of Leisure Centres
- Governance of Wholly-Owned Companies
- Climate Change

The information provided by the attending officers has facilitated comprehensive questioning during meetings as well as allowing the Committee to maintain an overview of the controls in place in relation to a wide range of service areas across the Council.

Throughout the year, the Committee also considered the Council's compliance with the Risk Management Framework, the Business Continuity Framework and the Fraud Prevention Charter, as well as seeking assurance with regards to the financial sustainability of the Council's wholly owned companies. Members provided strong challenge to address any issues identified and sought explanations from relevant officers of the measures in place to mitigate current and future risks.

## **External Auditors**

The Committee has continued to develop its productive working relationship with the Council's external auditors, Deloitte. Approval of the Annual Year End Accounts for 2020/2021 was delayed due to the emergence of a national issue around the historical accounting of local authority infrastructure assets, with questions being raised over the accuracy of previous methods used. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy established a task force to investigate the issue and to formulate a workable solution. As a result the audit was paused until such a solution had been agreed.

An audit solution was developed in 2022 and Deloitte have commenced work on approval for the 2020/2021 accounts. This issue has also delayed the completion of the audit of the 2021/2022 year end accounts. The Audit Committee will therefore be closely monitoring the situation over the situation into 2023/24 with a view to ensuring that the outstanding accounts are approved in a timely fashion.

The attendance of representatives from Deloitte, both in-person and virtually, at each meeting of the Audit Committee has provided members with the opportunity to seek assurance from the external auditors on the governance of the Council. In addition, the continuation of Deloitte's attendance at the Committee's pre-briefing meetings has proven to be a valuable asset, resulting in enhanced discussion of the key issues at the main meeting and the addition of a fresh perspective when considering areas of questioning.

## **Further Work Undertaken**

- CIPFA Position Statement – which set out how the Committee meets the requirement of the CIPFA Position Statement.
- Internal Audit Plan 2023/2024 - the Committee received and approved the plan – March 2023.
- Internal Audit Charter 2023/2024 – the Committee received and approved the charter - March 2023.
- Strategic Risk Register 2022/2024 – the Committee received and approved the register - March 2023.
- Fraud Prevention Charter– the Committee received and approved the charter - March 2023.

## **The Audit Academy**

High quality training and development has continued to be a focus for the Committee, delivered through the Audit Academy. Informative training sessions have been held regularly, where full participation from Committee members has been encouraged. In order to make the sessions as accessible as possible, these were undertaken remotely, which resulted in increased attendance levels and the facility for any absent members to access the sessions at a later date via the library of training session recordings. The training covered areas highlighted within the CIPFA Guidance for Audit Committee Members as well as any additional areas which members identified as requiring improvement in their skills or knowledge. As requested by the Committee, the following training sessions have been held over the past year:

- Audit Committee Terms of Reference
- Strategic Risk Register Deep Dives
- Role of the Audit Committee / Position Statement
- Statement of Accounts
- Annual Governance Statement

## **Future Work Programme**

The Committee will continue to receive and review key information including the Annual Governance Statement and the Risk Services Quarterly Reports and, when appropriate, invite Chief Officers and operational officers to attend to provide explanations where inadequate assurance has been provided or where key controls have not been implemented. The Strategic Risk Register will be reviewed and the information within it improved as necessary. Chief Officers will continue to be required to update the Committee with regards to the controls that are being implemented in order to manage the Council's risks especially when audit follow-up action is requested.

In the upcoming year the Committee will continue to work towards the following over the coming Municipal Year:

- Maintaining and strengthening the relationship with Scrutiny.
- Support and help manage the high risk areas.
- Ensure that the Audit Committee remains an active player in identifying emerging risks and general horizon scanning.
- Support the Council to tackle fraud by raising awareness of successful prosecutions.
- Communicate high interest items in Audit Committee meetings to the public.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
<b>Relevant Member:</b>	Councillor Paul Galley, Lead Scrutiny Member
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	28 June 2023

## SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2022/2023.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To receive the Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/2023 and to ask the Scrutiny Lead Member or other members of the Scrutiny Leadership Board questions relating to the report and the scrutiny function.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Scrutiny Annual Report sets out the achievements of scrutiny at the Council during the 2022/2023 Municipal Year and identifies areas for future development.

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 priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

**6.0 Background information**

6.1 The Scrutiny Lead Member and Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board, Councillor Paul Galley will present the Scrutiny Annual Report to Council. The annual report highlights the work undertaken during the Municipal Year 2022/2023 and identifies areas for future development.

6.2 The annual report builds on the previous reports provided to Council and forms part of the reporting arrangements identified and agreed by Council.

6.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 6(a): Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/2023.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 None associated with this report.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 There is no legal requirement to have an annual report, although it is considered best practice in the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None associated with this report.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None associated with this report.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None associated with this report.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

# Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/2023

Blackpool Council



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## Introduction

The 2022-2023 Municipal Year is the final year in the four year election term and the progress that Scrutiny has made during this time must be recognised. A new structure has been implemented, improvements have been made to the way in which Members consider and challenge, the level of work at both Committee meetings and through scrutiny reviews has increased and relationships with the Executive and partners have continued to develop with an intended consequence being a valued and positive contribution to policy development across the Council.

All Committees concluded their work prior to the pre-election period with suggested workplans developed for the new Committees to consider for 2023/2024 following their appointment at Annual Council.

The contribution of former Councillor Mrs Maxine Callow to the progress made must be recognised and the Council would like to thank her for her dedication and efforts over the years.

## Scrutiny Leadership Board

The Scrutiny Leadership Board has continued to focus on financial performance, budget scrutiny and the overall performance of the Council against the priorities identified in the Council Plan. The Board has continued to bring together the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees in order to provide joined up working on cross-cutting issues.

Regular meetings have been held between the Scrutiny Lead Member and the Leader of the Council in order to ensure relationships are strengthened and the Leader has continued to attend meetings of the Board in order to answer key questions on performance.

### Key pieces of work:

- During 2022/2023, the Scrutiny Leadership Board identified the issue of **measuring the impact of**

**scrutiny recommendations** as a priority. It was acknowledged that scrutiny had improved but that it was difficult to demonstrate added value from recommendations approved by the Executive. A scrutiny impact assessment tool was therefore developed and tested on the Housing and Homelessness scrutiny review. Feedback from Council Officers indicated that it was a useful reflective experience and provided a natural end to a scrutiny review once all recommendations could be considered complete.

- The recommendations of the **Channel Shift Scrutiny Review** were approved by the Executive and the Board undertook to review the implementation of the recommendations with a first report received in March 2023. There was still progress to be made in a number of areas and the Board will continue to follow these up over the next year.
- The Board has also taken hold of the Council Plan performance monitoring and has referred a number of items to the Scrutiny Committees which have been identified such as the support provided to young people aged 16-18 to assist them in accessing and sustaining work.

### FOCUS POINT: FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

As a cross-cutting and important strategy, the Board reviewed the draft and made a number of comments for consideration prior to its final approval:

- Reference to low paid single workers who were unlikely to qualify for any additional help or benefits and what could be done to support this cohort to be included.
- The importance of digital inclusion for all residents and ensuring a wide range of publicity was utilised.
- The extra pressure placed on private tenants required to purchase electric cards and those with coin-operated meters which could often have a mark-up making prices even higher.
- The importance of education and ensuring that Blackpool residents could upskill themselves. That the value of education should be promoted through the Strategy including financial education.
- To include risks attached to the informal economy in addition to information on lower risk generation of wealth and the opportunities available.

## Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee

The move to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) has been a key focus for the Committee in 2022/2023 with representatives from the ICB requested to attend on a number of occasions to provide an update on the development of the Board, its strategy and the vision for Blackpool with the intention to ensure that Blackpool residents did not see a disruption to service provision and were not 'lost' within the larger Lancashire and South Cumbria System.

The Committee also maintained its focus on mental health service provision with a special meeting again held with Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust regarding the Harbour, the development of the Initial Response Service and the improvement plans put in place to address the outcomes of the Care Quality Commission a number of years previously. A site visit was also arranged for Members of the Committee to tour the Harbour to see first-hand the services and environment on offer.

### FOCUS POINT: DRUG RELATED DEATHS

As a result of the report that Blackpool had the highest number of drug related deaths per head of population in England the Committee resolved to investigate the issue in detail in order to find areas of improvement for services. The review produced 9 recommendations, all of which were supported by the Executive. The recommendations ranged from mapping drug overdoses with related organised crime, increasing messaging around the dangers of using drugs alone, ensuring safe prescribing was embedded at GPs and the continuation of the outreach homeless health provision. A scrutiny review impact assessment was carried out on this review, which demonstrated that all of the Committee's recommendations had been implemented. Of the review, Public Health Officers and partners commented that the scrutiny process had been useful on this topic and everyone had valued the input of the Committee.

### Key pieces of work:

- **Supported Housing Scrutiny Review** – the Committee continued to monitor the recommendations made by the scrutiny review. As a result of the review, the recommended standards had been developed and approved by the Executive and were now available on the Council website. The Council continued to work with the Government regarding the development of regulations for the sector. The key role of scrutiny in the progress made in supported housing was highlighted with the impact on real lives and people noted.
- The Committee worked alongside the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee to investigate **Mental Health Provision for Young Men**. In total four recommendations were made targeting improvement in data sharing protocols, the provision of a key worked for 18-25 year olds and the importance of peer support. Both Committees will monitor the implementation of these recommendations in the new Municipal Year.
- Upon an in depth review of **Dentistry and Oral Health**, the Committee noted that service provision was in a state of change with the NHS redefining the model used to commission dentists. Access to dentists in Blackpool was a real issue and one that was reflected nationally. Therefore the Committee agreed to give the changes identified by the NHS time to have an effect and review whether access to provision had changed 12 months on. The Council was also developing an Oral Health Strategy to which the Committee has provided initial input.
- **Maternity Services** at Blackpool Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust was an area of concern identified by the Committee following a Care Quality Commission report and national press on the issues faced by Trusts around the country. The Trust was called upon to provide reports on proposed improvements and actions to be taken in order to address the concerns raised.

### Future focus:

The Committee has identified a number of areas for focus which will be passed to the new Committee for consideration including the increasing numbers of dementia sufferers and plans in place to support people, population health management and smoking cessation including vaping.

# Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee

The Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee has considered a large number of topics during 2022-2023, including the development of the Oracle Building, the final report of the HeadStart programme and updates on Young Inspectors and Youth Justice. Annual reports from the Corporate Parent Panel and the Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership have also been received.

### FOCUS POINT: CHILDREN’S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT

A key priority of the Committee during 2022-23 has been the ongoing improvement work to Children’s Services following Ofsted’s finding that services were “Inadequate” previously. Regular updates have been provided to meetings of the Committee and have provided opportunity for members to scrutinise the work taking place. The improvement work has impacted on a number of areas that the Committee has considered during 2022-23. Following a follow-up inspection in December 2022 Blackpool had been moved up to a rating of “Requires Improvement”. The Committee will continue to focus on improvement in this key area and support the Council on its journey to improve.

### Key pieces of work

- **Mental Health Support for Young men (aged 16-25) and Suicide Prevention** - In September 2022 Members of the Committee held a review panel meeting with Officers and representatives of Empowerment, Schools and the Integrated Care Board amongst others to ensure a broad range of views and representation. The review looked at case studies of young men and their experiences with mental health services during their transition from childhood to being an adult and the challenges they faced.
- **Catch Up/Recovery Spend Premium Review** – The Committee held a series of review panel meetings in 2022 to consider schools’ use of catch-up and recovery premium spending, provided following the Covid pandemic. These included meetings with head teachers from maintained primary schools to gain an

understanding of the issues that had been faced and how funding had been used to support them.

- **Young People Classed as Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)** – A review panel to consider NEET provision met with officers on 26 September 2022. The meeting discussed what work had been taking place and the opportunities available for young people classed as NEET. As much of the work had only been undertaken recently the panel agreed to review the impact of NEET work in 2023.

### Future Focus: Looked After Children in Blackpool

An area of future work for the Committee had been identified in the model of using private accommodation for looked after children. During 2023/24 it is proposed that the Committee will look at this model and consider alternative option for delivery, to ensure the best outcomes for Blackpool’s young people.

- **Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Written Statement of Action (WSOA)** – Following the outcome of the Ofsted and Care Quality Commissions inspection into SEND within Blackpool. The Committee met to scrutinise the draft WSOA to address the recommendations for improvement made during the inspection. Members considered the planned work and agreed to maintain monitoring of progress in respect of SEND provision improvements going forward.
- **Safety Valve Programme** – Following the announcement that the Council had been selected to take part in the Department for Education’s Safety Valve Programme, the Committee met with officers to discuss what the impact on Blackpool would be and what associated work would be taking place.
- **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)** – At its February 2023 meeting the Committee considered Children Service’s MTFS following the document being updated. The Committee discussed the changes to service provision outlined in the document and provided challenge regarding the assumptions made. A further revision of the MFTS is planned for consideration by the Committee in 2023-24.

**Topics identified for review in 2023/2024 include:**

- **Community Engagement in Schools**
- **Looked After Children in Blackpool – Children’s Homes**
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools**

**Future policy development work identified:**

- **Revised Children’s Services Medium Term Financial Strategy**

## **Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee**

The Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee has had multiple areas of focus over the previous 12 months including public rights of way, climate emergency work, town centre regeneration and leisure services performance and has received annual reports relating to parks and green spaces and waste and street cleansing.

**FOCUS POINT: SHORT TERM LETTINGS**

A key priority of the Committee has been the growth of Short term Lettings in Blackpool and their impact on residents and the local economy. As a result of this a review panel was established to consider evidence from officers and the Leader of the Council on the scale of the issue and the problems associated with short term lettings. A number of meetings were held during 2022 and the need for greater regulation of this form of lets was recognised in order to prevent their establishment outside of designated holiday areas. The Panel therefore made recommendations to the Executive supporting the maximum use of Council powers to regulate and control the growth short term lettings and sought additional resources to assist in the work taking place.

**Key pieces of work**

- **Air Quality Strategy** – On 14 December 2022, the committee met to provide input into the consultation on the development of the Air Quality Strategy. The meeting was updated on the themes identified under the strategy’s action plan and the work planned and taking place. The Committee endorsed a review of air quality

monitoring sites and recommended that Communication actions be assigned “owners” to ensure accountability and ownership. It was also asked that future policies in relation to domestic burning and heating, along with the draft Air Quality Strategy be brought back for consideration once developed.

- **Community Flood Resilience Policy** – On 15 December 2022 the Committee held a review panel to consider the draft Community Flood Resilience Policy. The meeting considered how the policy was designed to ensure clarity on roles and responsibilities during flood events and to enable local communities to be empowered in improving flood resilience in their own areas. The Committee recommended changes to wording of the policy to make it more positive and requested more details on flood work be shared with Members going forward.
- **St John’s Square Experimental Traffic Regulation Order** – The Committee was informed of proposals to introduce an Experimental Traffic Regulation order for St John’s Square. The order was intended to regulate traffic in the area for the benefit of local businesses and the public. Members endorsed the proposals and asked for an update a year on from implementation to consider the impact.

**Future Focus 1: Economic Regeneration**

Work to regenerate Blackpool through projects such as the Talbot Gateway and the Central Leisure Quarter have gained pace in 2022-23 and the agreement of the Blackpool Town Deal and receipt of Levelling Up funding from Central Government will ensure that this area remains a substantial part of the Council’s work in 2023-34.

- **Arts and Culture** – The Committee received an update on work to develop a Cultural Plan as part of its ongoing work to scrutinise the recovery of arts and culture in Blackpool following the Covid-19 pandemic. A steering group had been established to guide the Plan’s development and discussed the involvement of non-traditional cultural partners in the work taking place. A draft plan is scheduled for consideration in 2023-24.
- **Community Safety Partnership** - The Committee held its annual meeting as the Council’s statutory Crime and Disorder Panel to discuss the work of

the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in January 2023. The meeting was attended by officers and representatives of Lancashire Constabulary and discussed issues such as Anti-Social Behaviour, Begging, Rape and Serious Assault, Child Criminal Exploitation and work to improve the CSP's data quality. The implementation of the Serious Violence Duty was also noted by Members, with a new serious Violence Strategy to be developed in response.

- **Housing and Homelessness** - The annual update on Housing and Homelessness in Blackpool as recommended by the Housing and Homelessness Scrutiny Review Panel was considered. The pressure created by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis was discussed along with the role of housing services in supporting Children's Services in deprived areas and the planned use of the Severe Weather Protocol for winter 2022-23.

### **Future Focus 2: Climate Emergency**

Throughout 2022-2023 Climate Emergency work has grown at the Council and is impacting how services operate across the town. In addition to regular updates received by the Committee it is expected that a growing number of policies and strategies will be developed where scrutiny input will be necessary.

#### **Topics identified for review in 2023/2024 include:**

- CCTV
- Skills Gap in Blackpool's Economy
- Levelling -Up

#### **Future policy development work identified:**

- Electric Vehicle Strategy
- Domestic Burning and Heating
- Cultural Plan for Blackpool

NB Owing to the new Committee structure at the Council for 2023/2024, the work of the Tourism, Communities and Economy Scrutiny Committee will be moved as appropriate to the new Levelling Up Scrutiny Committee or the new Climate Change and the Environment Scrutiny Committee.

## **North West Employer's Review of Scrutiny 2022/23**

A follow up review was undertaken by North West Employer's with a final report received in early 2023. The review looked at the change and progress made following the full review by the same organisation carried out in 2019 from which a number of recommendations were implemented and identified further improvements to focus on moving forward.

The report highlighted the following key achievements since the first review had been carried out:

- A significant cultural shift at the Council and the mutual respect that now existed.
- The creation of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and its ability to work at the heart of the organisation.
- The introduction of more in depth scrutiny realised through a range of innovative and flexible approaches that extend beyond the standard scrutiny committees.
- The strength of scrutiny officer support through the use of pre-committee briefings.

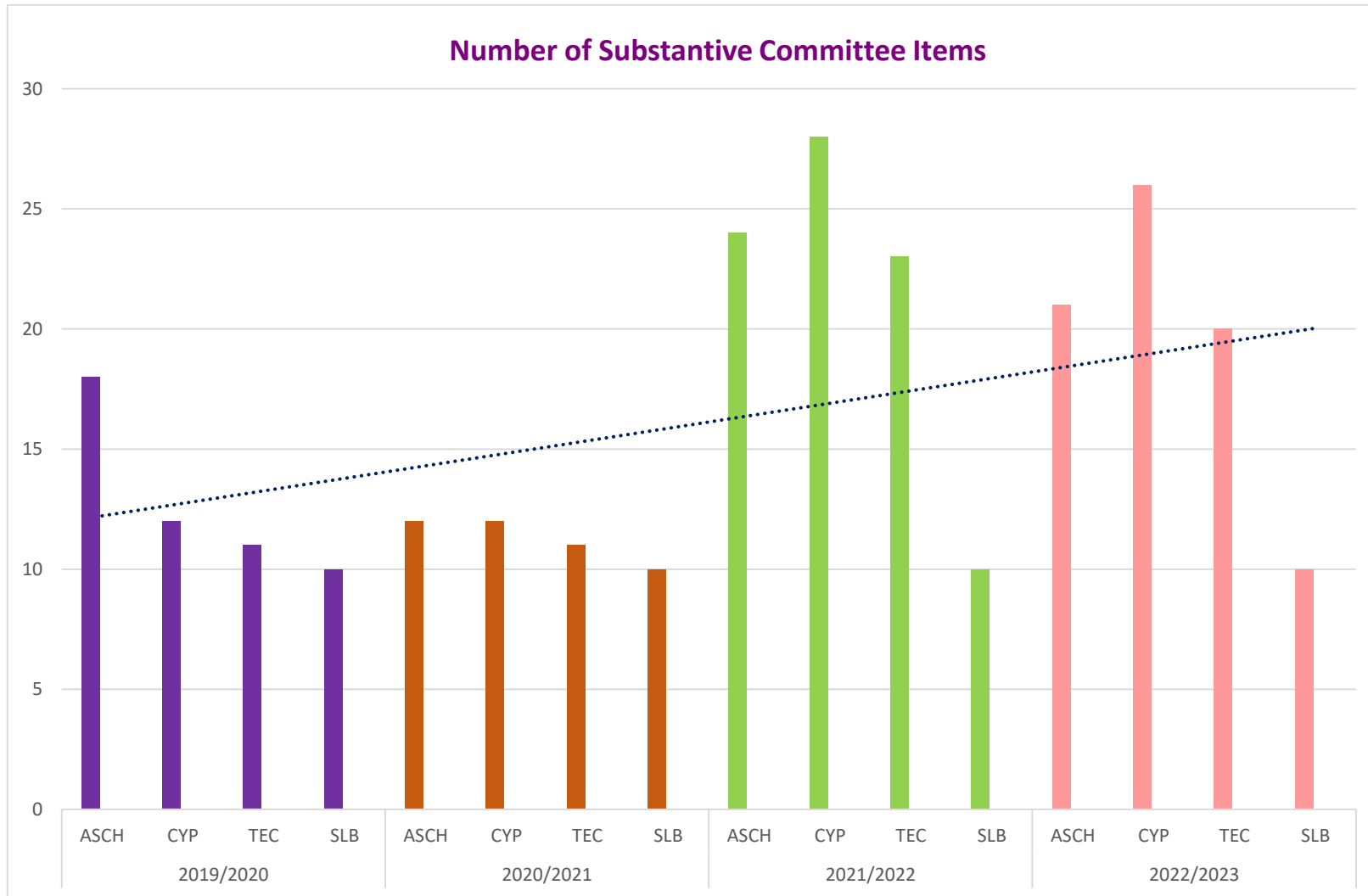
Opportunities for continuous improvement were also identified and an action plan will be developed in order to put these in place:

- To sharpen the role and purpose of the Scrutiny Leadership Board through the sharing of good practice and taking learning back to Committees.
- To further develop the impact assessments to contain rationale and reasoning behind the recommendations of reviews and demonstrate more widely the value added by scrutiny.
- To strengthen recommendation tracking and include in the annual report some data as to the level of work carried out.
- To continue work to develop public engagement and partner engagement in the scrutiny process.

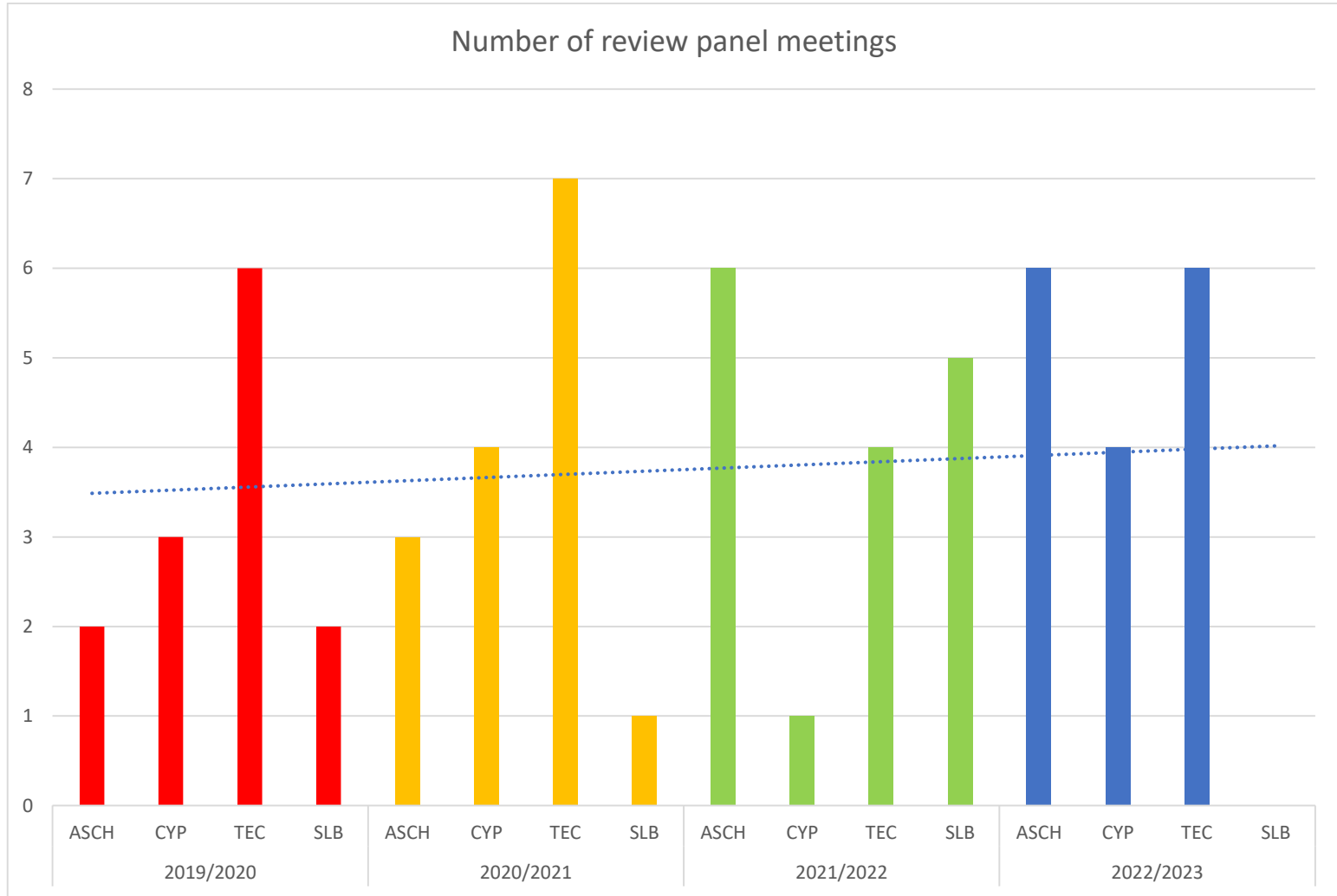
## Scrutiny Evaluation 2019-2023:

Scrutiny Members and Committees have worked hard through the four-year term in order to implement the recommendations of the North West Employer’s Review. The data below demonstrates the increase in review panels and recommendations over the four year term, an increase in the number of substantive Committee items for consideration and a substantial increase to the level of policy development which has been a key focus for the Committees.

	2019/2020				2020/2021				2021/2022				2022/2023			
	ASCH	CYP	TEC	SLB	ASCH	CYP	TEC	SLB	ASCH	CYP	TEC	SLB	ASCH	CYP	TEC	SLB
Number of substantive Committee Items	18	12	11	10	12	12	11	10	24	28	23	10	21	26	20	10
Number of Committee recommendations	13	9	3	0	11	10	7	0	13	25	3	0	11	8	9	0
Number of call-ins	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of completed Scrutiny Review Panels	1	1	2	0	0	2	1	0	3	1	2	1	0	2	1	1
Number of review panel meetings	2	3	6	2	3	4	7	1	6	1	4	5	6	4	6	0
Number of Scrutiny Review recommendations accepted by the Executive	10	5	0	0	0	0	10	0	2	0	0	0	9	0	3	10
Number of Special Committee meetings	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0
Number of policies/strategies contributed to	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	3	1	3	2
Number of briefing sessions held	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	2	1	0	3	2	1	0
Number of training sessions held for Committee Members *SLB in this category is for all Members	2	1	0	4	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Number of site visits held for Committee Members	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	0



The above chart shows the number of substantive committee items considered at Scrutiny meetings for the municipal years between 2019 and 2023. The chart shows that there has been a marked increase in scrutiny items, from 51 in total in 2019/2020 to 77 in 2022/2023. On average each committee has seen its number of items increase from 13 items a year to 20 in this period.



The above graph demonstrates the consistent level of review work under taken. The number of meetings increased from 13 in 2019/2020 to 16 in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023, despite the conclusion of the majority of scrutiny business prior to the pre-election period before the May 2023 local elections.



# Header 3

## Document Control

Document owner:	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
Document number:	1
Document category:	Annual Report
Document location:	
Issued by:	
Last edited:	28 April 2023

## Record of Amendments:

Date	Version	Amended by	Description of changes

## Approved By:

Name	Title	Signature	Date

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	28 June 2023

## EXECUTIVE AND COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPORTS TO COUNCIL

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider proposed changes to the Council’s Procedural Standing Order on Executive and Combined Fire Authority reports to Council.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To adopt a revised a Procedural Standing Order for Council meetings to replace Council Procedural Standing Order 11 as attached at Appendix 7(a) to the report and for this to be effective from the ordinary Council meeting scheduled for 20 September 2023.
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, to agree that the Group Leaders review the revised process within the next 12 months and report back to Council should any change be required, as set out in para 5.9.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To ensure that the process for consideration of Executive reports is more understandable and accountable.

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

### 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

Remain with the current reporting procedure or adopt an alternative.

#### **4.0 Council priority:**

4.1 The Executive reports cover all of the Council's priorities.

#### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 Under article 16 of the constitution, the Monitoring Officer has a duty to periodically review the Constitution. It states that "A key role for the Monitoring Officer is to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the Constitution adopted by the Council and to make recommendations for change..."

5.2 To this end a Working Group was formed in 2022 by the Monitoring Officer including elected members who held positions of importance in relation to governance. These included the Deputy Leader of the Council, the then Chair of the Audit Committee, the then Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and the then Chair of the Standards Committee. The Deputy Monitoring Officer also supported this group.

5.3 This Group recommended changes to the Constitution to the November Council in respect of the Articles of the Council and the Procedural Standing Orders for Council and committee meetings. It did highlight the need to review the Council's Procedural Standing Order for Executive and Combined Fire Authority reports to Council but agreed that this be reviewed following the local election.

5.4 Consequently the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group, the Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer and the Deputy Monitoring Officer met to consider an improved format for submitting Executive reports to Council and how Executive Members are held to account.

5.5 This report and the attached Appendix sets out the details of a revised process. The Group Leaders were also of the view that no Executive reports should go on this Council agenda but that Council be asked to consider instead this revised way of reporting and start the process from September's ordinary Council meeting.

5.6 The full Council has responsibility for corporate, policy and strategic matters and as such it is envisaged that Executive Members are held to account at the Council meeting in these areas. It was noted that this had been the original aim when the Executive reports to Council had been reviewed in 2015 but the content of reports and associated debate had somewhat moved away from this.

#### **Proposals**

5.7 In view of the above, it is proposed that Executive Member reporting at Council meetings should comprise of a single concise report from each Executive Member on a particular strategic, corporate or policy issue (or issues) with an opportunity for

general question/ comments at the end of the debate. These would be presented by each Executive Member as set out in Appendix 7(a). The time of 3 minutes per speaker it is proposed should remain but with answers being given during the debate by the Executive Member, with the Mayor calling on the Executive Member to respond as appropriate during the debate. (This is set out in more detail in Appendix 7a).

- 5.8 It is proposed that there be no overall limit on the time for questions/ comments per single Executive/ Fire Authority report with the Mayor managing the debate to ensure progress is made with dealing with business. The overall time for Executive reports being considered over the last 2 years has been approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes and it is suggested that this be used as a guide by the Mayor in managing the debate. More details on how the debate will take place and be managed is set out in the attached draft procedural standing order.
- 5.9 The two Group Leaders were supportive of this change to the way reports were presented but also were keen to see how it would work in practice. To that aim it is proposed that the process be reviewed by them within the next 12 months and if there is any change required then a report be brought back to Council.
- 5.10 A revised procedural standing order is attached at Appendix 7(a), which gives further details of how the reporting process would operate at Council for both Executive and Combined Fire Authority reporting.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 7(a) – Draft revised Procedural Standing Order

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

- 6.1 Article 16 of the Council’s Constitution (Review and Revision of the Constitution) sets out the duty of the Monitoring Officer to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution. The Council is required to approve any recommended actions which would consequently amend the Constitution.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

- 7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

- 8.1 None.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The proposals ensure that Executive Members are held to account at the right level.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 One of the Council's values is accountability and these proposals help enforce this principle.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Consultation has taken place with the working group identified at paragraph 5.4.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

## **Procedural Standing Order – Revised Number 11**

### **11. Executive Member and other Member reports to Council**

- 11.1 At ordinary meetings of the Council, each Executive Member (i.e. the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council and each Cabinet Member) shall present a report to the Council. These reports will be concise and cover either corporate, policy or strategic issues or matters in the Executive Member's areas of responsibility on a themed basis. There will also be an opportunity for the Executive Member to make any announcements to Council during the presentation of the report.
- 11.2 On a twice a year basis, at an ordinary meeting of Council, consideration will be given to a report from the Council appointed representatives from the Combined Fire Authority.
- 11.3 Each Executive Member and the nominated Fire Authority Representative will have a maximum of three minutes to present their report to the Council. The Mayor (or other person presiding) will then ask for questions and comments on each report (including those from other Executive Members) with a maximum of three minutes per question / comment. The Mayor will permit answers to be given during the debate by the Executive Member/ Fire Authority Representative but may group these questions / comments to allow debate to flow. There will be no set overall maximum time for each report to be debated although the Mayor will decide when a suitable time has elapsed and move to the next report.
- 11.4 Questions and comments should relate to issues contained within the report and there will be an opportunity for general questions / comments on any matter within the Executive Member's portfolio / Combined Fire Authority issues at the end of the debate. There is no limit on the number of instances that a member may ask questions on the Executive Member / Fire Authority Representative's reports.
- 11.5 Questions of a technical or purely operational nature may be disallowed by the Mayor, or the Executive Member may decline to answer or state that a written answer will be provided. In deciding whether a question is technical or operational in nature, as opposed to a matter of general policy, the Mayor and members shall have regard to any guidance issued by the Monitoring Officer.
- 11.6 Once a question/ comment has been answered there may be follow up questions / comments but the Mayor may limit this, if it is considered to be hindering wider debate.
- 11.7 Should a member have a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest in a question or comment raised by another member during the course of the debate, then in accordance with Procedural Standing Order 21, they shall leave the room whilst any discussion takes place. Whilst they are out of the room, either the relevant Executive Member or nominated Fire Authority Representative shall

respond to that question or comment immediately. After this has taken place and the member with the interest has returned to their seat then the questions and comments shall continue in accordance with Procedural Standing Order 11.3.

- 11.8 In the absence of an Executive Member, the Leader of the Council will appoint another Executive Member to deliver the report and respond to questions / comments and will notify the Mayor of this in advance of the meeting. The Fire Authority Representative nominated to present the report to Council will also be notified to the Mayor in advance of the meeting.
- 11.9 A response may be given by the Executive Member / Fire Authority Representative as follows:
- a direct oral answer
  - where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication
  - where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.



<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	28 June 2023

## REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to a full review of the Members Allowances scheme, undertaken following an all-out local election.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, as set out in paragraph 25 at Appendix 8(a).
- 2.2 That subject to the decision of Council, the Director of Governance and Partnerships be authorised to update the Members' Allowances Scheme accordingly.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Independent Remuneration panel has a duty to undertake a full review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and this report is presented following the all out local elections every four years. The Council has a duty to consider the recommendations of the Panel but may make its own decisions.

### 4.0 Background Information

- 4.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel was formed by the Council in 2001 and has a duty to provide the Council with recommendations on its scheme of members' allowances and amounts to be paid.
- 4.2 The Panel's terms of reference are to consider and make recommendations to the Council on the following:

**basic allowance** – the amount to be paid to all members of the Council.

**special responsibility allowance** – the roles for which this allowance should be paid and the levels of the allowance in each case.

**travel and subsistence allowance** – the duties for which this allowance should be paid and the amount.

**co-optees allowance** – whether this allowance should be paid and at what level.

**childcare and dependent carer’s allowance** – whether this allowance should be paid, at what level and how it should be calculated.

**backdating allowances** – whether any allowance should be backdated in the event of the scheme being amended.

**annual adjustment of allowances** – whether annual adjustments may be made by reference to an index or other pay award and, if so, how long such a measure should run.

4.3 The Panel also makes recommendations to Council regarding remuneration to be paid to the Chairmen and Non-Executive Directors of Council wholly owned companies.

4.4 The Panel has met on eight occasions since January 2023 and has also met with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group in undertaking its review. Attached at Appendix 8(a) is the report of the Panel, including its recommendations.

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix 8(a) – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

### **5.0 Legal considerations**

5.1 The Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent regulations set out the process to establish and maintain a Members Allowances scheme. The Independent Remuneration Panel appointed under that legislation has a duty to provide the Council with recommendations on its scheme of members’ allowances and amounts to be paid. The current Members Allowances Scheme is part of the Council’s Constitution at this link: <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/The-Council/Council-constitution-and-plans/Council-constitution.aspx>

### **6.0 Equalities Considerations**

6.1 One of the roles of the Independent Remuneration Panel under the Local Government Act 2000 and associated legislation is to recommend what it considers fair and appropriate allowances in relation to levels paid to members working in comparable authorities.

### **7.0 Financial considerations**

7.1 The Council’s Revenue budget has included based on the decision at the Budget Council in February 2023, an uplift of 2% in respect of the National Local Government

pay award. The recommendations of the Panel on the whole are covered by the recommendations which are broadly 2%. The budget was though based on the political management structure at that time and there are also uplifts for some positions backdated, together with new positions appointed since the election. If the proposals of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to the Members' Allowances Scheme were agreed in full then this would amount to £18,000, which can be met from the contingency budget. If the proposals relating to payments for non-executive chairmen and other non-executive directors on the Council's wholly owned companies were to be implemented then the costs for these would come from the companies themselves, except for those relating to Blackpool Transport Services and Blackpool Airport Group companies.

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Report of: The Independent Remuneration Panel  
To: Blackpool Council on Wednesday 28 June 2023

## Review of the Members' Allowances Scheme

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel to advise on the adoption of a scheme of members' allowances.
- 1.2 This report is a synopsis of the deliberations and recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Blackpool Council to advise the Council on its Members' Allowances scheme. The IRP was convened under The Local Authorities' (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021) ("the 2003 Regulations"). These regulations, which arise out of the relevant provisions contained in the Local Government Act 2000, require all local authorities to establish and maintain an advisory Independent Remuneration Panel to review and provide advice on Members' allowances on a periodic basis. All Councils are required to convene their IRP and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their members' allowances scheme. They must 'pay regard' to their IRPs recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances Scheme (2003 Regulations paragraph 19).
- 1.3 We undertake a full review once every four years and have met on eight occasions since January 2023 to undertake this review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and have met with both Cllr Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council, Cllr Paul Galley, Leader of the Principal Opposition Group and Mr Antony Lockley, the Council's Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Strategy.
- 1.4 We also held a joint meeting with Tracy Manning the Monitoring Officer from Fylde Borough Council and the Fylde Borough Council Independent Remuneration Panel, together with Mark Towers as Blackpool Council's Monitoring Officer (and Deputy Monitoring Officer at Fylde Borough Council).
- 1.5 We were reminded that Blackpool Council and Fylde Borough Council have shared arrangements in relation to the Standards Framework and have adopted the same Code of Conduct for elected and co-opted members and arrangements for dealing with complaints of member misconduct. As part of these shared arrangements there is a shared pool of three Independent Persons who input into that process. These positions have an allowance which is paid for on a 50/50 basis between the two Councils.

## 2.0 Methodology

2.1 We were supplied with the following information to assist us in our work:

- The Government's Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances published in July 2003
- The Council's current Members' Allowances Scheme
- A chart outlining the Council's political management structure (both pre-election and post-election 2023)
- A copy of the Annual Council meeting agenda for May 2023 detailing the appointment of Committees and the schedule of meetings for the forthcoming municipal year.
- Research on comparator levels of allowances from single tier Councils in the North of England and in the former Audit Commission Group of Councils (mainly seaside towns)
- Details of Executive responsibilities of the Cabinet Members (pre and post-election).
- Follow up review by North West Employers of the scrutiny function undertaken in late 2022/ early 2023.
- Details of a Members Survey carried out in 2022 regarding the level of time spent on various activities for both council and wholly owned company work
- Numerous role descriptions of council appointed elected member positions and role descriptions for the positions of the wholly owned company Boards
- An information document detailing the size, background, numbers of staff and activities of each of the Council's wholly owned companies
- Information submitted regarding how the role of a councillor in Blackpool had changed between the two local government boundary reviews (2002 and 2022) which had been submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in 2022
- Arm's-Length Management Organisations Board Member Remuneration Survey 2022
- Statistics for number of civic events over the last 6 years

2.2 We also met with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group to seek their views on the level of allowances and other factors including the operation of the scrutiny arrangements.

2.3 In arriving at its recommendations, the IRP is expected to take into account the following:

- Allowances paid in comparable councils, namely comparable single tier Councils in the North of England and in the former Audit Commission Group of Councils (mainly seaside towns)
- Views of the senior elected members interviewed
- Any other consideration that the Council obliges the IRP to consider
- The economic climate

2.4 Across the eight meetings, the Panel was supported at various times by the Director of Governance and Partnerships, the Head of Democratic Governance and the Scrutiny Manager.

### **3.0 Basic principles – the overall Allowances Scheme**

3.1 In undertaking the review of the Scheme, we were aware of, and had regard to, the following:

- (a) That following the Local Elections in May 2023, although there had been an influx of new councillors, overall there had been minimal change to the type of positions within the Council's Executive and committee structures, with minor alterations to responsibilities in the Executive, additional Cabinet Assistants, some changes in scrutiny committee responsibilities and the addition of an additional scrutiny committee.
- (b) It was acknowledged that the decision of the Council regarding its review of the Member Allowances Scheme in 2015 had brought the Council's levels of basic allowance to the northern average for basic allowances for single tier authorities/ former Audit Commission family group Councils ('northern single tier average') and this had been retained in 2019. The comments made by the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group at the Panel meeting in April 2023 were that broadly the level of the current allowances was about right.

### **4.0 The formulae for calculating allowances**

4.1 In 2015, we adopted a formula for calculating a basic member allowance, centred around the Joseph Rowntree Living Wage, now known as the Real Living Wage ('living wage'). This was in line with good practice adopted by other Councils. It was considered that this formula was wholly appropriate and should be continued to be used for this review.

4.2 The formula was: Living wage @25 hours per week, less approximately 12% for public service. In 2015 and 2019 we believed that the increase in living wage would be a good factor to maintain a consistency for future reviews:

4.3 The living wage in 2019 was £9.50 per hour and in 2023 this is now £10.90 per hour. The hours per week, from the Members Survey in 2013, determined that Blackpool councillors worked on average 25 hours per week. In 2022, a Member Survey was re-undertaken by Democratic Governance staff, to help identify whether this average had changed. This survey was done on a sampling basis reflective of the differing roles undertaken.

4.4 The members surveyed included those appointed to companies, some Chairs of Committees, Cabinet Members, and some with no position of special responsibility, covering all political parties and Independent elected members.

- 4.5 We were presented with the findings of the 2022 survey and on review of those findings, it was found that 25 hours per week was the average total amount of time spent on Council activities was still valid.
- 4.6 As part of the research we undertook, we not only obtained the average allowances for comparable positions across all single tier Councils in the north of England together with those in the former audit commission family group (northern single tier average), but also the % allowed for public service in those using this type of a formula. However, a benchmarking exercise with some northern unitary councils has shown that there was a need to increase the percentage of time allocated for public service (the 'public service' principle) and this ranged from 20% to 40%, higher than that currently being used. We felt that a figure of 20% better reflected the amount which should be given for public service and so have updated the formula to reflect that.
- 4.7 A revised formula for basic allowance would therefore be:
- Living wage @25 hours per week, less approximately 20% for public service.

## **5.0 Public Service Principle**

- 5.1 This is the principle that an important part of being a councillor is the desire to serve the public and therefore, not all of what a councillor does should be remunerated. Part of a councillor's time should be given voluntarily. This public service concept or ethos was a key introduction in 2015 to the formula and we therefore wished to continue to use this. However, as indicated at para 4.6 and following a benchmarking exercise we have updated this to 20%.

## **6.0 Fair Remuneration Principle**

- 6.1 In putting forward our recommendations in 2015 and 2019 we considered that they provided a package of financial support which was reasonable, and in some way went towards addressing the disincentives from serving in local politics. This was based on our research at the time, and speaking to the then Leader of the Council and Leader of the Principal Opposition Group. By continuing to use the formula from 2015 (as adapted above) we felt our recommendations would continue to assist in this regard. In essence, this meant that the recommendations we made reflected the increases in the 'Living Wage'.
- 6.2 We are also aware of the economic climate (as referenced in para 2.2) and feel that for serving councillors (even though as an allowance and as the survey indicates councillors give on average 25 hours per week), many undertake the role on a part time basis and therefore the allowances contribute to the cost of living they face. We have taken this into consideration in our recommendations below.



## **7.0 Level of basic allowance**

- 7.1 We note that the data showed that the basic allowance as of 1 April 2023 was now comparable with the 'northern single tier average' and recognise that the basic allowance is an integral part of the overall scheme and that this payment is the only allowance to which many of the councillors are entitled. We believe that we have strong evidence on which to base our recommendations, which are referenced in this report.
- 7.2 In the meetings with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group, both had commented that the level of allowances seemed appropriate following the 2015 and 2019 reviews and had parity with other similar local authorities. We have therefore taken this on board and recommend a 2.0 % increase for this current financial year (as the annual uplift). We have come to this figure using the formula at para 4.3 Whilst this brought a figure of 2.13%, in undertaking full scheme reviews, the common practice is to consider whether the figures should be rounded up or down, as appropriate.
- 7.3 Although the budget for the Members Allowances scheme is the Council's responsibility, not the Panel's, we were aware that the Council's revenue budget includes a 2.0% increase for the NJC pay award for 2023/ 2024. We also noted that the pay award offers already made to unions which had been declined as part of the ongoing discussions for the National Joint Council for Local Government Service pay award for 2023/ 2024 were in excess of this figure. We have therefore concluded that 2.0% is a fair increase to recommend for the basic allowance taking into account the economic climate and the Fair Remuneration Principle as set out in section 6.

## **8.0 Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)**

The basic allowance using the formula agreed in 2015 and 2019, would be factored to determine other Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs). In comparing the resultant SRA figures these all compared favourably with the average our research had shown from 'northern single tier average' for SRA positions.

## **9.0 Posts not uplifted in the 2022 Review**

- 9.1 We noted that for the annual uplift in 2022 the following posts were not given the uplift for that year. As part of this full review, we recommend that they also be given that increase which all other Special Responsibility Allowance roles benefitted from in 2022, or dealt with differently as indicated elsewhere in the report. These roles were:
- Chair and members of the Shareholder Committee (see section 17)
  - Chair, Audit Committee Chair and non-executive directors of all Council companies (see section 17)
  - Independent Standards Persons (see section 15)
  - Co-opted members of Scrutiny Committees (see section 16)

## **10.0 Leader of the Council and Executive Members**

10.1 We noted on the list of responsibilities for Executive members that the positions of the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Members were very similar to that in place prior to the election and in line with the proposals outlined by the Leader of the Council prior to the election. We therefore concluded that they continued to be at the same level and therefore in our view should continue to receive the same level of remuneration subject to the annual uplift.

## **11.0 Leader and Deputy Leader of the Principal Opposition Group and Leader of Second Opposition Group**

11.1 In 2015, we came to the view that the allowance for the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group should be at the same level as a Cabinet Member (subject to that group consisting of at least 25% of the Council members – i.e. 11 members) and the Deputy Leader of that Group should receive an allowance at 50% of that level of remuneration. In September 2018 we recommended to Council and it was agreed that in order for a Second Opposition Group Leader to qualify for an allowance the Group should consist of 10% of the Council members (i.e. four members). As part of our review we conclude that these criteria should be retained. We note that there is no second opposition group returned after the 2023 election. However, we believe that it should remain part of the Member Allowance scheme and we recommend that we be consulted on the appropriate allowance should a group of 4 or more members be formed in the future.

## **12.0 Lead Scrutiny Member/ Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board**

12.1 In 2019, we noted that North West Employers (NWE) had carried out a review of Scrutiny at Blackpool Council and had made several recommendations and comments regarding parity of esteem with the Executive and the appointment of a Scrutiny Leadership Board to oversee the scrutiny function. We were advised that the Lead Scrutiny Member/ Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board would be high status and have a very important leadership function.

12.2 We noted that in the 2019 review the Council had previously had a Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee and that was the same as that of an Executive Cabinet Member and concluded at that time that looking at the responsibilities of the role of Lead Scrutiny Member / Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and the time commitment expected, that it warranted an allowance the same as a Cabinet Member.

12.3 As part of this 2023 full scheme review, we were also furnished with a follow up report conducted by North West Employers (NWE) which reviewed the progress made since the 2019 NWE scrutiny review. The Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group had also received a copy and we questioned them on the follow up report and their thoughts on how the Lead Scrutiny Member/Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board role had worked since 2019.

- 12.4 They informed us that scrutiny had worked well and the Scrutiny Leadership Board had a good structure and form and was the right co-ordinating body for scrutiny. It was noted that the Lead Scrutiny Member/ Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board was a vital role especially going forward to make sure that the Board continued to develop and not become another ordinary scrutiny committee.
- 12.5 We reviewed the role of the Lead Scrutiny Member/Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board role and note that since the election at the Annual Meeting the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group had been appointed to this role.
- 12.6 We noted that there was some overlap with both these roles and accordingly have agreed that the Lead Member Scrutiny/ Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board should not receive a second allowance in full and note the similarities with the Chair of the Shareholder Committee (in terms of meetings, both formal and informal attended and time commitment) and have recommended both positions receive the same level of allowance.

### **13.0 Scrutiny Chairs, Vice Chairs and Cabinet Assistants**

- 13.1 For scrutiny committee Chairs and Vice Chairs we considered that the formula applied in 2015 and 2019 was applicable for this review (1 x basic). In previous full reviews we had agreed that the positions of Cabinet Assistants be given the same level of allowance as the Vice Chair of the scrutiny committees and we agreed that this should continue.

### **14.0 Other Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs**

- 14.1 In discussion with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group we considered whether the Chairs of Planning, Licensing, Appeals and Audit Committees should be remunerated on a similar level to Scrutiny Chairs. On review, we believe that the current formula applied is correct (i.e. 0.8 x basic). This is based on the importance placed on scrutiny by the Council, particularly following the North West Employers review in 2019, and the follow up review in 2022, and the contribution of scrutiny in holding the Executive to account, and working with the Executive to develop policy. This also applied to the Vice Chairs of these committees who would receive 50% of what the Chairs received. No change is therefore proposed.

### **15.0 Independent Standards Persons**

- 15.1 Blackpool Council and Fylde Borough Council have shared arrangements in relation to the standards framework and have adopted the same Code of Conduct for Members and arrangements for dealing with complaints of member misconduct. As part of these shared arrangements, we were aware that there is a shared pool of three Independent Persons.

- 15.2 A joint meeting was held with Fylde Borough Council Independent Remuneration Panel and their Monitoring Officer. We heard how the respective roles of the independent persons worked at Blackpool and Fylde and we heard of examples of recent meetings including hearings that the independent persons had been involved in. The last review had taken place in September 2021 and a revised figure of £950 per annum was agreed with an annual uplift in line with the scheme.
- 15.3 The current remuneration for this position was £966.62 per year, with payment made per council on a 50/50 basis. After deliberations and an acknowledgement that remuneration for this position should reflect the time and responsibility needed and to recognise that there had been no cost of living rise last year for the role, it was considered appropriate that an uplift should be given. The Joint Panel agreed to recommend both Blackpool and Fylde Borough Councils that the remuneration for Blackpool and Fylde Independent Persons should be £1,000 per year, starting from the 1st June 2023 (in order to allow Fylde Borough Council to agree this allowance also).

#### **16.0 Co-opted Independent Audit Committee Member and Scrutiny Co-opted Members**

- 16.1 We reviewed the role profiles for both positions and looked at the number of meetings they attended and other commitments the roles had to undertake and concluded that since their last review, the roles and associated workload had not significantly changed. As stated in para 9.1 we do feel the Scrutiny co-opted member positions should have the 2022 uplift backdated.

#### **17.0 Payments to Wholly owned Company and Shareholder Committee roles**

- 17.1 In previous reviews we had used the findings of the Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMO) Board Governance Surveys, to help determine payment for Chairs, Audit Committee Chairs and Board Members, which compared different levels of payments for these positions. We again, for consistency, used this information which was relevant up to December 2022 and covered 24 different wholly owned companies of councils.
- 17.2 We met Antony Lockley the Council's Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Strategy and he shared with us his thoughts on the Council's role of shareholder, its relationship with the companies it owned and how it made appointments to Non-Executive Director positions. In particular, we considered issues relating to the skills, appointment and selection process of independent Non-Executive director positions and Councillor Non-Executive Director positions. Mr Lockley advised that from the Council's perspective having the required skills, knowledge and diversity for any Non-Executive director position was essential to have an effective Board which would lead the companies on the Council's behalf.
- 17.3 In the discussions with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group, they also advised that they would, as far as practicable, seek to match required skills and diversity requirements of the Boards when making their appointments. They both also reiterated the important leadership role of the Chair of the Company Board in leading the company through times of change as had been experienced with the pandemic.

- 17.4 We noted that the level of remuneration of Non-Executive Directors for Blackpool's wholly owned companies was slightly below the benchmark norm, although we did acknowledge that being wholly owned companies there was an element of public service expected.
- 17.5 We were also asked to consider remuneration for the new position of Vice Chair at the Blackpool Housing Company and sought more information about this appointment. We noted that the position of Vice Chair was not a standard position in the company structures. We were informed that there was a potential expansion of the Blackpool Housing company in the coming months with Government support and there had been recent interviews for a Non-Executive Director and one applicant possessed the qualities to be a Vice Chair. This person (the Council believed in its role as shareholder) could provide support from a leadership perspective in the development and expansion of the company.
- 17.6 We considered that the allowance for a Non-Executive Director should be increased to £3,000 and with regard to the remuneration for the Chair of Company Boards, a 4% uplift be applied as it had not been in 2022 (see para 9.1). In addition to this the 2.0% average increase as would be applied to the formula-based allowances giving a total of £5,546.
- 17.7 We concluded that the Chair of the Audit Committee should receive an allowance between that of a Non-Executive Director and that of the Board Chair and that figure would be £4,250 per annum. The new Vice Chair of Blackpool Housing Company (BHC) and the Vice Chair of Lumen would be £4,000 per annum for each role and it is recommended that this would be reviewed in 12 months following the introduction of the BHC role.
- 17.8 With regard to the Chair of the Shareholder Committee, we recommend that this be applied on a similar model to that agreed by the Council in 2021 (i.e., the same as a Chair of a wholly owned company Board less 20% to reflect some Executive responsibility with regard to the role). This would give a remuneration of £4,436. For Shareholder Committee members that this be £3,000 as this has been parity with the allowance for Non-Executive Directors in previous reviews. We recognise the importance of both Non-Executive Directors and Shareholder Committee members and the roles they play both for the company and the shareholder particularly in recent times with the pressures placed on wholly owned companies of Councils, and the need for good governance at all levels. The proposed allowances are also in line with those comparator companies referred to in para 17.1.
- 17.9 We were reminded of the legal view that special responsibility allowances for directors of wholly owned 'transport' companies must be paid by the Council rather than directly by the company. It was noted that this would apply to both Transport and Airport Companies. The same amount would be paid whether paid direct by the company or through the Members' Allowances Scheme. In the same regard we also were reminded that a councillor NED must claim company related expenses to the value of that agreed in the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme and not a higher figure which may be determined by the company.

## 18.0 Armed Forces Champion

18.1 In our review of this role in November 2022, we recommended that no allowance be paid for this role and that this role be reviewed as part of this full review. This was agreed by Council. We have sought information from many different towns and cities with similar champion roles, we concluded that this role, as with many champion roles is one undertaken out of public duty/ service and has not been remunerated. We have therefore concluded that this position should not be remunerated in Blackpool.

## 19.0 Civic Mayor and Deputy Mayor

19.1 In 2012, 2015 and 2019 we recommended to Council that the position of Civic Mayor should be remunerated at a lower level and Council agreed that this be the case. The common factor here was that the level of the Blackpool remuneration was in each case lower than the northern single tier average. In 2019 we also noted that in relation to statistics of events attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor that there had been a significant reduction of 42% in events attended from four years earlier.

19.2 We noted that in the last four years there has again been a reduction in events attended by the Civic Mayor and Deputy Mayor, however we did acknowledge that this had also overlapped with the pandemic. We did seek clarification from the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group about their views on the role of the Mayor in Blackpool. Both spoke about the role being a very positive one and added value to the civic pride in the town and one that should develop and grow. We have therefore decided to re-apply the original formula for the Civic Mayor's allowance (and the Deputy Mayor's allowance) to reflect the importance of the role.

**Table 1: Level of allowance recommended using relevant formula (these have also been rounded, as per para 7.2)**

	<b>Formula (for 2023)</b>	<b>Recommended allowance for each position</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Basic allowance</b>	Living wage (£10.90 per hour) @25 hours per week, less 20% for public service	<b>£11,317</b>	See section 5
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	3 x basic	<b>£33,951</b>	See section 10
<b>Deputy Leader of the Council</b>	60% of Leader of the Council	<b>£20,370</b>	See section 10
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	45% of Leader of the Council	<b>£15,277</b>	See section 10
<b>Leader of Principal Opposition (Minimum of 25% of seats on Council i.e., 11)</b>	Same as Cabinet Member	<b>£15,277</b>	See section 11
<b>Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition Group</b>	50% of Leader of Principal Opposition Group.	<b>£7,638</b>	See section 11

	<b>Formula (for 2023)</b>	<b>Recommended allowance for each position</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Leader of another Opposition Group (minimum 10% of seats on Council i.e., 4)</b>	No current position	<b>N/A</b>	See section 11 – should a group be formed of 4 or more councillors then the IRP's views be sought on a formula.
<b>Lead Scrutiny Member/ Chair of Scrutiny Leadership Board</b>	Same as Chair of the Shareholder Committee on the basis that this is a second allowance.	<b>£4,436</b>	See section 12- If this becomes a stand-alone role in the future then this be reviewed by the Panel
<b>Chairs of Scrutiny Committee</b>	1 x basic	<b>£11,317</b>	See section 11
<b>Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Committees</b>	50% of Chairs of Scrutiny Committee	<b>£5,658</b>	See section 13
<b>Scrutiny Co-opted Member</b>	Stand-alone figure – based on comparable authorities – (no formulae applied)	<b>£555</b>	See section 16 and section 9
<b>Cabinet Assistant</b>	Same as Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Committees	<b>£5,658</b>	See section 13
<b>Chairs: Planning, Licensing, Appeals and Audit committees</b>	0.8 x basic	<b>£9,053</b>	See Section 14 and section 21
<b>Vice-Chairs: Planning, Licensing, Appeals and Audit committees</b>	50% of Chairs of Committees	<b>£4,526</b>	See Section 14 and section 21
<b>Independent Person Standards</b>	Stand-alone figure – based on comparable authorities – (no formulae applied)	<b>£1,000</b>	See Section 15 - (Allowance to be jointly agreed with Fylde Borough council).
<b>Independent Person Audit</b>	Stand-alone figure – based on comparable authorities – (no formulae applied)	<b>£798</b>	See Section 16 and section 9
<b>Chairs of Council Company Boards</b>	In line with ALMO Board Governance survey	<b>£5,546</b>	See Section 17, section 21 and section 9
<b>Chair of a Company Audit Committee</b>	In line with ALMO Board Governance survey	<b>£4,250</b>	See Section 17, section 21 and section 9
<b>Vice Chair of the Blackpool Housing</b>	In line with ALMO Board Governance survey	<b>£4,000</b>	See Section 17 and section 21.

	<b>Formula (for 2023)</b>	<b>Recommended allowance for each position</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Company and Vice Chair of the Lumen Housing Ltd</b>			(Review in June 2024).
<b>Other Non-Executive Directors (incl Lumen Housing Ltd)</b>	In line with ALMO Board Governance survey	<b>£3,000</b>	See Section 17, section 21 and section 9
<b>Chair of Shareholder Committee</b>	20% less than the Chair of a Wholly owned company Board	<b>£4,436</b>	See Section 17, section 21 and section 9
<b>Members of Shareholder Committee</b>	Same as No-Executive Directors	<b>£3,000</b>	See Section 17, section 21 and section 9
<b>Mayor</b>	1 x 1.25 basic	<b>£14,146</b>	See Section 19
<b>Deputy Mayor</b>	25% of Mayor	<b>£3,536</b>	See Section 19 and section 21

## **20.0 Parental Leave of Absence Policy**

- 20.1 At the Council meeting on 21 November 2018, a notice of motion was passed to request that we consider and report back on a parental leave of absence policy for elected members. We considered a report setting out the reasons for the request and examples of existing policies in place at other Local Authorities. The reasons given in the motion for the introduction of a policy include that the role of a Councillor should be open to all. We considered good practice from various authorities and recommended (and Council agreed) that a parental leave of absence policy for Blackpool councillors and associated adjustments be made to the Members' Allowances Scheme.
- 20.2 As part of this 2023 full review we reviewed the Parental Leave of Absence Policy and sought the views of the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group. Both spoke of the need to have such a policy and whilst acknowledging that it may not have been activated yet, with a significant number of new councillors, with the average age of councillors falling and many being in employment then having such a policy in place was the right thing to have. We have therefore not made any changes to the policy and recommend that it is maintained as part of the Members Allowances scheme.



## **21.0 Payment of more than one Special Responsibility Allowance**

- 21.1 As part of this full review we considered the current guidance regarding payment of additional SRA allowances and noted the exceptional circumstances in which additional allowances were currently paid (i.e. Shareholder Committee roles, Company Non-Executive Directors/ Chairs, paying an additional SRA for a member covering another member's absence whilst on Parental Leave of absence and for someone undertaking the role of Deputy Mayor).
- 21.2 In November 2022 we recommended (and Council agreed) that in relation to Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Appeals Committee, Audit Committee, Planning Committee and Public Protection Sub-Committee, the special responsibility allowance (SRA) for these positions can be paid in addition to one other SRA from within the political management structure as set out in the constitution, we continue to support this view. As indicated in Section 12 we also now recommend that the position of the Lead Scrutiny Member/ Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board be partly paid as an additional SRA.
- 21.3 Subject to the paragraphs above it was considered that the expectation that only one allowance should be paid should continue, however, where a councillor is appointed to additional roles and there is a direct request to do so, then we believe that as a Panel we should consider such a request on its merits. One scenario we did consider was that of someone in receipt of a Chair or Vice Chair of a Scrutiny Committee SRA and whether that should be used as a basis for qualification for an additional SRA. We are of the view that, based on the guidance summarised at para 21.4, it would not qualify to be paid as an additional allowance. (It could be paid as a first allowance with other allowances identified in the scheme paid as an additional allowance).
- 21.4 Our consideration of requests for additional allowances would cover the level of responsibility, time required for each role and the public perception of the additional allowance to determine whether the circumstance warranted payment of one allowance, more than one allowance or a percentage thereof. We would then recommend to Council accordingly.

## **22.0 Review of Approved Duties**

- 22.1 It was noted that there had been some minor changes to wording in 2019 but acknowledged that many Council constitutions had similar wording for what constituted approved duties in a Leader and Cabinet system in accordance with para 15 of the 2003 Regulations. We therefore agreed that no changes be made to this part of the scheme.

## **23.0 Annual Uprating of the Scheme for Future Years**

- 23.1 We noted that a key principle for the last two full scheme reviews was to uprate the scheme in line with the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Service scheme and we agreed that that principle is continued in future years.

## 24.0 Other Allowances

- 24.1 We considered that the 'other allowances' in the scheme were on the whole correct or required minor change or removal and make the following recommendations:

**Table 2: Other Allowances**

<b>Carers and Dependents Allowance</b>	Recommend no change - the wording to remain the same as the current Members' Allowances Scheme.
<b>Bus/ Tram Passes</b>	Recommend no change - the wording to remain the same as the current Members' Allowances Scheme.
<b>Car Parking</b>	Recommend no change - the wording to remain the same as the current Members' Allowances Scheme.
<b>Mileage allowances</b>	Recommend this be in line with the staff mileage allowance.
<b>Public and Other Transport</b>	Recommend no change - the wording to remain the same as the current Members' Allowances Scheme.
<b>Subsistence allowances and overnight subsistence</b>	Recommend this be in line with the staff allowance.
<b>Accommodation claims</b>	Recommend no change - the wording to remain the same as the current Members' Allowances Scheme.

## 25.0 Recommendations to Council

- 25.1 The Panel recommends that a new Allowances Scheme be adopted by the Council based on the recommendations below with the rationale as set out in the report.
- 25.2 That the basic allowance for members should be set at £11,317 per annum (a 2.0% increase) and backdated to the fourth day after the local election (Monday 8 May 2023).
- 25.3 That the special responsibility allowances for members should be as set out as recommended in Table 1 of this report (following paragraph 19.2 of this report) and commence from the current date of appointment for the councillor concerned into those positions in the Municipal Year 2023/ 2024.
- 25.4 That the position and criteria for a Second Opposition Group Leader be retained in the Members Allowances scheme but no allowance be determined but should a group be formed of 4 or more councillors then the IRP's views be sought on the level of an SRA, as set out in para 11.1.
- 25.5 That should the Lead Scrutiny Member/ Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board be no longer occupied by the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group, then the IRP's views be sought on the level of the SRA, as set out in section 12.
- 25.6 That no SRA continues to be paid to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Standards and Chief Officers Employment Committees on the basis that they meet infrequently.

- 25.7 That no SRA continues to be paid to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Public Protection Sub Committee on the basis that these positions are occupied by the same councillors who hold the positions of Chair and Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee and an SRA is payable for those positions.
- 25.8 That the criterion for the payment of additional SRAs be as set out in section 21, including the endorsement of previous decisions relating to additional SRAs.
- 25.9 That as set out in Section 18, no allowance be paid to the Armed Forces Champion.
- 25.10 That the 'other' allowances as set out within the scheme should be set as recommended at Table 2 (following paragraph 24.1).
- 25.11 That the Parental Leave of Absence Policy currently part of the Members' Allowances Scheme not be changed and be readopted.
- 25.12 That the annual uprating to be applied to the Members' Allowances Scheme in respect of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances continue to be in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Service pay award.
- 25.13 That in relation to the seven wholly owned Council companies and Lumen Housing Ltd, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023, we recommend the following allowances to the Council (and to Blackpool Housing Company in respect of Lumen Housing, as its parent company):
- Chairs of Boards should receive an allowance of £5,546 per annum
  - Vice Chairs of Boards (Blackpool Housing Company and Lumen Housing Ltd only) should receive £4,000 per annum
  - Chairs of Board Audit Committees should receive £4,250 per annum
  - Non-Executive Directors (not holding the above positions) (or Board Members for Lumen Housing) should receive £3,000 per annum.

The expenses for these roles for councillor NEDS to be in line with the Members' Allowances Scheme. This would acknowledge the level of responsibility required with some deduction for public service. We recommend that the allowances for the Vice Chairs of Blackpool Housing Company and Lumen Housing Ltd be reviewed in June 2024.

- 25.14 In relation to the recommendation above, the payments for the Chairs and Non-Executive directors for the Transport and Airport companies be paid via the Members' Allowances Scheme, with the payments to the other companies paid by the companies themselves.

Mrs H Hockenhull  
Mrs K Eaton  
Mr N Kilgallon  
Mr G Molyneux

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	28 June 2023

## HONORARY ALDERMAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider, under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, whether to make arrangements for a Special meeting of Council to confer upon recently retired councillors, who, in line with the criteria agreed by Council and wish to be put forward, to receive the title of 'Honorary Alderman'.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To agree to hold a special meeting of Council to confer the title of 'Honorary Alderman' of the Borough of Blackpool under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to former Councillors

- Don Clapham
- Gary Coleman
- Allan Matthews
- David Owen

the time and date of this to be agreed by the Mayor.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To recognise long-serving councillors who have made an exceptional contribution to the Borough and their community during their time in office.

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

- 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The recommendations in this report meet all the Council's priorities.

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 At the meeting of the Council on 25 November 2015, the Council unanimously agreed to adopt the award of Honorary Alderman of the Borough under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and it also agreed the process and criteria for such conferment.

5.2 The title of Honorary Alderman may be conferred on persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the borough, but who are no longer serving Members. There is no specific definition of 'eminent services', it being left to the discretion of the Council to assess and recognise any individual's contribution to the activities of the Council and the borough.

5.3 Whilst the award of Honorary Alderman of the Borough does not convey with it any legal rights or responsibilities, Honorary Aldermen support the office of Mayor and are invited to attend certain civic ceremonial events. A minimum of 15 years' service as a councillor was agreed as part of the criteria in November 2015 and that they had stood down prior to an election, as opposed to losing their seat at an election. The former councillors put forward have all served more than 15 years.

5.4 It would be expected that an Honorary Alderman would be invited to certain civic events, act as ambassador for the Council and promote civic pride within the borough. Honorary Aldermen would also be entitled to a car park permit and if appropriate use of a tram/ bus pass, operated by the Transport company.

5.5 In accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, nominees must receive the support of not less than two-thirds of the Members voting at a special meeting convened for that purpose and this report is to agree that a special meeting be set up for such purposes.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**List of Appendices:**

None.

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows Councils to confer the award of Honorary Alderman.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 There are no Human Resource considerations.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 There are no equalities considerations.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 Small badges of office will be purchased which can be met from within the current civic revenue budget.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 There are no risk management considerations.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The conferring of such an award recognises the dedicated service the nominee will have made to the borough of Blackpool.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Consultation has taken place with the Mayor and Group Leaders regarding this report and the holding of a special meeting. Consultation has also taken place with those former councillors who stood down at the last election and this report recommends a special meeting be arranged for those who wish to receive the award. Former Councillor Simon Blackburn does not wish to be considered for the award. No other former Councillors meet the criteria set out in paragraph 5.3.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

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