

# Council Plan 2019 – 2024



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# Foreword

In our introductions to the 2015-2020 Council Plan we described an organisation which had re-shaped its entire outlook to overcome some of the biggest budget cuts handed out by Central Government. We talked about taking tough spending decisions to change or secure much needed and respected services, but also the innovative thinking going on to open up new opportunities. The Plan was big on ideas and ambition, never straying from the idea that “Progress” – in spite of our financial and social context – should be our watchword.

Half way through delivering the plan, we reviewed how much we’d achieved so far, and took stock of the changing context in which we operate. It was also time to ask “What’s next?” With so many other great seaside resorts in Britain, what would keep Blackpool ahead of the pack, whilst making sure that everyone who lives here feels a real, lasting benefit from the work? This updated plan is our response to this review, and it takes forward our vision into the 2020s.

We are clear that the direction we took in 2015 remains the right one. With Blackpool still at the wrong end of many indicators measuring the strength of the economy, or health, we need to continue focussing on the things that matter – maximising economic growth and opportunity for everyone in the town, and creating stronger, more resilient communities. Some of the plan is about using programmes and projects we’ve already got in place to deliver more, faster. And some of it is about starting on new projects which fit with our vision and priorities.

Working in partnership is a growing theme of our approach to delivering more with less. For example, in October 2018, we launched the Blackpool Town Prospectus, developed with the private sector and one of the Prince of Wales’s charities Business In The Community. Working together we have identified a list of aspirational projects which will fundamentally change how Blackpool and the Fylde Coast works, looks and feels. Together, we will promote Blackpool’s cause across government and business, creating further opportunities to deliver on our vision and priorities. So whilst we’re delivering this updated plan, we’re also looking for further opportunities, partnerships, projects, initiatives, funding and support for the next steps.

Blackpool is the UK’s best family resort. Delivery of this plan will make it even better.



**Cllr Simon Blackburn**  
Leader of the Council

**Neil Jack**  
Chief Executive



# Introduction

The pace of change in Blackpool is quickening. A modern beach resort with big city facilities is emerging. This plan contains details of a wave of exciting projects and initiatives to grow our economy and strengthen our communities. Our core priorities have not changed since our 2015 Council Plan, but our ambitions have grown and become ever more realistic.

We already delivered over £300m of investment in the visitor economy since the mid-2000's, arresting a decline in the number of staying visitors, and giving the private sector confidence to invest. We now have improved sea defences, a renewed tramway, new rolling stock and buses, a new promenade environment, and refurbishments to the Blackpool Tower and Winter Gardens. Furthermore, well over £100m of further investment is on its way, with a new conference centre, tram extension and new hotels currently coming out of the ground.

Our holistic approach has also seen effort and investment to diversify our employer base beyond tourism, pushing up average wages and reducing seasonal employment, with the co-creation of two Enterprise Zones in the wider Fylde Coast which seek to deliver 6,500 extra jobs. Hundreds of poor quality housing units have been demolished or refurbished, replaced by quality affordable units for rent and sale, whilst standards in the wider private sector have been driven up by a targeted approach to rogue landlords.

By building on our strengths, but nurturing emerging specialities, we aim to produce a well-rounded, resilient economy, with a variety of opportunities to suit workers of all skill levels, which both attracts staff and provides further opportunity for them to stay locally as their career develops.

In tandem with this, we have moved to develop our communities, helping them to get better at helping themselves. Two lottery-funded flagship programmes, the NSPCC-led A Better Start and the Council's HeadStart initiative have started to shift the perception of what life can be like in Blackpool, with community connectors empowering young families by bringing them together with services to improve nutrition, language skills and emotional development. Meanwhile, our teenagers are leading a "resilience revolution", working with us on a range of initiatives to make all 10-16 year olds better able to cope with their individual circumstances.

This focus on young people extends to their education. As an Opportunity Area, we are working with the Department for Education to ensure that the aspirations of our young people are raised through evidence-based approaches, and to ensure that our teaching provision is of the highest quality. This will enable our young people to aspire to further education and challenging careers, making the most of institutions like Blackpool and Fylde College's new Energy HQ, which will be crucial to meeting the future needs of our employers.

Blackpool is Britain's Number One family resort. This plan seeks to build on this position over the next five years, getting the town ready for even higher aspirations in the future.



# Achievements since 2015

## Economy

- Secured the status of Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, which has already created and safeguarded over 700 jobs
- Won £18m of funding and started construction on the new £26m Winter Gardens Conference Centre
- Secured funding and started construction on the £23m tramway extension to Blackpool North Station
- Started delivery of the £7m Quality Corridors programme to improve key roads and streetscape in the town
- Captured and delivered over £10m of road bridge improvements, and undertook work to improve and stabilise Yeadon Way
- Gained national recognition for the town's commitment to customer service, after being awarded WorldHost Recognised Destination status, training 2500 staff over two years
- Fully allocated two rounds of the Business Loans Fund, with nearly £100m going into businesses in Blackpool, enabling them to grow and strengthen, and also facilitating the development of the Hampton by Hilton hotel in South Shore
- In 2017, Blackpool Transport served the highest number of passengers on the tramway in over 15 years (5.1 million), and introduced a ticketing app offering live travel information
- The LightPool project resulted in approximately 465,000 additional visitors to the Illuminations in 2016 alone
- My Blackpool Home has now delivered over 250 brand new affordable home for rent through the conversion of poor quality property, addressing some of our worse housing stock
- Secured an initial £6m towards the capital cost of the Blackpool Museum Project



# Achievements since 2015

## Resilient Communities

- Delivered, in partnership with the NSPCC, A Better Start – with initiatives including Baby Steps, Family Nurse Partnership and Community Connectors promoting better parenting around language skills, social and emotional development, and nutrition
- Engaged 45 schools with our HeadStart Resilience Revolution, with 945 school staff now trained to help pupils make resilient moves to promote mental health
- Opened the Health and Social Care Careers Academy, supporting those beginning or wanting to advance their careers in the health and social care sectors, helping to ensure the sector can access the skills necessary to deliver changing care needs
- Launched The HealthWorks, bringing together employment, health and lifestyle advice to help local residents gain and sustain jobs, as well as improve their overall physical and mental health
- Our innovative work placement programme for students with disabilities, Project Search, is into its fifth year, and has enabled 20 interns to gain and maintain paid employment
- Delivered 191 new council homes at Queens Park on the site of the former tower blocks in Brunswick
- Improved property standards through rigorous enforcement and extension of our selective landlord licensing schemes
- £739,000 investment in Marton Mere Local Nature Reserve, safeguarding ecosystems and enabling safe access
- Improved accessibility, cleanliness and water quality along our coastline
- New gyms at Palatine and Moor Park, and a High Ropes adventure course at Stanley Park
- Completed sea defences at Anchorsholme, attracting £27 million of grant funding





# Our Council Plan

Retaining our position as the UK's Number One family resort, with a thriving economy that supports a happy and healthy community who are proud of this unique town

Values: Accountability, Compassion, Fairness, Quality Services, Trustworthiness



## The Economy

Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool



Visitor Experience: Tourism & Culture



Enterprise, Skills & Economic Inclusion



Improving Housing  
Increasing Resilience



Infrastructure & Regeneration



## Communities

Creating stronger communities & increasing resilience



Health & Social Care



Young People



Safeguarding

Addressing **Economic** and **Health** Inequalities

A Resilient Organisation: Innovative, Efficient & Customer Focused, with great staff and strong governance

Working in partnership with our companies and other local organisations

Equalities: Fair- Treatment, diversity in decision-making celebration increased respect, a representative and understanding workforce



# The Economy

An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely London, showing a dense urban area with red-tiled roofs. In the foreground, a large green field is outlined in red, containing an airport terminal with several aircraft, a parking lot, and various industrial and commercial buildings. A road and a railway line cross the field. The sea is visible in the top left corner.

The site of the Airport Enterprise Zone, which will contribute to the creation of around 6,500 new jobs





# The Economy: Maximise growth and opportunity across Blackpool

Our plans for the economy for 2019-2024 can afford to be increasingly ambitious, capitalising on our strong market position amongst seaside resorts, whilst continuing to diversify into new areas.

Much has been written about Blackpool's social and economic issues. We recognise that support is needed at all levels, from supporting people to gain confidence and enter or re-enter the workplace, right up to encouraging those with academic aptitude to raise their aspirations and qualification levels. We will deliver further tailored programmes, building on our existing provision to deal with the complex factors suppressing people's ability to achieve. All of this will be matched with the needs of companies seeking to grow.

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**“ The Enterprise Zone will develop and safeguard skilled jobs ”**

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The next five years will see us delivering on our ambition to take our visitor offer well beyond the basics expected of any modern resort. We will open an exciting new museum for the town and commence delivery of a whole new world-class Leisure Quarter Blackpool Central – as well as opening our new conference centre, the biggest push yet to re-capture a larger slice of this burgeoning market. All this will bring extra visitors and spend, who will be able to get around the resort more easily thanks to investment in our transport infrastructure, and stay in an expanded range of high quality hotels as big brand names seek to capitalise on Blackpool's growth. And crucially, all of these new developments will create new jobs for local people.

Having now found its feet, the Enterprise Zone will continue to develop and safeguard skilled jobs, but the benefits of skilled work will be shared around the borough as the Talbot Gateway development moves into new phases of delivery. The renewal and creation of high quality affordable housing will enable us to retain more of the economic benefits of these jobs in the borough, as people choose to live and work in the town, further boosting the quality of our town centre offer.





# The Economy: Visitor Experience – Tourism and Culture

By 2024, we will:

Complete development of a new 21st century conference offer at the Winter Gardens, and increase numbers of new conferences.



Finalise design and funding, then deliver the Blackpool Museum project.



Implement a new model of funding and delivery to sustain the Illuminations, events programme and cultural services.



Deliver the first phase of a £300m investment into Blackpool Central, to include world class visitor attractions, including the UK's first flying theatre.







# The Economy: Infrastructure and Regeneration

By 2024, we will:

Complete the tram extension, transport interchange and new 4\* hotel at Blackpool North station.



Implement the Blackpool Enterprise Zone Delivery Plan, facilitating the growth of energy, aviation and food sectors.



Deliver extensions to the Central Business District at Talbot Gateway.



Further invest in highways, including completing the Quality Corridor programme, Yeadon Way upgrade and bridge renewal programme.





# The Economy: Enterprise, Skills and Economic Inclusion

By 2024, we will:

Get hundreds of people back into work via job schemes for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, including HealthWorks and More Positive Together.



Support local businesses to grow and expand by maximising take-up of the Business Loans Fund.

Work with partners to deliver the Opportunity Area programme, raising attainment and aspirations of our young people.







# The Economy: Improving Housing

By 2024, we will:

Deliver hundreds more affordable new homes, including the re-development of land at Grange Park and further properties at Foxhall Village.



Enable further housing delivery through pro-active assistance to developers, including use of CPO powers where necessary.



Enable My Blackpool Home to deliver at least an additional 455 new quality affordable homes for rent.



# Communities







# Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

At the centre of life in Blackpool are our residents and our communities. Our aim continues to be on making life better for everyone, focussing on prevention more than support. Three flagship projects – A Better Start, HeadStart and most recently the Department for Education-funded Opportunity Area – all mark a decisive shift towards enabling future generations and creating the right conditions for their success.

We want to focus more on building on our assets, whilst providing core services for those most in need. This will allow us to manage our limited resources, but continue the move started in the last Council Plan towards starting a conversation with communities on how we can build a better town together, encouraging people to volunteer and take positive social action. Some of this is around creating the right conditions for community life and mental health to flourish – something our Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will address through creating and restoring green spaces, linking

them together better to encourage their use.

Our health and social issues are well documented, and these must be addressed if we are to become truly resilient. Partnerships with independent projects such as Fulfilling Lives will tackle some of our most deep-seated social issues, providing intensive support for those with multiple complex needs around homelessness, reoffending, problematic substance misuse and mental ill health. But much of the effort will focus around our social care services, reducing the cost of delivery whilst improving

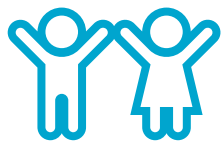
the outcomes for all. Over the period of the plan there will be local and national pressures and opportunities for adult social care that Blackpool will need to respond to. Our approach will be the same as the one we have adopted in the previous Council Plan. We will work closely with health services to challenge traditional ways of working, maximise the use of resources to support people in the community to be as independent as possible, make sure people who are reliant on services are safe and supported and work to ensure that people are able to play a meaningful part in their community.



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**“ Our aim continues to be on making life better for everyone, focussing on prevention**

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# Communities: Young People

By 2024, we will:

Continue to implement the NSPCC-led A Better Start initiative, improving life chances for 0-3 year olds.



Improve the experiences and outcomes of young people in our services by improving relationships between organisations.



Facilitate a school led system which improves attainment at Key Stage 4.



Development of family hub model in local neighbourhoods for all age engagement and building community resilience.







# Communities: Health and Social Care

By 2024, we will:

Implement a new approach to delivering smoking cessation support and initiatives in the town.



Shape the work of the Council towards delivering the Green and Blue Infrastructure strategy, greening the town.



Continue to increase numbers accessing drug and alcohol services at an earlier stage and sustaining a positive outcome.





# Communities: Safeguarding

By 2024, we will:

Reduce numbers of Looked After Children in a safe, sustainable way through incremental improvements of the social care system.



Work in partnership across Blackpool to review our approach to delivering safeguarding and support for families.







# Communities: Increasing Resilience

By 2024, we will:

Deliver whole system change by sustaining the HeadStart Resilience Revolution, increasing mental health resilience amongst 10-16 year olds across the town.



Stabilise our communities through additional activity to regulate private sector housing, reducing supply and improving quality.



Improving the co-ordination of volunteers across the town.



Develop a placed-based approach to service delivery in community settings in partnership with public and voluntary sector organisations.



# Addressing inequalities and promoting equality through our values

All Council staff are asked to share in some common values, which we adopted back in 2011. These are our principles for how our organisation engages with people. They influence how we deliver services, and help to create a positive experience for anyone who comes into contact with us.

## Our values are:

- **Accountability:** We take responsibility for delivering on the promises we make, and can be challenged if we fall short.
- **Compassion:** We'll be caring and understanding when we listen to your concerns, and try to help even if we can't solve the problem ourselves. When we deliver services, we'll consider individual and community needs as much as possible
- **Quality:** We take pride in delivering services, and will always do this to the best of our abilities
- **Trustworthiness:** We will be honest with you about what we can and can't do and the decisions we make, only make promises we can keep, and make sure your information is kept confidential and securely
- **Fairness:** Everyone, regardless of their circumstances, will receive a service appropriate to their circumstances, which treats them with respect.

Closely linked to our values is our approach to fulfilling our legal obligations on equalities. We understand that fairness means making reasonable adjustments for people and groups so they can get access to services and support. Our approach to this is set out in our Equality Goals, which are reviewed every 4 years.

All new Council plans and strategies are reviewed to make sure they're tailored to the needs of groups with protected characteristics. Going beyond this, in the course of our work we also consider how to contribute to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; how to advance quality of opportunity; and how we can help different groups of people get along together. Our equality objectives aim to get more people to tell us they experience fair treatment by Council services; to make our workforce representative of our communities, with more people from diverse backgrounds involved in decision-making at every level; that equality and diversity is embedded in staff culture; and that we celebrate growing diversity and increase respect and understanding for all.





# A platform to deliver: ensuring a resilient organisation

To deliver on our ambitions the Council needs to be efficient and resilient – able to withstand short term distractions and pressures, as well as ongoing reductions in the funding we have available. We've already developed different ways of working, maximising our chances of achieving our outcomes. Examples of this include our Wholly-Owned Companies, bidding for funding, working in partnership, and making savings whilst transforming our services.

The Council has bought or retained ownership of companies where it is in the town's best interests for us to do so. Companies can be more flexible in how they operate, and have greater flexibility to earn income than the Council. We can also support them through loans and preferential rates which benefit both organisations. This has led to unparalleled investment in our bus fleet, with plans to go all-electric in the coming years; the Sandcastle Waterpark operating at maximum capacity in high season and looking at options to expand; the Winter Gardens attracting new conference trade; our housing companies re-shaping our physical environment with quality new builds and conversions; and being able to influence the development of the Enterprise Zone by buying the companies operating Blackpool Airport. We will continue to work in partnership with our companies, helping them to seek and deliver new opportunities for the benefit of the town.

Most of our resilience comes from a planned approach to dealing with reductions to our funding. We will have made over 150m of savings by 2020 compared to 2010, through a combination of technical savings, policy changes, service transformations and reductions, moving more of our services online, generating more income, encouraging voluntary activity and social action, and measures to reduce demand on our services in favour of preventative and alternative delivery approaches.



# How we'll deliver on our commitments

To make sure we monitor how well we're delivering this Council Plan, we have developed a new Performance Management Framework, allowing us to understand how we're doing against our priorities, identify areas of underperformance, and move resources around as needed. It makes sure that staff are accountable for how well we're doing.

Council performance indicators are monitored and scrutinised quarterly, with an annual report analysing performance against targets and similar authorities. Our approach follows the industry-recognised "Plan-Do-Review-Revise" cycle, which provides structure around the process undertaken annually and ensures that lessons are learned, to feed back into future action planning activity.

In late 2017 we reformed the performance monitoring of our Companies through a new Shareholder Advisory Board. As well as regularly reviewing the overall performance of our companies, the Board ensures that our companies contribute to the wider strategic vision for the town.

Within the Council, directorate and departmental business plan set out the actions described in this plan in more detail, with named officers personally responsible for delivering actions within the agreed timescales and resources. These plans are monitored internally by Councillors and Officers, and considered as part of reports to the Overview and Scrutiny committee, opening up discussions about performance.

Beyond the scope of the Council Plan, further arrangements exist to monitor the day-to-day activity of Departments to deliver statutory responsibilities, with Departmental Management Teams reviewing further performance indicators to check progress against their own Business Plans and Service Plans. These all link down to the individual activity of staff identified through our Performance Appraisal process.







**To ensure our services are accessible to all, documents prepared by Blackpool Council are available in large print, Braille, on audio-cassette or computer disk upon request. We can also provide help for British Sign Language users and provide information in other languages. Please ask for details or telephone 477117.**