



MINUTES

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board

Date:	Thursday, 9 June 2022
Venue:	Reception Room, Town Hall, St Annes.
Economic Prosperity Board Members Present:	Councillor Karen Buckley, Leader - Fylde Council Councillor Mark Smith, Blackpool Council Councillor David Henderson, Leader - Wyre Borough Council
Chief Executive Officers Present:	Allan Oldfield, Chief Executive, Fylde Council Neil Jack, Chief Executive, Blackpool Council Garry Payne, Chief Executive, Wyre Council
Co-opted private sector representatives Present:	Martin Long (Blackpool), Neil Farley (Fylde)
Other Attendees:	Scott Butterfield, Strategy, Policy & Research Manager - Blackpool Council Sarah Kemp, Chief Executive of Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Nicole Billington, Projects & Comms Manager EZ Tony Doyle, Head of ICT, Blackpool Council Paul Evans, Assistant Director, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Paula Huber - Economic Development and Regenerations Manager - Fylde Council Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council. Lyndsey Lacey Simone – Principal Democratic Services Officer
Observers:	Councillor Thomas Threlfall - Chairman of Environment, Health & Housing Committee

Councillor David Henderson (Former Chairman) opened the meeting and invited all attendees to introduce themselves.

1. Appointment of Chairman

The Board considered the appointment of a Chairman of the Board for 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Karen Buckley, Leader of Fylde Council be appointed Chairman of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board for the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Nick Gerrard.

3. Appointment of Vice - Chairman

The Board considered the appointment of Vice- Chairman of the Board for 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mark Smith be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board for the 2022/2023 municipal year

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

6. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the meeting held on 3rd March 2022.

Variation of Business

The Chairman varied the business as detailed below.

7. Economic Opportunities of Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Scott Butterfield, Strategy, Policy & Research Manager, Blackpool Council updated the Board on discussions concerning the economic aspects of the climate change mitigation and adaptation agendas. A copy of the report was circulated with the agenda. In addition, a PowerPoint presentation was given at the meeting.

By way of background the report (previously circulated) referred to an earlier report “Addressing Emissions Across the Fylde Coast” considered by the Board on 9th September 2021, as a result of which, the Board had agreed to act as an influencer and enabler regarding the green agenda across the Fylde Coast on issues relating to the economy. It was explained that this role requires a focus on two related concepts: Climate Change Mitigation and Climate Change Adaptation.

Further to the above, the Board had previously requested that green local projects and businesses across the Fylde Coast that need funding be identified in order to match up opportunities and ensure resilience. As a result, a group of officers from Fylde, Wyre and Blackpool Councils covering climate change and economic development was convened to discuss ideas and potential projects. An update on progress was given at the meeting.

The Board was reminded that the overall target of UK government is Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 which in turn needs emissions to have reduced by 78% from 1990-2035, to help limit the global temperature rise to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. It was explained that “Net Zero” is a more stringent target than “carbon neutral”, as it includes scope 3 emissions from supply chains. It was confirmed that Blackpool, Wyre and Lancashire County Council are all formally committed to targets, with operational work by Fylde to reduce carbon emissions

Some of the key points raised at the meeting were:

- The Fylde Coast needs the equivalent of 2891 “green jobs” by 2030 in areas such as low carbon heat, electricity, alternative fuels, services and infrastructure.
- Greatest proportion of emissions in Fylde and Wyre is from transportation, in Blackpool domestic emissions.
- Adaptation and Mitigation are both needed to ensure the ongoing growth and resilience of our society and economy.

In terms of Fylde Coast activity, the following areas were highlighted:

- Mitigation- few collaborative net zero projects exist at scale. Reducing emissions is only seen as a secondary benefit to some growth projects and is absent from others.

- Adaptation - some aspects of adaptation are well advanced (i.e., coastal defences), and provide positive examples of how to ensure economic continuity.
- Evidence of general commitment from officers, but a lack of resources, time and knowledge, and the opportunity to prioritise net zero.

Details of a shared adaptation project (ECO-CoBS: Environmental Community Owned Coastal Buffers Strips project, led by Wyre Council across the NW) and a shared mitigation project (Ichoosr Solar Together Lancashire" domestic solar panel auction) was given at the meeting.

The significant opportunities for mitigation with direct economic benefits were outlined at the meeting.

In terms of next steps, the following areas were suggested:

- Explore opportunities for collaboration on baseline studies and shared evidence base (e.g. Local Plan Reviews and the Duty to Cooperate)
- Officer group to work with Net Zero Hub on a Fylde Coast basis
- Prepare list of sub-regional projects for consideration
- Share details of internal and external funding opportunities

Following consideration of the above, the Chairman invited questions. Clarification was sought on the roll out of electric charging points across the Fylde Coast area. In response, Mr Butterfield stated that this was the subject of ongoing discussions and that an Electric Vehicle Strategy was currently being written. He stated that Blackpool is currently underserved with charging points and that funding was being accessed to look at key areas including increasing the charging points in public areas. Other practical actions taken were highlighted. Reference was also made to on-going challenges relating to power supply options for residential terraced houses and a potential collaborative working model.

Further to the above, a discussion took place about external funding opportunities including access to the UK Urban Resilience Fund; the insulation of properties (passive houses) and the associated impact on planning/building regulations.

Following detailed consideration of this matter, it was **RESOLVED**: that the Board agree to the following list of prioritised projects:

1. To explore opportunities for collaboration on baseline studies and shared evidence base (e.g., Local Plan Reviews and the Duty to Cooperate)
2. That the Officer group work with the Net Zero Hub on a Fylde Coast basis.
3. To prepare list of sub-regional projects for consideration.
4. To share details of internal and external funding opportunities.

The Chairman thanked Mr Butterfield for his report and contribution.

8. Fibre Network Update and Emerging Digital Opportunities

Mr Tony Doyle, Head of ICT, Blackpool Council provided the Board with an update on the progress of developing digital infrastructure on the Fylde Coast. A copy of the report was circulated with the agenda.

Members were reminded that at a previous meeting, the Board was informed of the development of a Full Fibre network (funded by £3million grant from DCMS) to create fibre backbone along the Fylde Coast using a ducting asset in the Tramway. The grant was also used to extend the Fibre backbone into the two Enterprise Zones on the Fylde Coast and was further supplemented by Wyre Borough Council to ensure the Fibre network reached the Hillhouse Enterprise Zone.

Mr Doyle explained that the Fibre Network enables connectivity to public sector assets along the promenade in Blackpool such as CCTV columns and publicly owned buildings. He added that a plan is also in place to gradually further extend the network using BT Openreach ducting to connect other Council buildings and schools' connectivity and that dialogue is also taking place with the NHS Trust to connect NHS sites.

A discussion took place about how the spare capacity in the Fibre Network is shared with the CNI Co-op (Co-operative Network Infrastructure) made up of both private sector public sector members. In addition, details about the fibre network activity in Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre areas and matters associated with the Blackpool and Lancaster University Catalyst opportunities and Data Centre opportunities were also highlighted.

Mr Doyle added that worthy of note is that there is a free WiFi service available at every tram stop in Blackpool and that the Airport EZ fibre interconnects with the transatlantic fibre.

Following the presentation, the Chairman invited questions. These related to the following areas: windfarm infrastructure/ developments; fibre roll out limitations and the requirements for 6G columns.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the progress of the development of full fibre network infrastructure on the Fylde Coast.
2. To note the invitation to learn more about the work of the Blackpool and Lancaster University Innovation Catalyst at a symposium on the 15th September 2022 and that the invitation be extended to relevant officers.

The Chairman thanked Mr Doyle for his report and contribution.

9. Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Update

Sarah Kemp, Chief Executive of Lancashire Enterprise Partnership provided the Board with an update on the work of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP). In doing so, she made reference to the LEP 2020 -201 Annual Report which had previously been circulated with the agenda. A PowerPoint presentation was given at the meeting.

Some of the areas highlighted at the meeting were a reminder about the role and function of the LEP and the associated Government review about revised roles & functions/expectations and future intentions and core funding arrangements of LEPs. In addition, details about other pieces of work/ LEP activity within the Strategic Economic Framework to help shape the arena of drive for economic growth and job creation including the requirement to publish delivery plans were also highlighted at the meeting.

Ms Kemp then went on to outline some of the Economic Challenges/measures for Lancashire. In addition, details of key skills development events taking place in the next few months were highlighted.

Following the presentation questions were invited. These related to the following areas: economic challenges in different parts of Lancashire; impact of Covid; gross weekly pay/ cost of living; hard to fill vacancies; skills and training; Government interventions; travel to work/lost opportunities as a result inaccessible site such as Samlesbury and levelling up matters. In responding to these points, Ms Kemp stated that of 5,000 new National Cyber Security Centre jobs 2,000 of those new jobs would be based in Lancashire.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and ask Ms Kemp to feedback the Board's concerns about the challenges relating to inaccessible sites for jobs as outlined above.

The Chairman thanked Ms Kemp for her report and contribution.

10. Exclusion of the Public and Press

The Board decided that the public and press should be excluded for the remaining items on the agenda and passed the following resolution; "that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the meeting, on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in category 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Variation Order 2006 and, that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information".

11. Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone - Progress Report

Mr Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, presented the Board with an update on the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit. A copy of the report which included an appendix entitled "Blackpool's £1bn+ Growth & Prosperity Programme" was circulated with the agenda.

At the meeting, Mr Green highlighted progress with the Masterplan and delivery and in particular, work currently being undertaken with a company on a Data Centre project. In addition, reference was made to the new football sport pitches and matters associated with the study of jobs growth via the rates relief process. In summary, The Board was advised that some 133 businesses had located to the Enterprise Zone since April 2016 and that a gross cumulative total to date of 2082 jobs had located to the Enterprise Zone. This figure included jobs new to the area, safeguarded jobs within Blackpool and construction full time equivalent jobs.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the updated report.

The Chairman thanked Mr Green for his report and contribution.

12. Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone Progress Report

Mr Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones presented the Board with an update on Hillhouse Enterprise Zone in relation to its future work and priorities against its role and remit. A copy of the report had previously been circulated to the Board.

One of the key areas highlighted at the meeting was an approach from two new companies wanting to relocate and the fact that the outcome of the bid for 200 new jobs/ investments was still awaited. Reference was also made to the residential development / new access road opportunity.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the update.

The Chairman thanked Mr Green for his report and contribution.

13. Any Other Business

An offer was made by Mr Evans to provide any advice/support with regard to matters associated with the EPB investment plans.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

To note the date of next meeting as Thursday, 8 September 2022 at 2pm.

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