

Blackpool Council



wyre  
council

16 March 2021

## **BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD**

Thursday, 25 March 2021 at 2.00 pm  
in Zoom Meeting

### **A G E N D A**

#### **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 Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Blackpool Council or their own Council's Monitoring Office in advance of the meeting

#### **2 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

If the discussion during items 6, 7 or 8 of this agenda involves the disclosure of "exempt information", as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Board wishes to move to confidential session, it may at any point pass the following

resolution: "That the public and press be excluded from the meeting whilst the agenda item(s) is/ are considered, on the ground 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 in the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information".

**3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2020** (Pages 1 - 8)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 17 December 2020 as a true and correct record.

**4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2020**

To receive any brief updates on matters arising from the minutes not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

**5 TOURISM RECOVERY** (Pages 9 - 14)

To receive an update on progress with the Lancashire Tourism Recovery Plan from Marketing Lancashire and the work being undertaken on a Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre basis, and to discuss the scope for further collaboration to facilitate the tourism economy's recovery post-Covid pandemic.

**6 LEVELLING UP AND COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND** (Pages 15 - 30)

To summarise the main provisions of the Levelling Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund announced in the March 2021 Budget.

**7 BLACKPOOL AIRPORT ENTERPRISE ZONE: UPDATE** (Pages 31 - 40)

To review the work of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit.

**8 HILLHOUSE TECHNOLOGY ENTERPRISE ZONE: UPDATE** (Pages 41 - 48)

To review the work of Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit.

**9 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To consider dates of future meetings.

# Agenda Item 3

## MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING - THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2020

### **EPB members present:**

Councillor Karen Buckley, Fylde Borough Council  
Councillor Michael Vincent, Wyre Borough Council as substitute for Councillor David Henderson  
Councillor Lynn Williams, Blackpool Council

### **Chief Executive Officers:**

Allan Oldfield, Fylde Borough Council  
Garry Payne, Wyre Borough Council

### **Co-opted private sector representatives present:**

Neil Farley (Fylde), Martin Long (Blackpool), Peter Worthington (Wyre)

### **Other Attendees:**

Nicole Billington, Marketing Officer, Blackpool Council  
Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, Blackpool Council  
Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council  
Sarah Kemp, Chief Executive Officer, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (until Item 7)  
Katherine O'Connor, Senior Planning Officer, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy  
Andrea Wallace, Enterprise Zone Adviser, Wyre Borough Council  
Paul Walker, Director of Development Services, Fylde Borough Council  
Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Blackpool Council

### **Apologies:**

Councillor David Henderson, Wyre Borough Council  
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities, Wyre Borough Council  
Neil Jack, Chief Executive, Blackpool Council

No members of the public or press attending the meeting. The public parts of the meeting were broadcast via YouTube

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

Martin Long, Business Representative, declared that his company did legal work for companies based within the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone but that none of his clients were included in the update report at this meeting.

**MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING -  
THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2020**

**2 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting whilst the agenda items 9,10 or 11 are considered, on the ground 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 in the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Board considered the appointment of a Vice-Chairman for the remainder of Municipal Year 2020/21.

**Resolved:**

That Councillor Lynn Williams be appointed Vice-Chairman for the remainder of Municipal Year 2020/21.

**4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Board considered the minutes of the last meeting held on 16 September 2020.

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**5 MATTERS ARISING**

Further to item 5, Full Fibre Network on the minutes of the 16 September 2020 meeting. The Board noted that Fylde Borough Council and Wyre Borough Council had now joined the Broadband Co-op. The Board noted that this would be beneficial for future connectivity and agreed to receive a further update on the progress made by the co-op at a suitable meeting in 2021.

**6 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

The Board received a presentation from Sarah Kemp, CEO of Lancashire Economic Partnership. She highlighted the following work being undertaken by that partnership. Ms Kemp gave a brief history of the partnership's creation and outlined what the Partnership saw as its four key roles: to understand local economic markets, to align with other key strategies, to advocate for business and influence future government policy.

## **MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING - THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2020**

Ms Kemp highlighted the development of a strategic economic framework to align with the Local Industrial Strategy and the Greater Lancashire Plan. The plan included strategic actions and centred around pillars of growth namely: food and agriculture, tourism, culture and place, digital, advanced manufacturing, energy and low carbon and health. Each pillar of growth had a sub-group lead by a passionate business leader from the sector and there was also an Aerospace Sub-Group to emphasise that sector's importance. The initial focus of these sectors would be on the response to COVID with a subsequent focus on developing sector plans for long-term sustainable growth.

Members of the Board thanked Sarah for the presentation. The general view of the Board being that since her appointment the linkages between the Local Enterprise Partnership and local Councils had dramatically improved.

The Board agreed that it would be beneficial to have regular presentations and also to share workplans.

### **7 REVIEW OF ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD**

The Board undertook an exercise to review its work since its creation May 2018.

Mr Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, presented the item. The report highlighted the four priorities agreed by the Board at its creation namely Accelerated Growth focusing on our Enterprise Zones, Connectivity, Marketing and Investment, and Housing Growth and Quality of Life.

The Board noted the agenda tracker and considered that these meant for the past three years the Board had focussed almost exclusively on the first three of these priorities. Members accepted that a large part of the workload of the Board had been the Enterprise Zones as they developed as this was part of its formal governance role through to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership.

Members of the Board considered that in the future the Board must continue to ensure good corporate governance for the Enterprise Zones but avoid repetition given the zones were now well-established. The Board should look to also focus further on connectivity, and marketing and investment. Further to Item 6 it agreed to ensure where possible that linkages were maintained and strengthened between the Board and partner organisations notably, but not limited to, the Department for International Trade, Marketing Lancashire and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership.

The Board considered the issue of housing. It agreed that whilst there had been little collective focus it did however consider that with changes in planning proposed by Government it may be that a further changes to the Duty to Cooperate Memorandum of Understanding were now required so that the three Councils could consider how where such issues were best to be considered.

**MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING -  
THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2020**

**Resolved:**

To note the progress made by the Economic Prosperity Board and agree that the relevant Councils review the Board's priorities.

**8 HIGH SPEED 2 AND THE GOLBORNE LINK**

The Board received a report which highlighted High Speed Rail 2's potential benefits and disbenefits for Fylde Coast Rail services.

The Board noted that the current proposal had been subject to considerable pressure not to include a phase2b spur from Manchester to the Wigan area (known as the Golborne Link). Without the Golborne link there would appear to be a much reduced chance of maintaining direct Fylde Coast to London Euston services. The Golborne link offered capacity that would allow the preservation of direct services and would enable journey times between the area and major centres to be reduced.

The Board also noted that the removal of direct train services might be a negative factor for inward investment and tourism with some travellers who preferred not to change trains.

The Board noted that removing the four a day direct Avanti departures from Blackpool North with stops at Poulton-Le-Fylde and Kirkham and Wesham would be a retrograde step, particularly following the lengthy campaign fought to restore these direct London services and the need for rail access to support post-pandemic economic recovery.

The Board agreed that it would support lobbying for the retention in plans for High Speed 2 of the Golborne Link and requested that the three Councils and partner organisations did likewise.

**Resolved:**

That the Economic Prosperity Board and the three Councils join Lancashire County Council and others, including the West Coast Rail 250 campaign, in supporting the High Speed Rail 2 Golborne link's construction, maximising opportunities for direct Fylde Coast – London services to be retained when High Speed Rail 2 HS2 is in operation.

**9 FYLDE COAST RAIL LOOP**

The Board noted that a key aspiration of three Councils and the Board itself since its formation had been since its formation to advocate for and propose substantial improvements to local rail networks as such improvements were considered essential to improve transportation and in support of the Climate Change agenda.

**MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING -  
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The Board had received previously submitted or received information on bids that it had supported to the Transforming Cities fund and Future High Streets fund to support that strategic aim.

Mr Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Manager, highlighted the bid that had been submitted to the Restoring your Railways Fund for work on the Fleetwood to Poulton-Le-Fylde line reopening. The Board noted that a consultant had been appointed and key stakeholders engaged to consider the development of a Strategic Outline Business Case to identify whether tram, rail or a tram-train combination would be the best option for returning the line to use.

Mr Gerrard also highlighted to the Board that a further bid submitted by two local MP's to the Restoring your Railways Fund, titled 'Enhanced existing passenger services, Preston - Blackpool South (South Fylde Line Passing Loop)' had been successful. While it was acknowledged that specific details were not available yet about the bid it represented an opportunity to progress matters. The necessity to undertake a similar Strategic Outline Business Case and consult with all stakeholders had been noted.

The Board expressed its support for these bids and its commitment to seeking solutions to improve strategic transport connectivity. It further agreed that it would be beneficial to receive updates as to progress.

**Resolved:**

1. To reaffirm the Board's support for improving strategic transport connectivity on the Fylde Coast through a Fylde Coast rail loop
2. To recognise that the two successful Restoring Your Railway bids for Fleetwood to Poulton-le-Fylde and the South Fylde Line provide the opportunity for a Strategic Outline Business Cases to be prepared to establish the basis for further requests for funding to implement the preferred schemes in due course.
3. To note that a consultant for the Fleetwood to Poulton-le-Fylde study has now been appointed by Lancashire County Council and work should be completed by May 2021.
4. In respect of the South Fylde Line, to recommend that all key stakeholders are consulted in the development of the brief, namely Lancashire County Council and Blackpool Council, as the two local transport authorities for the South Fylde Line, Fylde Borough Council, the local MP's, the Department for Transport, Network Rail and Northern Trains, together with others including town/parish councils and user groups.
5. To ensure that adequate funding is earmarked to undertake a Strategic Outline Business Case study for the South Fylde Line, similar to the one that is currently being undertaken for the Fleetwood - Poulton-le-Fylde disused railway line.
6. To receive the outcome of the two studies in due course and then identifies the best route for securing funding for the implementation of the preferred options.

**MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING -  
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**10 BLACKPOOL AIRPORT ENTERPRISE ZONE: PROGRESS REPORT**

Mr Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, provided the board with an update on the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone.

The report started by highlighting the approval of the delayed updating of the Masterplan to reflect the substantial changes to the physical development around the eastern gateway access, sports field re-provision revised airport proposals and the change of direction for the future of the Squires Gate Industrial Estate (former Wellington Bomber Factory) this had previously been delayed. The revised interim delivery plan had been approved by the Executive of Blackpool Council as Accountable Body in 7 December 2021 and subsequently submitted to Fylde Borough Council, the Lancashire Local Economic Partnership and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Further to the last two meetings Mr Green emphasised that central to the Enterprise Zones would be a request that government extend the period in which the 5 year business rates relief would be available from the current expiry in March 2022 to financial year 2025/26. With full Local Enterprise Partners support officers had joined nationally with The Local Enterprise Partnership Network to put a proposal to HM Treasury. This would be to seek an extension of business rates relief to 2025/26 as a low cost focus and engine for post Covid-19 economic recovery and growth, and to recognise the delays in all Enterprise Zones being able to bring forward enabling infrastructure. This remained a high priority for the Board and partners to ensure that Enterprise Zones could play their key role in delivering post-COVID industrial and economic recovery.

Ms Nicole Billington, Marketing Officer, highlighted that the hosting of workshops to develop a Digital Strategy for each of the Enterprises Zone allowing linkages with the Local Full Fibre Network. A meeting had also been proposed with the digital lead at Department for International Trade to introduce Blackpool's new digital opportunities.

**Resolved:**

To note the update.

**HILLHOUSE ENTERPRISE ZONE: PROGRESS REPORT**

Mr Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zone presented an update on Hillhouse Enterprise Zone.

Mr Green spoke about the closure of the Vinnolit site and the opportunities presented by the purchase of the site by the majority landholder, NPL Estates releasing new sites for development and enabling the relocation of existing businesses.

The landowner had also reported the in- principle offer of funding from the Getting Building Fund toward the costs of essential infrastructure upgrades to enable the new development to progress and were now engaged in the preparation of detailed planning applications for the development together with a planning application to relocate the existing gatehouse.



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The Board noted that funding had been secured from the Getting Building Fund to address required upgrades to utilities and access roads. The project had been allocated some funding £630,000 from the Getting Building Fund, with additional match funding provided by Wyre Borough Council and NPL. Also included had been funding of £200,000 has also been approved by Wyre Borough Council to support the extension of the Local Full Fibre Network broadband fibre optic network.

Further to Item 10 Mr Green again emphasised that central to the Enterprise Zones would be a request that government extend the period in which the 5 year business rates relief would be available from the current expiry in March 2022 to financial year 2025/26. With full Local Enterprise Partners support officers had joined nationally with The Local Enterprise Partnership Network to put a proposal to HM Treasury. This would be to seek an extension of business rates relief to 2025/26 as a low cost focus and engine for post Covid-19 economic recovery and growth, and to recognise the delays in all Enterprise Zones being able to bring forward enabling infrastructure. This remained a high priority for the Board and partners to ensure that Enterprise Zones could play their key role in delivering post-COVID industrial and economic recovery.

Ms Nicole Billington, Marketing Officer, highlighted that the hosting of workshops to develop a Digital Strategy for each of the Enterprises Zone allowing linkages with the Local Full Fibre Network.

**Resolved:**

To note the update.

**12 FUTURE DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES**

Further to items 6 and 7, the Board considered future agenda items.

Further Item 6, the Board agreed that under a new priority of 'Levelling Up' to identify how to support and assist in developing the LEP priorities that could benefit the Fylde Coast - notably Greater Lancashire Plan, Industrial Strategy, Independent Economic Review, Green Industrial Revolution.

The Board agreed that under the priority of Marketing the Board should consider the development of a project to promote the region post-Covid particularly around supporting sectors most impacted by COVID such as hospitality and leisure but also around how to address new opportunities due to social changes such as increased agile and remote working or industries that had developed during the pandemic.

The Board also noted Fylde Borough Council was currently undertaking a review of the impact of flooding. The Board considered it may be useful for Board members to receive an update on this progress but the Board noted the need to ensure that this was directly relevant to the Board.

**MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING -  
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**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Chairman**

(The meeting ended at 4.25pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

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<b>Report to:</b>	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
<b>Report Author:</b>	Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director (Blackpool Council)
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	25 March 2021

## TOURISM RECOVERY

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive an update on progress with the Lancashire Tourism Recovery Plan from Marketing Lancashire and the work being undertaken on a Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre basis, and to discuss the scope for further collaboration to facilitate the tourism economy's recovery post-Covid pandemic.

### 2.0 Recommendation:

2.1 To note the progress made and discuss the potential for further areas of collaboration to accelerate the recovery of the tourism economy on the Fylde Coast.

### 3.0 Background

#### 3.1 Marketing Lancashire

Rachel McQueen, Chief Executive, Marketing Lancashire to present.

Pre-pandemic, Marketing Lancashire had been working with public and private sector partners to develop a new Tourism Growth Strategy, part funded by the Lancashire Economic Partnership. All the evidence gathering and initial consultation had taken place and we were just about to consult on the proposals and priorities when the first lock-down began. Since then, Marketing Lancashire has been looking to review that strategy, again in partnership with the Lancashire Economic Partnership and working alongside a Tourism, Culture and Place Sector Group that they established as part of their overall strategic framework.

The intention was that this group would inform and direct this strand of the framework to help the sector move from survival, through stabilisation and on to recovery. Understandably though, it was a challenge to pull this group of private sector representatives together during the tier restrictions and lock down. Also, the process that was being followed to create these sector strategies is of a type that is working well for industries such as energy and low carbon or aerospace, but is not easily applied to a completely diverse and wide-ranging sector such as tourism, culture and hospitality.

Marketing Lancashire continues to work with that group to look at a longer term sector development strategy, working from the original foundations of the Tourism Growth Strategy but with a real assessment of the impact the pandemic has had and what needs to be done to help it build back sustainable. However, in the meantime we felt it was critical for Marketing Lancashire to move forwards with the development of a recovery plan even with major uncertainties still on the horizon. Utilising the intelligence gained from business surveys, the group workshops that took place, our discussions with partners and consumer insights from Visit England, Marketing Lancashire created 'Redefining the Rule of Six – a Recovery Plan for Lancashire Tourism and Hospitality'. This plan was shared with the Marketing Lancashire Board, with all Lancashire local authorities and the Lancashire Economic Partnership, with Department for Culture, Media and Sport (who are currently working on their own national recovery strategy), and with Marketing Lancashire partners for review and feedback before being published on 15 February 2021 (see link below)

Now that the country has the roadmap out of lockdown and much of the additional support that Marketing Lancashire and partners had been calling for has been confirmed within the budget, Marketing Lancashire can begin to work together in earnest to deliver against all of the identified objectives.

<https://www.marketinglancashire.com/covid-19/a-recovery-plan-for-lancashireourismand-hospitality/>

### **3.2 Blackpool Council**

Much activity is continuing on the future strengthening of the tourism product in Blackpool including the construction of several new hotels and the Conference and Exhibition Centre and the the major Blackpool Central investment. Support has been provided to companies through the various Government grant regimes, with the latest scheme launched on 15 March 2021.

#### Destination Marketing 2021/22

VisitBlackpool is working closely with partners on a multi-channel campaign for 2021. This will focus on a number of phased elements that reflect the milestones in the Prime Minister's roadmap. This is an outline of the plan for the year ahead:

#### Initial phase (March to mid-April) – *Ready and waiting, start planning*

Focusing on the need to get people to respect restrictions prior to the opening up of some outdoor attractions (including Blackpool Pleasure Beach and Zoo) and self-catering accommodation on 12 April 2021, but also encouraging them to plan ahead and book attractions and accommodation as the tourism industry recovers. This initial phase seeks to build consumer confidence by using the Visit Blackpool website ([Tourist Information & Things To Do In Blackpool | Visit Blackpool](#)) to give people as much information as possible about the COVID-safe measures that are in place before they book. This part of the campaign will utilise PR and outdoor advertising,

but will be primarily social media-based to give the Council maximum flexibility if there is any slippage in roadmap dates.

#### Second phase (mid-April onwards) – Find your freedom

Recognising that the area will have a much more comprehensive tourism offer with the opening of indoor attractions, hotels and hospitality from May 17. Again, this campaign will be a mixture of PR, outdoor and social, showcasing the breadth of Blackpool's family attractions and accommodation. The messaging will become increasingly upbeat as we move towards the end of the roadmap and will major on the myriad of things that people can do during the summer as the resort returns to something akin to business as usual. This element of the marketing campaign will also incorporate promotion of any large events over the summer months (subject to them being allowed to go ahead).

#### Third phase (June onwards) – Bring On The Light

As we move into the summer months, the Council will start to roll out an autumn/winter campaign that will see a two-month extension to the Illuminations season; high-profile events over October half-term including Nickelodeon SLIMEFEST and the Lightpool Festival; and a new and much more compelling Christmas offer. This phase will be the mainstay of Blackpool's 2021 destination marketing activity with a multi-channel campaign incorporating TV, radio, outdoor, PR and social. The key objective here is to drive volumes of visitors to the resort over the traditional Illuminations season, but also generate additional visitation and spend in the final two months of the year to enable businesses to recoup some of their losses from the first few months of this year.

#### Fourth phase – preparing for 2022.

Blackpool's destination marketing partnership has already started looking at a new campaign for 2022, when it is envisaged that the resort will be able to reintroduce a comprehensive package of shows, entertainment, large-scale events, and conferences and exhibitions across the entire year. The preparation work will likely include a new TV creative for roll-out in the early part of 2022.

#### Tourism Recovery Group

This group was established by VisitBlackpool/Blackpool Council in June 2020 and has met on a weekly basis ever since. It comprises key attractions, venues, transport operators and accommodation providers. It will continue to meet for the foreseeable future to provide real-time customer insights, provide feedback on destination marketing activity, to help lobby for further Government support for our tourism businesses and to help develop sustainable funding streams for the resort's longer-term recovery.

### 3.3 Fylde Borough Council

Whilst the pandemic since March 2020 has caused severe pressures on the tourism industry, travel, leisure and hospitality, Fylde Borough Council has been continuing to support the industry in different ways – administering a range of government grants to tourism businesses, business support on legislative and environmental health matters, advice on how to open safely, plus sharing messages via social media where businesses have diversified during the various lockdowns – e.g. hospitality businesses diversifying to a take out model. Fylde Borough Council has continued to financially support Marketing Lancashire through their tourism marketing and support initiatives, plus keep strong dialogue and some joint activity with both Visit Blackpool and Discover Wyre.

The Heritage Lottery Fund developments at Fairhaven Lake will offer a year round destination and prove to be a valuable location for a range of events with its new water sports centre, recruitment of a new activities officer to engage with new groups and co-ordinate events, plus the potential development of a wind sports centre on St Annes beach with keen interest already gained from a variety of sports organisations, including kite surfing and sand-yachting. There are developments of rural walks and trails and these will be extended to work with Wyre to highlight where joint working can benefit. Fylde Borough Council will also further strengthen links to key Blackpool and Wyre operators to ensure strong links to tourism providers.

Support will be given to event organisers which annually account for approximately 250 events of all shapes and sizes on Council and private land from a charity fund raising event to the Lytham Festival. Some funding, plus support and advice is available through the Tourism Officer. The Tourism Officer is actively seeking new events, particularly out of season and a Town Centre Member Working Group are looking at opportunities for year-round events in each of the borough's three town centres.

Through targeted marketing via the ever growing [Discover Fylde web](#) and social media channels and continuing to participate in Marketing Lancashire promotional activities, Fylde will further add to the destination marketing mix, plus additional promotional activities with Discover Wyre and Visit Blackpool. Thematic marketing campaigns will be undertaken to highlight the heritage, coastal, food and drink offers. A new mobile Tourism Information unit (due summer 2021) will offer the opportunity to undertake roadshows / visits to key target markets, such as the North East and Yorkshire – this could be undertaken in conjunction with Blackpool and Wyre. Fylde Borough Council will attend trade shows and exhibitions where relevant to promote the tourism offering and potentially in partnership.

### 3.4 Wyre Borough Council

During the lockdowns, Wyre tourism focussed on:

- Promoting Health and Wellbeing, Parks and open spaces, Coast and Countryside and on things that were walking distance from home.
- Developed an online campaign utilising our [www.discoverwyre.co.uk](http://www.discoverwyre.co.uk) to support businesses '10 Ways to support businesses'

The Council also utilised its Visit Garstang Centre (Tourist Information Centre) as a community support hub, calling vulnerable and isolated members of the community to offer assistance.

During the small summer window when the Council area was out of lockdown, Wyre developed a 'ReDiscover 'Wyre Campaign which was about awareness raising about what is on offer in Wyre and was very well received. Wyre Tourism carried out the following activity:-

- 'Stay Local, Stay Safe Message'
- Supporting and promoting the 'Eat Out to Help Out scheme'
- Healthy Wyre – Enjoy the great outdoors in your support bubble
- Online Business Spotlight Campaign – Attractions, Services, Hospitality
- Creation of a Virtual tour of Marsh Mill Windmill (all year around campaign)
- Involvement in virtual Fylde Coast Food and Drink Festival in August.
- Development of 3 Digital Display Systems (2 in Cleveleys and 1 for Fleetwood) to promote Wyre
- Bespoke advice for businesses in light of the challenges presented by the pandemic
- Reopening high streets safely

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<b>Report to:</b>	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
<b>Report Author:</b>	Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director (Blackpool Council)
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	25 March 2021

## LEVELLING UP AND COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To summarise the main provisions of the Levelling Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund announced in the March 2021 Budget.

### 2.0 Recommendation:

2.1 To note the report and to discuss the approaches to be taken by the Fylde Coast Local Authorities in relation to these funding opportunities.

### 3.0 Background

3.1 As part of the Budget the Chancellor announced a broad package of complementary UK-wide interventions including:

- **The UK Levelling Up Fund**, which will invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities and will support economic recovery. The Fund will be jointly managed by HM Treasury, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and the Department for Transport. This is a new approach to investing in local growth – ending siloes in Whitehall that make it difficult to take a holistic approach to the needs of local areas  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-fund-prospectus>  
(see summary in Appendix 6a)
- The **UK Community Renewal Fund**, which will provide local areas across the UK with access to £220 million of additional funding as they prepare for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund due to launch in 2022. It is targeted to help to level up and create opportunity across the UK in places most in need in a manner distinct but complementary to the Levelling Up Fund, through investment in skills, enterprise and employment.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus-2021-22>  
(see summary in Appendix 6b)

- The **UK Community Ownership Fund**, which will empower communities to protect vital community assets in their area by providing funding to take ownership over them, in support of the social wellbeing of local communities. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-ownership-fund/community-ownership-fund>
- The **Plan for Jobs**, which builds on Department for Work and Pension's Jobcentre Plus network, offering tailored support to help people find work, including through Youth Hubs, Restart, and Kickstart. The Plan for Jobs will support longer term recovery from the unprecedented economic impact of Covid-19.
- The **Freeports programme**, establishing national hubs for global trade and investment in every nation of the UK, promoting regeneration and job creation and creating hotbeds for innovation that will intensify the economic impact of our ports and generate increased economic activity in areas in need of regeneration across the UK.
- The **UK Infrastructure Bank**, which will provide financing support to local authority and private sector infrastructure projects to help meet UK Government objectives on climate change and regional economic growth. It will also establish an advisory function to help with the development and delivery of projects.
- **The Towns Fund**, providing £3.6 billion to drive the economic regeneration of deprived towns and deliver long-term economic and productivity growth, by renewing and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that drives growth, improves user experience, and ensures future sustainability.

### 3.2 Levelling Up Fund - Key Issues to consider

Clarity is still required on the detail of all the conditions associated with these funds and further information is to be sent soon by way of what is required in any submission.

Some of the key issues to consider include:

- The number of bids for which each authority qualifies
- The potential for cross-boundary bids
- The role of Local MPs. The prospectus states that the number of bids that a local authority can make will relate to the number of MPs in their area. Accordingly, local authorities can submit one bid for every MP whose constituency lies wholly within their boundary. Where an MP's constituency crosses multiple local authorities, one local authority should take responsibility as the lead bidder and local areas should work together to designate that lead bidder.

Blackpool has 2 MPs:

- Blackpool South (wholly within Blackpool) – Scott Benton
- Blackpool North and Cleveleys (in Blackpool and Wyre) – Paul Maynard

Wyre has 3 MPs

- Lancaster and Fleetwood (in Wyre and Lancaster) – Cat Smith
- Blackpool North and Cleveleys - (in Blackpool and Wyre) – Paul Maynard
- Wyre and Preston North (in Wyre and Preston) – Ben Wallace

Fylde has 1 MP

- Fylde (within Fylde and Preston) – Mark Menzies

As Transport Authority Lancashire County Council for (Fylde and Wyre) or Blackpool) also potentially qualify for a £20-£50m for a cross-boundary transport project

### **3.3 COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND**

Blackpool and Lancashire County Council are the relevant lead authorities for the purposes of inviting bids.

Arrangements for inviting bids for these funds need to be set up to enable them to be appraised and prioritised by the lead authority for submission by 18 June 2021.

Further guidance is awaited from Government but these revenue funds provide the opportunity to innovate and undertake pilot schemes.

Clarity is required on a number of issues including the fact the guidance states that “the Government encourages applicants to maximize impact and deliverability though larger projects of £500,000+ where this is possible. With potentially only 8 months to fully defray all revenue spend this is likely to be very difficult to achieve. Clarity is also required on whether Councils can bid for projects they will lead themselves or projects in which it can be a partner.

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## Appendix 6a : LEVELLING UP FUND SUMMARY

### a) Fund Background

The Levelling Up Fund, which applies to the whole of the UK, brings together the Department for Transport, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Treasury to invest £4.8 billion in high-value local infrastructure up to 2024-25.

The Fund will **invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities**. This includes a range of high value local investment priorities, including transport schemes, urban regeneration projects and cultural assets. The Fund will be delivered through local authorities and will focus on **capital investment** in local infrastructure.

The Fund is designed to help local areas select genuine local priorities for investment by putting local stakeholder support, including the local MP where they want to be involved, at the heart. It should have a visible, tangible impact on people and places, and support economic recovery.

### b) Where is the Fund Targeted?

Initial guidance reflects the first round of the Fund, which will **prioritise bids** that can demonstrate investment or begin delivery on the ground in the coming **2021/22 financial year**. The amount of funding each area receives will be determined on a competitive basis to ensure value for money.

Within the competition, funding will be targeted towards places with the most significant need, as measured by an index taking into account the following the following place characteristics:

- need for economic recovery and growth;
- need for improved transport connectivity; and,
- need for regeneration.

Using this index, Blackpool has been placed into **category 1**, representing a place with the highest levels of identified need, Fylde in category 2 and Wyre into Category 3..

Bidding authorities are required to consult local **Members of Parliament** as part of their bid; though such support from local MPs is not a necessary condition for a successful bid. MPs can have a positive role in prioritising bids and helping broker local consensus. When considering the weighting given to bids, the expectation is that an MP will back one bid which they see as a priority, and any bid may have priority backing from multiple MPs and local stakeholders.

The number of bids that a local authority can make will relate to the number of MPs in their area. Accordingly, local authorities can submit one bid for every MP whose constituency lies wholly within their boundary

Where an MP's constituency crosses multiple local authorities, one local authority should take responsibility as the lead bidder and local areas should work together to designate that lead bidder.

The Fund will focus investment in projects that require up to **£20m of funding**. A minimum of 10% co-funding is needed with a contribution from private sector stakeholders required.

However, there is also scope for investing in larger high value transport projects, **by exception**. Bids above £20m and below £50m will be accepted for transport projects only, such as road schemes, and can be submitted by any bidding local authority. They will be subject to a more detailed business case process and will need to score highly overall.

Bidding authorities are encouraged to collaborate with neighbouring authorities on cross boundary schemes and to submit joint proposals across their local areas where appropriate.

**Consultation** with relevant local stakeholders and partners is deemed important. Bids should demonstrate evidence of this overall local engagement as part of their strategic case through stakeholder letters or similar.

### **c) What Can be Funded?**

**The first round** of the Fund will focus on three themes:

- I. **Smaller transport projects** :- that make a genuine difference to local areas; investments including (but not limited to)
  - Investments in new or existing cycling provision.
  - Improved priority for local bus services (e.g. bus priority lanes or signal priority at junctions).
  - Enhanced public transport facilities, such as bus stops and stations.
  - Accessibility improvements to local transport networks for disabled people.
  - Enhancements and upgrades to local road networks (e.g. by passes and junction improvements).
  - Structural maintenance works to local roads, including bridges.
  - Multi-modal proposals which combine two or more interventions to enhance transport across modes.

Proposals for high-impact small, medium and by exception larger local transport schemes should look to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, cut congestion, support economic growth and improve the experience of transport users.

- II. **Town centre and high street regeneration** : - Investments including (but not limited to) :
  - Regenerating key leisure and retail sites and improving their security, in order to encourage new businesses and public services to locate there.
  - Removing derelict buildings and other eyesores to make way for new developments.
  - Site acquisition and remediation of abandoned or brownfield sites, for both commercial and new residential use.

- Improving the public realm including high streets, parks and green spaces, designing out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.
- invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction
- Creating better connectivity between and within key retail and leisure sites.

### III. **Support for maintaining and expanding the UK's world-leading portfolio of cultural and heritage assets**

Projects submitted for appraisal under this investment theme may include:

- Upgrading and creating new cultural and creative spaces including sports or athletics facilities, museums, arts venues, theatres, libraries, film facilities, prominent landmarks or historical buildings, parks or gardens.
- New, upgraded or protected community hubs, spaces or assets (and associated green spaces).
- Acquiring and refurbishing key cultural and heritage sites including hotels and historic buildings
- Cultural investment maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing museums, galleries, visitor attractions , heritage assets as well as creating new community-owned spaces to support the arts and serve as cultural spaces

Proposed investments should actively complement, rather than duplicate or compete with funding already delivering or set to deliver in their areas (such as through the Heritage High Streets Fund).

Investment proposals should focus on supporting **high priority projects** that will make a visible impact in local areas. projects should be aligned to and support **Net Zero goals**: for instance, be based on low or zero carbon best practice; adopt and support innovative clean tech and/or support the growth of green skills and sustainable supply chains.

#### **c) Fund Targeting and Application Detail**

The Levelling Up Fund is a competitive fund, with funding distributed to places across the UK on the basis of successful project selection and funding will be targeted towards places with the most significant need, as measured by an index taking into account the following the following place characteristics:

- need for economic recovery and growth;
- need for improved transport connectivity; and,
- need for regeneration.

The first round of funding, will **prioritise projects** which are able to demonstrate investment or begin delivery on the ground in the **2021-22 financial year**. There will be future opportunities to bid in subsequent rounds. It is expected all funding provided from the Fund to be spent by **31 March 2024**, and, exceptionally, into 2024-25 for larger schemes.

**Local authorities can only have one successful bid for each of their allocated number of bids over the lifecycle of the Fund.** Local authorities are therefore encouraged to consider whether bids that they wish to submit for the first round of the Fund reflect their local priorities, or if they should wait until later rounds so that they have more time to consider and develop their proposals.

Applications for funding should clearly demonstrate how proposed investments will **support relevant local strategies**. Local areas will also need to show why the proposed investment or set of investments represents the highest value local priorities.

Each bid submitted by local institutions can be a bid for an **individual project** or a **package bid** consisting of multiple projects.

**Package bids must** clearly explain how their component elements are aligned with each other and represent a **coherent set of interventions**. They can include a mix of projects from the Fund's three investment themes but any one bid **should not include multiple unrelated investments**.

Local authorities may submit **joint bids**. The maximum bid size for joint bids will be determined by adding up the individual £20 million caps of each bidding authority. **Joint bids will count towards the maximum number of bids that each local authority is able to submit**. Joint proposals can contain a combination of interventions both within counties, regions and across borders. However, they must not be a disparate package of interventions - as part of the strategic case bidders must demonstrate that joint bids are a cohesive and coherent investment proposal.

In the case of package bids containing more than one project, bids should come in two parts, covering the following:

- Part I (for the whole overall bid): a summary of the project proposals within the bid (up to a maximum of three projects per bid); and an overall financial case;
- Part II (for each individual project): the main theme this falls under; summary and strategic link to overall bid; information on deliverability (management, risk, finances, and benefits)

To apply for investment from the first round of the Levelling Up Fund, bids must be submitted by **Friday 18 June 2021**.

It is expected that investment decisions will be made by the UK Government for this funding round by **autumn 2021**.

All applications must comply with the **Public Sector Equality Duty**, as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and show how they will deliver in line with **subsidy control** (or State Aid).

Further guidance and templates for bid submissions, including package bids, will be provided to local authorities shortly after Budget.

### **Assessment criteria**



The assessment process will focus on the following key criteria:

- Characteristics of the place – the local authority category representing the highest level of identified need.
- Deliverability - will be based on supplementary finance, management and commercial cases, with bids able to demonstrate investment or which begin delivery on the ground in 2021-22 financial year prioritised in the first round of funding.
- Strategic fit with local and Fund priorities – this should be addressed in the strategic case of submissions and should include support from stakeholders.
- Value for money – an economic case should be submitted to explain the benefits of the bid and how it represents value for money.

**Monitoring and evaluation** of the Levelling Up Fund will involve a combination of national-level evaluation activity with project-level monitoring and evaluation. As part of business case development, local authorities should set out a proportionate plan for project-level monitoring and evaluation

**Capacity funding** will be provided to local authorities. This will help support relevant local authorities to develop high quality bids. A flat £125,000 of capacity funding will be allocated to all eligible local authorities. This capacity funding will be provided with the primary intention of supporting the relevant local authorities to develop their bids for later rounds of the Fund. It is expected that local authorities will not be able to use the capacity funding in time to support bids for the first round and that it will instead support the development of proposals for later bidding rounds.

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## **Appendix 6b: COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND SUMMARY**

### **1) Fund Background**

The UK pays for EU structural funds through its EU Budget contributions, made of UK taxpayer's money. Local areas will continue to spend investment from EU structural funds until the end of 2023.

Further to Brexit, the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** will be a new flagship policy in delivering on this Government's commitment to level up the country. This new Fund, to be launched in 2022, will operate throughout the UK and play a part in uniting and levelling up the whole country. It will target people and places most in need across the UK. To help the UK prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, this government is providing funding in 2021-22 through the **UK Community Renewal Fund**. This Fund aims to support **communities to pilot programmes** and new approaches, aligning national and local provision.

The UK Community Renewal Fund aims to “**support people and communities most in need across the UK, creating opportunities to trial new approaches (pilot programmes) and innovative ideas at the local level**”.

Through this Fund, UK government will work directly with local partners, so that the people that know their places best central to the decisions that impact their areas and lives. To ensure that local communities are best placed to do this, the UK Community Renewal Fund is being provided for 2021-22 – an additional £220 million of investment. This Fund, which this prospectus outlines, will help support local areas to pilot imaginative new approaches and programmes that unleash their potential, instil pride, and prepare them to take full advantage of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund when it launches in 2022

### **2). Objectives of the UK Community Renewal Fund**

- **Enabling innovation through pilots**

The UK Community Renewal Fund will support communities to pilot programmes and new approaches ahead of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This includes removing barriers that people face in accessing skills and local labour market opportunities, building the evidence base for future interventions and exploring the viability of new ideas.

- **Levelling up and creating opportunity**

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a competitive process with no pre-set eligibility. In Great Britain, to level up and create opportunity across the UK for people and 100 priority places have been identified based on an index of economic resilience.

### **Investment priorities**

To nurture innovative thinking and offer flexibility, projects may align with one, or deliver across several, of the following investment priorities:

1. **Investment in skills**
2. **Investment for local business**
3. **Investment in communities and place**

#### **4. Supporting people into employment**

90% of funding available through the UK Community Renewal Fund is revenue funding.

**A range of projects by theme and size can be submitted but it is encouraged that to maximise impact and deliverability, larger projects of £500,000 are submitted.**

All project activity must be able to be completed by March 2022.

##### **1. Investment in skills**

The Fund will help equip people with the skills they need to seize new opportunities and ensure their local communities are prosperous and productive. This includes equipping people with the skills they need to capitalise on the opportunities and needs of their local area and meet the needs of an increasingly green and digital economy.

Innovative projects are sought that address current and emerging local skills needs and are complementary to broader place-based investment. Bids may include, but are not limited to interventions that address:

- Work-based training
- Retraining, upskilling or reskilling members of the workforce
- Promoting the advancement of digital skills and inclusion

##### **2. Investment for local business**

Targeted support for local business can help local residents through increased employment, better training and in-work opportunities and creating new entrepreneurial ventures.

Projects that target support for under-represented groups and community-level interventions that can increase opportunity for all, including coastal are sought.

Investment in pilots can also help create an innovation culture across the UK. This could be through finding new ways to promote green and tech adoption, commercialisation or helping create a pathway for upskilling local businesses through collaborations between higher education and small businesses.

Innovative pilots and projects are sought that address local business and innovation needs. Bids may include, but are not limited to, interventions that address:

- Supporting entrepreneurs and helping businesses with potential to create more job opportunities for current employees or take on new employees
- Encouraging businesses to develop their innovation potential
- Supporting decarbonisation measures

##### **3. Investment in communities and place**

Communities are at the core of cultural and economic heritage and identity. The fund aims to invest further to maximise opportunities to bring people together, build the social fabric and boost recovery and resilience. In turn, this will create places where people want to

work, visit and live. Investing in improving, protecting and creating community and natural assets can boost pride and wellbeing, drive productivity, attract and retain talent, and nurture a unique sense of place.

Proposals for innovative pilots and projects that address community needs and support local places. Bids may include, but are not limited to, interventions that address:

- Feasibility studies for delivering net-zero and local energy projects
- Exploring opportunity for promoting culture-led regeneration and community development – for example investing in culture focused feasibility studies and community facilities to attract people to places, including city centres and rural and coastal towns.
- Improving green spaces and preserving important local assets

#### **4. Supporting people into employment**

There needs action to reduce the additional barriers some people face to employment in order to enable them to take advantage of the economic opportunities as the UK moves forward.

Investment here will help places provide local, tailored, wrap-around support to those furthest from the labour market – focusing on individuals who find it difficult to engage with mainstream provision or for whom mainstream provision is not an option. This will support people in overcoming a variety of additional barriers to employment or mainstream programmes, which they are unable to fully utilise without additional support.

Bids should also demonstrate how their proposal will complement mainstream activity, such as the Kickstart Scheme, Restart Programme and other Plan for Jobs initiatives, highlighting what wrap-around support is being proposed, and how the target audience will be identified and engaged.

Pilots should draw upon and enhance multi-agency delivery teams, including the community and voluntary sector along with public provision. They should bring together a range of service providers to embed and provide a coordinated service to support individuals along the journey to employment.

Proposals for innovative pilots and projects are sought that focus on delivering bespoke programmes, utilising a needs-based approach to support individuals to overcome their multiple or complex barriers which inhibit their ability to gain employment. These pilots should support those most disengaged from the labour market. Bids may include, but are not limited to, interventions that address:

- Supporting people to engage with local services which support them on their journey towards employment
- Identifying and addressing any potential barriers these individuals may face in gaining employment or moving closer to the labour market
- Raising aspirations, supporting individuals to access Plan for Jobs employment support, jobs and find sustainable employment

- Supporting people to gain the basic skills they need to develop their potential for sustainable work
- Testing what works in helping people move towards work

These pilot projects should enable an evidence base to understand what really works in supporting people into employment. They should test ways of working collaboratively at a local level, taking a multi-agency approach, working with Jobcentre Plus and including the community and voluntary sector to provide the complete suite of support that those with additional or complex barriers might face.

### **3). Application Process**

Lead authorities (Blackpool Council or Lancashire County Council on behalf of Fylde and Wyre) should **invite project proposals** from a range of local applicants, including local district councils, voluntary and community sector organisations, umbrella business groups and local education providers including universities. Lead authorities should then **appraise** these projects and **prioritise a** shortlist of projects up to a maximum of **£3 million per place** for submission to UK government with a **bid deadline of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021**. Late July successful projects are targeted to be informed.

#### **Timetable**

Included here is a summary of the UK Community Renewal Fund timelines and key dates.

#### **3 March 2021**

- UK government publishes the UK Community Renewal Fund prospectus.
- During March, lead authorities launch invite bids from for their places.

#### **1 April 2021**

- Bid assessment and coordination capacity funding can be incurred by lead authorities of the 100 priority places in Great Britain.

#### **18 June 2021**

- Lead authorities submit a shortlist of project bids to UK government for assessment.

#### **Late July 2021 onwards**

- UK government announces successful projects for the UK Community Renewal Fund.
- First tranche of funding flows to lead authorities

#### **November and December 2021**

- Mid-point monitoring reviews of projects with lead authorities

#### **31 March 2022**

- UK Community Renewal Fund finishes.

The lead authority of each of the 100 priority places will receive capacity funding (£20,000) to help them with this bid co-ordination and appraisal.

A detailed selection criteria is in place based around Strategic fit, Deliverability, effectiveness, and efficiency

## Leveraging other funds

The UK government encourages applicants and lead authorities to **maximise the leverage** of other funding. It is recognised that not all projects or applicants will be able to secure match funding, and it is not expected for employment support projects. However, value for money is a selection consideration. This will take the overall funding package for each project, including any match funding, into account.

Following conclusion of the selection process, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will enter into agreements with Lead authorities – for an agreed package of projects

Full application details are due to be provided to local authorities ASAP.

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Report to: Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board

Report Author: Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council

Date of Meeting: 25 March 2021

## BLACKPOOL AIRPORT ENTERPRISE ZONE: UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To review the work of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To note the report.

### 3.0 Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone: Progress Report

#### a) Masterplan

The Enterprise Zone masterplan and delivery plans have now been refreshed to reflect the new development since 2016. The updated reports were presented to Blackpool's Executive and approved in December 2020 reflecting the impact of changes in third party ownership across the site, requirements for changes required to satisfy Sport England and address Highway and transportation concerns.

An online public consultation is to be undertaken in respect of the refreshed masterplan and the supporting written document, with any significant amendments as a result of feedback reported back to Blackpool Council, the Economic Prosperity Board and Local Enterprise Partnership for endorsement. This consultation will be run in parallel with a pre-application consultation on the third Common Edge planning application, which will cover the new Highways and the development of the former sports pitches. Timing will be dependent upon on restrictions prior to the local elections in May.

The updated delivery plan estimates expenditure on infrastructure and delivery of the Enterprise Zone at £72m, which equates to £14,500 per job. With the benefit of a grant funding allocation of £7.5m secured from the Towns Fund as part of Blackpool's Town Deal, the financial projections indicate a small forecast surplus over the lifetime of the project after the cost of Prudential Borrowing. The estimated Cumulative Gross Value Added from the project will be close to £2bn.

The masterplan and associated delivery plan are designed to be flexible to adapt to changing circumstances and opportunity and will be reviewed on an annual basis and fully refreshed every 5 years.

The approved marketing strategy will continue to be implemented for the Enterprise Zone and where appropriate will be updated in line with the revised masterplan.

#### New Project Manager Posts:

One of two Project management roles, funded by Fylde Borough Council has now been appointed and commenced work on the 1 March 2021. The outstanding role will be re-advertised in March. The importance of strengthening the project management resource is a very high priority to ensure continued successful and expanded delivery as the range and scale of direct delivery ramps up in 2021/22.

#### **b) Fiscal Incentives**

Work is continuing to lobby Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to seek an extension of Enterprise Zone fiscal benefits which are due to expire for Blackpool in March 2022 for rates relief and November 2023 for enhanced capital allowances.

With full Lancashire Enterprise Partnership support, Blackpool Enterprise Zone joined nationally with The Local Enterprise Partnership Network to put a proposal to HM Treasury. This seeks an extension of business rates relief to 2025/26 as a low cost focus and engine for post Covid-19 economic recovery and growth, and to recognise the delays in all Enterprise Zones being able to bring forward enabling infrastructure.

Further to being informed by HM Treasury that there is presently no opportunity for the proposal to be included in the 3 March 2021 budget which focussed on the Freeports programme, the Local Enterprise Partnership Network will now look to re-engage with Treasury and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to further discuss Enterprise Zone policy, with the objective of securing support in the Autumn financial and business rates review.

In the meantime the Blackpool Enterprise Zone team has briefed local MPs for Blackpool South and Fylde (Blackpool Enterprise Zone), Blackpool North and Cleveleys and Fleetwood and Lancaster (Hillhouse) on the campaign so far, the benefits of Enterprise Zones and the role they have to play in a post-Covid-19 recovery strategy and why there is a pressing need to push for an extension of benefits.

A template clearly articulating issues and actions has now been shared with our northern Enterprise Zone counterparts to encourage them to widen the level of MP support across the Northern Powerhouse area.

**c) Current Activity Phase One**

STRI Group is now off site, except for maintaining the seed growth on the pitches which will be playable from the start of the 2021/2 football season in September. Additional drainage works have been undertaken in association with the phase one work to help alleviate local drainage difficulties in Fylde. A new drainage strategy has been developed for Common Edge to ensure that the drainage outflows to the existing drainage networks do not exceed current greenfield rates of discharge.

The second of three proposed planning applications designed to release the Common Edge Sports pitches was submitted in September 2020. It includes a 3G sports pitch, grass rugby pitch, training area, reconfiguration and extension to existing car park, provision of associated hard-standing, fencing and landscaping, improvement works to the access from Common Edge Road including the creation of a new footway and cycleway.

Only one 3G facility will now be provided at Common Edge to comply with Sports England's recommendations, with a further grass pitch to be enhanced for Rugby League use. Discussions with the Football Foundation have confirmed that they will still, subject to application, be willing to provide grant toward the cost of the facilities with a full funding application to be submitted in April 2021. Initially it was hoped that planning consent could be secured by January 2021, however very last minute issues raised by Sport England, Natural England and Lancashire Highways, have resulted in the final approval being unlikely to be secured until May. This will not delay the new sports pitches coming into use and phased release of existing pitches will allow Highway preparation works to progress.

Detailed design work on the changing room and car parking is now 95% complete with minor adjustments being made to allow for changing places provision and to value engineer, as second stage tender prices have shown marked escalation since November.

Further design work has continued both the Eastern Gateway Access and the Common Edge Road junction upgrade led by Blackpool highways team, with further detailed site investigation being commissioned. The purchase of third party property has now been agreed but leasehold surrenders and renewals with sports clubs are still under negotiation, and need to be resolved before the design can be finalised and the planning application submitted.

Target for submission of the major planning application covering roads and commercial development is the second quarter 2021.

**d) M55 Link Road**

Efforts to fund the project have been boosted by its award of Getting Building Fund support and it is anticipated that a full funding package will soon be in place, including an Enterprise Zone contribution of up to £1m with Fylde generated retained Business Rates growth monies being ring fenced toward this. It is hoped that the scheme will be in a position to enable Lancashire County Council to tender the contract in the first quarter of 2021.

**e) Initial Development**

Legal agreements have been concluded for the development of 40,000 sq ft facility to be occupied by Multiply Components Limited, and Eric Wright Construction commenced on site works in late October. The Design and Build contract is for a nine month build with an October 2021 opening subject to completion of specialist fit out works being undertaken by the company. £800,000 of Growth Deal funding was secured and the funding fully drawn down. Steelwork has now been erected and cladding and external works will commence shortly. A naming ceremony or a topping out ceremony will be organised once the roof is in place, due to commence week commencing 1 March 2021.

**f) Current Planning Applications**

Three live planning applications are currently being considered by Blackpool Council, with a significant number of retrospective applications anticipated for works/and use changes within the Squires Gate Industrial Estate. These include an application for a small fibre switching data centre to support roll out of superfast broadband across the Fylde Coast, and a retrospective application for construction of a cement batching plant at the Squires Gate Industrial Estate. A long standing proposed development of a 20MW gas fired power generation facility has been withdrawn.

**g) Squires Gate Industrial Estate (Former Wellington Bomber Factory)**

The new owners of Squires Gate Industrial Estate continue subdividing and letting units and an up to date tenancy schedule has been received from the new owners. Work is progressing to resolve technical issues relating to planning permissions, building regulation and fire certification, whilst individual rating assessments are still to be put in place for newly created individual units.

## **h) Communications Infrastructure**

Blackpool Council and BITC are leading a series of planned workshops to develop a digital strategy for Blackpool and to clearly identify market sectors leading to the development of an operational business plan. A meeting is also pending with the digital lead at Department for International Trade to introduce Blackpool's new digital opportunities.

## **i) Fibre Blackpool**

The Fibre Blackpool campaign continues to promote the roll out a local full fibre network for improved, gigabit capable, broadband internet connection to residents and businesses on the Fylde Coast. The dedicated website [www.fibreblackpool.com](http://www.fibreblackpool.com) is still receiving enquiries registering interest in the scheme and various suppliers are now active in the Blackpool area. The Enterprise Zone Marketing Officer will provide marketing support for any co-op members for the benefit of Enterprise Zone businesses. Discussions are now underway to secure extension of the Local Full Fibre Network network along the coast to serve Wyre and Fylde, particularly the rural areas of both authorities.

## **j) Marketing**

Marketing Lancashire has commissioned a new Enterprise Zone section of the Invest in Lancashire website <https://investinlancashire.com/lamec/> but phase 2 works on the individual LAMEC website has still yet to undertaken. Blackpool and Hillhouse Enterprise Zone continue to push for an update to the websites to include an option for people to sign up to the respective Enterprise Zone newsletters, as the websites only offer a City Deal and Lancashire Business Brief that are not relevant to the Enterprise Zones.

Any updates need to ensure the material is fully accessible for anyone with disability. Additional administrator rights have been obtained on elements of the LAMEC website to ensure regular news updates are posted and linked to Enterprise Zone social media accounts, but further improvement is required.

A series of workshops are underway to discuss the branding and messaging for all four LAMEC sites and a combined communications strategy is to be implemented.

Regular newsletter updates have continued throughout lockdown providing Covid-19 business support advice with the Marketing Officer continuing to monitor the

situation carefully. The next quarterly spring 2021 edition is planned by the end of March containing good news stories.

A double page spread in the Invest in Lancashire Guide 2021 has been secured along with editorial coverage and can be viewed here: [Lancashire Investment Guide 2021 \(flickr.com\)](#) David Holmes, chair of the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee C is confirmed as a round table guest, representing LAMEC as part of the package.

Work is progressing with Lancashire County to appoint a joint international agent for all four LAMEC sites. So far no interest has been received and the advert has been extended till 12 March 2021.

An editorial report on Lancashire enterprise zones is also upcoming in the Mar/April Lancashire Business View and a wide range of individuals from each of the three active sites have been put forward for interview.

An evaluation of the marketing activity 2020/21 is being prepared and 12 communication campaign being drafted for the forthcoming year 2021/22.

Top 10 enquiries are:

No.	Date of enquiry	Target sector	Size	Type of enquiry
1	Jan 2021	DC	up to 125,000 sq ft	National company, land sale enquiry for data centre
2	Dec 2020	FM	up to 80,000 sq ft	Land sale for international wholesaler, Warehousing and distribution
3	Oct 2020	DC	Up to 30,000 sq ft	D&B LH for NW data centre facility requirement
4	Apr 2020	AV	25,000 sq ft	D&B sale hangar for specialised sim/helicopter training facilities, worldwide contracts
5	Nov 2020	E	20,000 sq ft	D&B sale for mix of owner/occupier and spec devt
6	Dec 2020	FM	Up to 80,000 sq ft	D&B LH for regional manufacturing and warehousing co.
7	May 2020	AV	2 acres	Land sale for hangar complex for engineering and

				storage, high net worth investment for airport
8	Nov 2020	FM	Up to 30,000 sq ft	D&B lease for fast growth, local target sector company
9	Aug 2019	ADM	20,000 sq ft	D&B sale for established local manufacturers constrained at existing premises
10	Dec 2020	ADM	Up to 2 acre plot for 20,000 sq ft	D&B sale for established local manufacturers constrained at existing premises

SECTORS: ADM - Adv. Manufacturing and engineering, AV - Aviation, OA - Office administration, FM - food manufacturing, E - Energy, DC – digital and creative, O - Other

**k) Blackpool: The Place for Business**

A verbal update will be given at the June meeting.

**l) Blackpool Airport**

A decision has been made on the operating contracts and licensing for the airport which will be brought in-house. Staff have all been notified and a press release informing of the decision was issued to the local, regional and trade press early March. Work is underway to apply to Civil Aviation Authority for new operating licenses to come into effect from end of September, and a specialist project manager appointed on a short term contract to lead the transition.

The airport has continued to operate throughout Covid-19 lockdowns to ensure offshore services could be maintained. This has resulted in an adverse impact on earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization; which will impact upon ability to fund future infrastructure upgrades. There is continued lobby group pressure to reintroduce commercial air services but in the present distressed state of the aviation industry there is very limited interest from airline industry to consider new domestic or near European routes.

The airport was successful in securing support from the Airfield Development Advisory Fund, with the consultancy support funded looking at options for introduction of virtual control technology, which would avoid the requirement for construction of a new control tower. In the short term the existing 1939 tower is undergoing repair to extend its operational life.

The contract to serve the offshore rigs transferred to NHV with effect from 1 December 2020 for the present time NHV will continue to serve the production platforms owned by both Spirit and Italian company ENI.

New airport estate signage is now in place across the site.

**m) Third Party Development**

There is no current third party development activity on site but up to three projects are in the pipeline- with the Love Expo development having completed in October.

To date:

- A total of over 300 live enquiries are currently logged for Blackpool Enterprise Zone.
- Some 114 businesses have located to the Enterprise Zone since April 2016.
- A gross cumulative total of 1602 jobs have located to the Enterprise Zone, this figure includes jobs new to the area, safeguarded jobs within Blackpool and construction full time equivalent jobs.

**n) Project Team**

The latest meeting of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone Project Team was hosted online on 29 January 2021 and the next meeting is due to take place 26 March 2021 via MS Teams.

**o) Risk Register**

The Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone risk register is reviewed regularly with Blackpool Council's Corporate Risk Team, the Project Board and the Programme Board (EPB) every quarter.

**p) Milestones**

The table below lists key milestones which will be reviewed at the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee scheduled for the 18 March 2021 and also at the next Enterprise Zone Project Board on 14 April 2021.

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Proposition and identifying opportunities for data centre market	Ongoing
Land / property acquisitions x 4	Mar 2021
Appoint international marketing agents LAMEC brand	Apr 2021
Changing Rooms and car park/3G pitch planning application decision expected	May 2021
Appoint Common Edge Changing room and 3G pitches contractor	May 2021



Architectural feasibility study and design work for airport complete	May 2021
Head of Terms to be agreed 20,000 sq ft unit	Jun 2021
Focussed marketing of Common Edge phase 1 commences	Jun 2021
Design and outline planning application for eastern gateway access	Jun 2021
Design and outline planning application for Common Edge Road	Summer 2021
No. 12 grass football pitches ready for use	Sep 2021
Release of existing sports pitches and commencement of highway and utility infrastructure	Oct 2021
40,000 sq ft devt complete	Oct 2021
Fiscal benefit extension decision from HM Treasury	Nov 2021
Planning approval for highways	Dec 2021*
12 month construction contract for EGA access road	Jan 2022
Airport Control tower, fire station relocation planning application	Jan 2022
Outline planning app for airport redevelopment	Mar 2022
Decision on airport redevelopment planning application	May 2022
Commencement of works for airport redevelopment	July 2022
Delivery of spec dev of 20,000 sq ft commercial unit	Sept 2022
Replacement hangar development commenced	Sep 2022
Completion of airport redevelopment works	Autumn 2023

\*Subject to Secretary of State approval of Greenbelt development

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**Report to:** Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board

**Report Author:** Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council

**Date of Meeting:** 25 March 2021

## HILLHOUSE TECHNOLOGY ENTERPRISE ZONE: UPDATE

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To review the work of Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note the report.

### 3.0 Hillhouse Enterprise Zone: Progress Report

#### a) Implementation Plan

Finalisation of the implementation and delivery plan has again been delayed as it is amended to reflect both the closure of the Vinnolit facility and the loss of the proposed large scale waste to energy plant, and the conventional gas fired power station, alongside the progression of proposals by NPL Estates for an initial phase of speculative development totalling 6,100m<sup>2</sup> which would in part, assist the decanting of existing businesses from the old international business centre releasing that site for redevelopment. Similarly alternative use for retained former Vinnolit building and preparation of former site for development. The accountable body Enterprise Zone team are working with NPL to update the programme and costs estimates for delivery of enabling infrastructure and surveys. This will then be presented to Wyre Borough Council for approval as the accountable body and subsequently to the Economic Prosperity Board, Enterprise Zone Governance Committee, Lancashire Economic Partnership and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government for information and endorsement.

NPL, who has secured an in principle offer of funding from the Getting Building Fund toward the costs of essential infrastructure upgrades to enable the new speculative development to progress, are now preparing detailed planning applications for the

development, which should be submitted to Wyre Borough Council before the end of April 2021 together with a planning application to relocate the existing gatehouse.

The project identifies a requirement for urgent upgrading and repair to ageing enabling infrastructure, including site access road, and an extension and repair to Hillhouse's water ring main and electricity supply mains.

The project has been allocated provisional funding £630,000 from the Getting Building Fund, with additional match funding provided by Wyre Borough Council and NPL at £63,000 each. Formal confirmation of funding is dependent upon completion of the Lancashire Economic Partnership's due diligence process but is expected to be confirmed at the next Project Board.

A purchaser for the former Sainsbury retail site has been identified and their intention is to secure a planning consent for up to 250 homes and a smaller district retail centre which will support employment and provide some retained business rates growth. To enable development to proceed the new owners of the site Promenade Estates and BXB Ltd will need to reach agreement for contributions toward highways, drainage and utility infrastructure, accelerating currently delayed delivery.

NPL have also submitted planning application for residential development of the former Thornton AFC site having now supported the relocation of the football club to their Poolfoot site. Once consent is granted and work commenced, this should see the completion of works to enable Bourne Road, the main access route to Hillhouse, to become an adopted Highway.

## **b) MARKETING**

Marketing Lancashire has commissioned a new Enterprise Zone section of the Invest in Lancashire website <https://investinlancashire.com/lamec/> but phase 2 works on the individual LAMEC website has still to undertaken. Blackpool and Hillhouse Enterprise Zone's continue to push for an update to the websites to include an option for people to sign up to the respective Enterprise Zone newsletters, as the websites only offer a City Deal and Lancashire Business Brief that are not relevant to the Enterprise Zones.

Any updates to the web sites and printed media need to ensure the material is fully accessible for anyone with disability. Additional administrator rights have been obtained on elements of the LAMEC website to ensure regular news updates are

posted and linked to Enterprise Zone social media accounts, but further improvement is required.

A series of workshops are underway to discuss the branding and messaging for all four LAMEC sites and a combined communications strategy is to be implemented.

Regular newsletter updates have continued throughout lockdown providing Covid-19 business support advice with the Marketing Officer continuing to monitor the situation carefully. The next quarterly spring 2021 edition is planned by the end of March containing good news stories.

A double page spread in the Invest in Lancashire Guide 2021 has been secured along with editorial coverage and can be viewed here: [Lancashire Investment Guide 2021 \(flickread.com\)](https://www.flickread.com)

David Holmes, chair of the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee C is confirmed as a round table guest, representing LAMEC as part of the package.

Work is progressing with Lancashire County Council to appoint a joint international agent for all four LAMEC sites. So far no interest has been received and the advert has been extended till 12 March 2021.

An editorial report on Lancashire enterprise zones is also upcoming in the Mar/April Lancashire Business View and a wide range of individuals from each of the three active sites have been put forward for interview.

Regular newsletter updates have continued throughout lockdown providing Covid-19 business support advice with the Marketing Officer continuing to monitor the situation carefully. The next quarterly spring edition is planned by the end of March containing good news stories.

A marketing strategy has been prepared for inclusion in the Delivery Plan. When the Delivery Plan is completed, a communications campaign will be drafted to support site activity.

Current enquiries include:

Date of enquiry	Target sector	Size and type of enquiry
Feb 2021	Waste to energy project	10,000 sq ft
Feb 2021	Construction	1 acre outdoor secure storage
Jan 2021	Chimney manufacturer	2 acres
Jan 2021	USA owned PPE manufacturer	200,000 sq ft
Jan 2021	Energy and renewables	20,000 sq ft new build industrial
Jan 2021	Organic waste recycling centre	10 – 20,000 sq ft industrial

Jan 2021	Waste to energy recycling project	Up to 2.5 acres
Jan 2021	Warehousing and distribution of beauty supplies	20,000 sq ft new build
May 2020	Manufacture of PVC compound	15,000 sq ft industrial
Jan 2020	Manufacturing of mobile kitchens	Up to 4 acres

**c) Hydrogen Steering Group**

Further Hydrogen Hub meetings have been put on hold until further notice due to furloughed key members of the group. These will be re-established once social distancing restrictions are lifted. Added impetus to the work of the group is anticipated in the wake of Government announcements about the new green agenda and the role of hydrogen as a clean fuel source for transportation.

**d) Site Activity**

**i) Vinnolit**

Majority landowner NPL Estates have completed the purchase of the vacant property of the former Vinnolit site and are seeking planning consent to demolish with work likely to take up to 12 months releasing new sites for development resulting in increased long term employment.

**ii) Victrex**

Global polymer solutions supplier Victrex, which is a FTSE 250 company with a 900-strong workforce, has made 79 redundancies across operations at its Thornton Cleveleys HQ due to the effects of Covid-19 on the business, but hopes to re-recruit once market stabilises post Brexit and Covid.

**iii) Forsa Energy**

Construction work is ongoing for a new 20MW Short Term Operating Reserve (STOR) gas turbines, planning consent having been granted in 2017. The development is due to complete in Spring 2021.

A number of construction jobs have been created by Forsa Energy and NPL/Wyre BC will confirm with the contractor the final numbers for the project.

**e) Job Creation**

A number of construction jobs have been created due to the start on site by Forsa Energy. The team continues to chase confirmation of how many construction full time equivalent jobs are currently on site and work will continue to make connections with Hillhouse tenants.

**f) Enterprise Zone Board Meetings**

A Board meeting took place on 15 January 2021 online with a group of stakeholders including Hillhouse tenants. The February meeting was postponed, rescheduled for 19 March 2021.

**g) Communications Infrastructure**

Funding of up to £250,000 was approved by Wyre Borough Council to support the extension of the Local Full Fibre Network broadband fibre optic network to the site gates, work which is now been delivered. It is now for NPL to commit to further expenditure to progress the extension of the fibre optic broadband capability throughout the Enterprise Zone site.

**h) Enterprise Zone fiscal benefits**

Work is continuing to lobby Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to seek an extension of Enterprise Zone fiscal benefits which are due to expire for Hillhouse on 31 March 2021 for rates relief and November 2023 for enhanced capital allowances.

With full Lancashire Enterprise Partnership support, Hillhouse Enterprise Zone joined nationally with The Local Enterprise Partnership Network to put a proposal to HM Treasury. This seeks an extension of business rates relief to 2025/26 as a low cost focus and engine for post Covid-19 economic recovery and growth, and to recognise the delays in all Enterprise Zones being able to bring forward enabling infrastructure.

Further to being informed by HM Treasury that there is presently no opportunity for the proposal to be included in the 3 March 2021 budget which focussed on the Freeports programme, the Local Enterprise Partnership Network will now look to re-engage with Treasury and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to further discuss Enterprise Zone policy, with the objective of securing support in the Autumn financial and business rates review.

In the meantime local MPs have been briefed; Blackpool South and Fylde (Blackpool Enterprise Zone), Blackpool North and Cleveleys and Fleetwood and Lancaster (Hillhouse Enterprise Zone) on the campaign so far, the benefits of Enterprise Zone and the role they have to play in a post-Covid-19 recovery strategy and why there is a pressing need to push for an extension of benefits.

A template clearly articulating issues and actions has now been shared with northern Enterprise Zone counterparts in the absence of any strong centralised push from the LEP Network.

**i) Risk Register:**

The Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone risk register is regularly reviewed by Wyre Borough Council's corporate risk team and will be reviewed again at the upcoming Project Board on 19 March 2021. Copies will be available upon request.

**k) Milestones:**

The table below lists key milestones scheduled to be discussed and approved at the Hillhouse Enterprise Zone Project Board on 19 March 2021.

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Getting Building Fund grant funding agreement to be signed	Mar 2021
Planning application submitted utilities and infrastructure upgrade including new gatehouse	Apr 2021
60,000 sq ft speculative development of small multi-use units planning submitted	Apr 2021
Risk Register updated regularly by Project Board	Apr 2021
Appointment of joint international marketing agent LAMEC brand	Apr 2021
Revised Delivery Plan	May 2021
Procure state aid advice once Implementation plan complete	May 2021
Fiscal benefit extension decision from HM Treasury	Mar 2021
Planning permission granted for utilities infrastructure and new gatehouse	July 2021
Construction commences for utilities infrastructure and new gatehouse	July 2021
A flood risk assessment to be scoped and commissioned for the entire site subject to identification of funding	Q2 2021
A transport assessment be scoped and commissioned for the entire site subject to identification of funding	Q2 2021
An Environmental and Ecology study to be scoped and commissioned for the entire site subject to identification of funding **	Q2 2021
Forsa Energy completion of build	Q2 2021
Demolition and clearance of Vinnolit plots complete	Q2 2021
Completion of electric and water main upgrades*	Sep 2021
Subsequent roll out of fibre ducting on site	Q3 2021



\*Applications still to be submitted by NPL

\*\* Habitat assessments to be undertaken Nov 21-Mar 22

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