



MINUTES

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board

Date:	Thursday, 13 October 2022
Venue:	Reception Room, Town Hall, St Annes.
Economic Prosperity Board Members Present:	Councillor Karen Buckley, Leader - Fylde Council Councillor David Henderson, Leader - Wyre Council Councillor Mark Smith, Blackpool Council.
Chief Executive Officers Present:	Allan Oldfield, Chief Executive, Fylde Council Neil Jack, Chief Executive, Blackpool Council Garry Payne, Chief Executive, Wyre Council
Co-opted private sector representatives Present:	Martin Long (Blackpool), Neil Farley (Fylde)
Other Attendees:	Nick Gerrard - Growth and Prosperity Programme Director Rob Green - Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council Steve Peters - Managing Director - Blackpool Airport Scott Butterfield - Strategy, Policy & Research Manager - Blackpool Council Marianne Hesketh - Corporate Director of Communities - Wyre Council Tony Doyle - Head of ICT - Blackpool Council Paul Evans - Assistant Director - Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Charlie Richards - Head of Projects & Regeneration - Fylde Council Lyndsey Lacey Simone - Notetaker - Fylde Council

1. Welcome

The Chairman, Councillor Karen Buckley welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

5. Review of Economic Prosperity Board's Priorities

Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director - Blackpool Council presented the report which sought to review the Economic Prosperity Board's (EPB) future work and priorities against its role and remit. A copy of the report was circulated with the agenda.

In summary, the report set out background information which included the purpose and remit of the EPB; governance arrangements and the four priorities agreed at the July 2018 meeting. It was reported that the Board last reviewed its priorities in December 2020 and an extract of that resolution was included on the agenda.

The Board were reminded that the current four priorities were as follows: Accelerated Growth focusing on our Enterprise Zones (ii) Connectivity (iii) Marketing and Investment and (iv) Housing Growth and Quality of Life.

Included as an appendix to the report was an Agenda Tracker which identified the range and frequency of issues discussed at the EPB since the last review. The Board was advised that these still relate closely to the first 3 priorities agreed by the EPB primarily because the focus of business had been on issues of common interest that affect the whole area. However, since the last review, there had been an increasing focus on climate change and associated matters which was deemed to be a potential new fourth priority.

The Board recognised the importance attached to the housing element but acknowledged there had been little collective focus on housing through the EPB directly as this was supported by other bodies. In view of this, it was deemed appropriate to remove that priority and replace it with a new fourth priority on Climate Change. Mitigation and Adaptation and its economic opportunities.

It was RESOLVED: To note the progress made by the Economic Prosperity Board and support the updated priorities as outlined above.

6. Presentation - Blackpool Airport

Steve Peters, Managing Director of Blackpool Airport provided the Board with a PowerPoint presentation relating to the ongoing work and on-going development opportunities at Blackpool Airport.

Some of the key areas highlighted at the meeting were: the licensing arrangements at the Airport and details of the strands of revenue streams including the anchor contract, general aviation and corporate aircraft. In addition, other financial related matters incorporating a 10-year plan were discussed. Details relating to the market scope and opportunities including MRO; pilot training; cargo; specialist charters; corporate operators; GA growth; scheduled domestic flights and HNW operator together with details of the special mission ops; FBO; events; electric innovations and delivery and infrastructure requirements were also highlighted in the presentation.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chairman invited questions. These included matters relating to commercial flights; the airport's hydrogen and investment strategy/links to other users; impact of the closure of other small airports and the associated financial implications. Mr Peters addressed these points in turn.

It was RESOLVED to (i) note the report and thank Mr Peters for his presentation and (ii) to circulate the presentation slides to the Board.

7. Economic Opportunities of Climate Mitigation and Adaption

Scott Butterfield, Strategy, Policy and Research Manager at Blackpool Council updated the Board on matters concerning the economic aspects of the climate change mitigation and adaptation agendas. In doing so, he reminded the Board of the following four key actions highlighted at the 9 June meeting. He went on to expand on those key actions.

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

Mr Butterfield then went on to highlight the Duty to Cooperate requirements; the work of the Local Energy Northwest Hub together with details of the various projects that would require or benefit from input from the hub or close collaboration. In addition, reference to internal and external funding opportunities and the work of the Lancashire Climate Officers Group was highlighted.

It was also reported that Lancashire County Council are leading on a piece of work to produce a Lancashire 2050 plan, which included Environment and Climate Change as a key theme. It was suggested that this would likely to lead to collaborative opportunities as detailed work is undertaken on a county-level action plan.

The Chairman enquired about the various working groups dealing with the topic of climate mitigation. She asked that the notes of those meetings be circulated (as appropriate) to the Board. This was agreed.

Clarification on the future of offshore wind turbines was sought. In addition, details about the use of Shared Prosperity Fund and the impacts of the New Energy Security Bill and the Government's stance on fracking was also raised.

It was RESOLVED to note the updated report.

8. Innovation Catalyst

Mr Tony Doyle, Head of ICT, Blackpool Council provided the Board with a PowerPoint presentation on the 2023 Vision to deliver a new kind of digital eco system that is sustainable leading to significant economic growth and social prosperity to the area.

An overview of progress made of developing digital infrastructure along the Fylde Coast and the associated international fibre connectivity was given.

In brief, the report highlighted work undertaken by a team of researchers from Lancaster University and a sustainability consultancy; the impact of current Data Centres/ Net Zero Data Centres on carbon footprint; digital growth and trends in ICT; details of the Innovation Catalyst (funded by Community Renewal Fund) and links to the Symposium session held on 15 September. In addition, an overview of existing investments in the area was highlighted. It was suggested that the Fylde coast area could:

- Become the UK's leading sustainable digital eco-system.
- Become the home of ethically powered data.
- Power the compute and AI for the Northwest due to the ultra-low latency fibre networks.
- Can be a major Internet exchange point as an alternative to London.
- Generate and store renewable energy= share at a low price per kwh.
- Can re-use energy and waste heat to benefit the community.
- Establish a co-operative to share and re-use energy.
- Continue to build on the co-operative to share digital infrastructure.
- Educate and train young people for futures jobs in sustainability and digital- Energy HQ on EAZ.
- Attract, high value jobs in digital, sustainability, advanced manufacturing and research.
- Establish the developing knowledge and research quarter on the EAZ as a centre of excellence for climate-tech one of the most exciting fastest growing parts of the economy being driven by innovators who want to use technology to save the planet (climate tech-hub)

The following opportunities were also highlighted:

- High-capacity bandwidth local and international fibre.
- Ultra-low latency local and international- closer to New York than London and Slough.
- Sustainability – Offshore wind and solar, energy storage and energy reuse (wind, solar and heat)
- The convergence of offshore wind and international fibre at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone (EAZ)
- Greenfield in terms of data centres but all the other ingredients there (existing data centre will struggle to adapt)
- Advanced dialogue with investors to build liquid cooled compute suitable for AI and Robotics at the EAZ
- Next wave of the Internet- the democratisation of AI and robotics – the need for a local (edge) cloud and a sustainable Internet.
- Blackpool Energy HQ on the Blackpool EAZ – district heating
- Enterprise zone with a knowledge research quarter in development
- High value jobs.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chairman invited questions. These related to the following areas: the impact of the shift to a digital climate on the Enterprise Zone together with renewal fund and investor opportunities. Mr Doyle addressed each point in turn.

It was RESOLVED to (i) note the report and thank Mr Doyle for his presentation and (ii) to circulate the presentation slides to the Board.

9. Exclusion of the Public and Press

As the public and press were not present at the meeting and the fact that the information was generally in the public domain, the Board decided not to pass the exclusion of the public and press resolution for the remaining items on the agenda as set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Variation Order 2006.

10. Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone - Progress Report

Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, presented the Board with an update on the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit. A copy of the report was circulated with the agenda.

Mr Green was asked to provide an overview of any updates since the publication of the agenda. The following areas were highlighted: planning consent granted by Blackpool Council regarding remodelling the highways works at Division Lane/Common Edge Road and the application being submitted to the Secretary of State re greenbelt. In addition, the first phase of the new grass sports pitches and changing rooms at the site together with details of airport renewal sector; data centre market; renewal energy; battery storage; windfarms and job gains were also discussed at the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to note the updated report.

The Chairman thanked Mr Green for his report and contribution.

11. Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone Progress Report

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

Some of the key areas highlighted at the meeting included the work being undertaken with Network Rail, LCC and Wyre Council on the Fleetwood/ Poulton railway line, Infrastructure costs and the work continuing with NPL to safeguard jobs at Hillhouse.

It was RESOLVED to note the update.

The Chairman thanked Mr Green for his report and contribution.

12. Any Other Business

An update on the Investment Zone submissions that were being made by the deadline of 14th October by the Upper Tier authorities of Blackpool and Lancashire County Council (which included areas in Fylde and Wyre and both Enterprise Zones) The potential consequences of an Investment Zone in terms planning was also highlighted.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

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

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