

Blackpool Local Economy Action Plan

Priority & Action Template

March 2012

| Priority One | RE-BALANCING THE ECONOMY |
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| <p>Rationale</p> | <p>Blackpool continues to be over-dependent on two employment sectors – the visitor economy and the public sector (including Council, NHS and civil service).</p> <p>Whilst the restructuring of the public sector poses a threat to the overall economy, the visitor economy remains a key area of growth potential, albeit for jobs at the lower end of the pay scale.</p> <p>There is also a recognised need to nurture growth businesses in other sectors and to attract new investment that will provide sustainable jobs in other sectors</p> <p>Although much of Blackpool's business base comprises small to medium-sized businesses, there is a core of businesses across a range of sectors that continue to provide a significant percentage of jobs within the town.</p> <p>While the prospects for these employers will predominantly be determined by external factors in their external markets, there may be areas (eg, skills development, funding, operational issues) in which the Council and other public sector stakeholders could proactively assist.</p> <p>By developing a much closer relationship with these employers, Blackpool's reputation as a "business friendly" town will be enhanced among prospective inward investors.</p> <p>It is accepted that Blackpool can often be a difficult area in which to trade, not least because many of its businesses are Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and often inter-dependent on the seasonal visitor economy and the increasingly fragile public sector.</p> <p>The demise of the personalised Business Link support service and other enterprise-related funding streams means that local SMEs are being left to fend for themselves.</p> |
| <p>Objectives</p> | <p>Objective 1.1 Help major employers and key growth sectors in Blackpool to improve their productivity, increase their investment and create/safeguard jobs</p> <p>Objective 1.2 Promote the attraction of higher-value industries to Blackpool in order to diversify the economy and provide employment opportunities for local people</p> <p>Objective 1.3 Provide and/or help co-ordinate services that support the growth and development of Blackpool's businesses</p> <p>Objective 1.4 Ensure a clear channel of communication exists between Blackpool's business community and the public sector to aid partnership working and understanding</p> |
| <p>Activities</p> | <p>Objective 1.1 Help major employers and key growth sectors in Blackpool to improve their productivity, increase their investment and create/safeguard jobs</p> <p>1.1.1 Identification of key growth companies (and by sector)</p> <p>1.1.2 Identification of top 50 private sector employers in Blackpool (and top 100 on Fylde Coast)</p> <p>1.1.3 Establishment of a Blackpool (and Fylde Coast) "Major Employer Customer Care" programme for those employers including robust monitoring systems that can track performance</p> <p>1.1.4 Identification of dedicated Council resource that can work with these employers on an ongoing basis</p> <p>1.1.5 Promotion of "major employer" care programme to nurture those businesses that account for the largest number of local jobs</p> <p>1.1.6 Develop partnership activities with Blackpool Bay Area Co and Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership to develop "key client" approach</p> |

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| <p>Priority One</p> | <p>RE-BALANCING THE ECONOMY</p> |
| | <p>Objective 2: Promote the attraction of higher-value industries to Blackpool (eg, manufacturing) in order to diversify the economy and provide employment opportunities for local people</p> <p>1.2.1 Proactive marketing campaign to attract new investors in target growth sectors to Blackpool</p> <p>1.2.2 Engagement with prospective investors in Blackpool to ensure there is a support network in place in terms of planning advice, site development, recruitment and skills development (eg, Cuadrilla)</p> <p>Objective 3: Provide and/or help co-ordinate services that support the growth and development of Blackpool's businesses</p> <p>1.3.1 Investigate primary reasons for high business failure rate in Blackpool</p> <p>1.3.2 Establish robust monitoring systems to identify early signs of business failure</p> <p>1.3.3 Development of "one stop" shop business support services incorporating advice on business planning, grants, loans, training, apprenticeships/work placements, mentoring and bespoke training</p> <p>1.3.4 Establish a Council-led financial support package for micro and small businesses</p> <p>1.3.5 Target Council economic development resources at services that give businesses a greater level of resilience</p> <p>1.3.6 Re-focusing and further investment in in-house business engagement staff to provide bespoke on-the-ground services and intelligent brokerage of support</p> <p>1.3.7 Establish closer business and education partnership working that ensures that employers are better aware of the available business support from Higher Education and Further Education institutions.</p> <p>1.3.8 Support new product development and innovation in both the manufacturing and service sector through access to specialist advice, facilities and funding support</p> <p>Objective 4: Ensure a clear channel of communication exists between Blackpool's business community and the public sector to aid partnership working and understanding</p> <p>1.4.1 Facilitate improved networking and communication with businesses through the Blackpool Business Leadership Group</p> <p>1.4.2 Develop further private partnership working through the Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company</p> <p>1.4.3 Develop best practice solutions to the challenges facing Blackpool and encourage increased levels of cross sector/collaborative working</p> <p>1.4.4 Develop business forums in key business districts eg, South Beach</p> <p>1.4.5 Enhance the effectiveness of online communication with the business community and particularly through the established Blackpoolunlimited.com site</p> |
| <p>Interested stakeholders</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blackpool Council ■ Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company (Blackpool Bay Area Co) ■ Blackpool Business Leadership Group ■ Blackpool & The Fylde College ■ North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce ■ Federation of Small Businesses ■ Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership ■ Blackpool Young People's Council |

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| Priority Two | JOB CREATION, RETENTION & WORK-READINESS |
| Rationale | <p>Employment is recognised as a key determining factor of quality of life and a means of reducing levels of deprivation, inequality and improving health.</p> <p>The seasonality of jobs within the visitor economy and the increasing fragility of jobs within the public sector has created serious employment issues within Blackpool.</p> <p>There is a particularly acute problem with young people who either have low aspirations or who are unable to see where future job opportunities lie within the town's economy.</p> |
| Objectives | <p>Objective 2.1 To ensure that employment opportunities for residents are created in Blackpool and that existing employees are secure in their jobs</p> <p>Objective 2.2 To develop opportunities and pathways for people to move into work</p> |
| Activities | <p>Objective 2.1 To ensure that employment opportunities for residents are created in Blackpool and that existing employees are secure in their jobs</p> <p>2.1.1 Working with current/imminent investors (including construction companies) to provide short and medium term employment opportunities</p> <p>2.1.2 Lobbying of Government and close working with public sector agencies to minimise the impact of public sector cuts across the Fylde Coast</p> <p>2.1.3 Development of "employment charter" that commits key employers, potential investors, Council partners and suppliers to employ local people</p> <p>2.1.4 Working with partners on the Fylde Coast to introduce new, non-seasonal employment</p> <p>Objective 2.2 To develop opportunities and pathways for people to move into work</p> <p>2.2.1 Development of local support services and incentives for businesses to help create new jobs and/or protect existing jobs</p> <p>2.2.2 Ensure there is a joined-up approach to enable local residents to benefit directly from jobs arising from key investment opportunities (eg, new Sainsbury's in Central Business District)</p> <p>2.2.3 Address the needs of long-term unemployed through effective delivery of the Work Programme and other specialist support services for families with a history of worklessness</p> <p>2.2.4 Explore funding opportunities to undertake targeted employment initiatives in neighbourhoods with high levels of worklessness (eg, South Beach)</p> |
| Interested stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blackpool Council ■ Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company (Blackpool Bay Area Co) ■ Blackpool Business Leadership Group ■ Blackpool & The Fylde College ■ Blackpool Sixth Form ■ Blackpool Schools ■ Job Centre Plus ■ Blackpool Young People's Council |

| Priority Three | DEVELOP & DELIVER AN EFFECTIVE SKILLS AGENDA |
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| <p>Rationale</p> | <p>There is a particular need to address the whole issue of skills and aspirations among the people of Blackpool, and particularly in the younger age groups.</p> <p>Although there are excellent further education establishments within Blackpool, too many of those who attend leave the area to seek employment elsewhere. Hence, Blackpool becomes a net exporter of its skills.</p> <p>Equally, those without the same level of aspiration are often disengaged with employment opportunities. In these instances, there is a requirement to provide strong links between schools, colleges and prospective employers so that young people are equipped with the appropriate skills to move into employment within Blackpool.</p> <p>Blackpool has a significant Further Education (FE) presence and a small, but growing Higher Education (HE) presence. As Blackpool's economy evolves, these providers will have a key role to play in ensuring that the local population can capitalise on new opportunities. These existing providers are well placed to build and develop their existing strengths to meet emerging employer needs.</p> <p>The demise of some areas of public sector work and the continued rationalisation of major employers such as British Aerospace creates the risk of key skills being lost to the Fylde Coast as workers seek re-employment elsewhere.</p> <p>It is vital that Blackpool retains those skills if it is to attract new and more diverse businesses to the area. Equally, it is important that there are opportunities for people to re-train to be able to capitalise on new opportunities.</p> |
| <p>Objectives</p> | <p>Objective 3.1 Upskill and inspire the young people of Blackpool</p> <p>Objective 3.2 Ensure Blackpool people have the skills that businesses need</p> <p>Objective 3.3 Make effective use of the existing skills base on the Fylde Coast</p> |
| <p>Activities</p> | <p>Objective 3.1 Upskill and inspire the young people of Blackpool</p> <p>3.1.1 Recruit local employers to provide relevant career awareness sessions in local schools, particularly in relation to future growth sectors, as part of a broader approach to raising local aspirations</p> <p>3.1.2 Creation of targeted work placements and apprenticeships to assist young people to gain practical work experience (especially those most distant from the jobs market)</p> <p>3.1.3 Development of the South Point facility as a hub for bringing employers and young people together, thus motivating young people through enterprise and work-related activities</p> <p>3.1.4 Further expansion of the University Centre to provide a greater range of higher education opportunities</p> <p>Objective 3.2 Ensure Blackpool people have the skills that businesses need</p> <p>3.2.1 Establish a "one stop" business and skills support and advice service to link employers with training providers, Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) establishments and private sector providers</p> <p>3.2.2 Establishment of a business and skills partnership group that can bring together employers from key sectors to work with HE, FE and work-based skills suppliers to develop appropriate provision over the short to medium term. This partnership working should cover the range from careers awareness in schools through to full-time, post-16 provision and beyond to part-time provision for mature workers</p> <p>3.2.3 Develop and maintain student placement schemes that encourage local employers to recruit from local educational institutions and also encourage locally-based students to work in locally-based firms</p> <p>3.2.4 Promote and help facilitate apprenticeships for all ages and across all sectors (including public sector) in Blackpool</p> <p>3.2.5 Work with local FE and HE and other training providers to identify likely future growth sectors and opportunities in the local economy</p> <p>3.2.6 Facilitate greater engagement between providers and local employers to develop key course provision and to identify skills gaps</p> <p>Objective 3.3 Make effective use of the existing skills base on the Fylde Coast</p> <p>3.3.1 Seek out opportunities to bring back into productive use those people and assets directly hit by the recession, both in the public sector and as a result of business failure/rationalisation through effective re-training and enterprise opportunities</p> |

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| Priority Three | DEVELOP & DELIVER AN EFFECTIVE SKILLS AGENDA |
| | <p>3.3.2 Utilise skill base to attract inward investment from “office-based” businesses</p> <p>3.3.3 Establish strong partnerships between skills providers and employers to ensure that there are easily accessible opportunities for re-training of experienced people</p> <p>3.3.4 Establishment of Fylde Coast-wide “task and finish” group to respond to emerging impacts of restructuring programmes within the Civil Service</p> |
| Interested stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blackpool Council ■ Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company (Blackpool Bay Area Co) ■ Fylde Coasts Skills and Employment Group ■ Blackpool Business Leadership Group ■ Blackpool Sixth Form ■ Blackpool & The Fylde College ■ Blackpool Schools ■ Blackpool Young People’s Council |

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| Priority Four | RAISING QUALITY WITHIN THE VISITOR ECONOMY |
| Rationale | <p>Although Blackpool has made significant strides in improving quality within the visitor economy in recent years, not least through the arrival of Merlin Entertainments as a key partner in the development of some of Blackpool's key leisure assets, there is substantially more work to be done in this area.</p> <p>Continuous improvement of the quality and diversity of the tourism offer in Blackpool, building on the momentum generated in recent years through the attraction of new, high-profile providers and improved tourism infrastructure, as well as collaborative destination marketing is critical if Blackpool is to remain a mainstream destination.</p> <p>So too is the attraction of a higher percentage of more affluent visitors and a bigger share of the conference and business tourism markets</p> <p>Tourism should also be viewed in the context of the wider economy and the opportunity to capture a greater market share of a growing UK leisure market</p> |
| Objectives | <p>Objective 4.1 Increasing the spend of visitors to Blackpool through delivery of a higher-quality, all-year-round experience and the conversion of substantial numbers of day trippers into overnight stays</p> <p>Objective 4.2 Maximise the potential contribution of tourism to local residents and businesses</p> <p>Objective 4.3 Increase skills and salaries of workers in tourism economy</p> <p>Objective 4.4 Development of Illuminations into a more compelling visitor attraction that is commercially sustainable</p> <p>Objective 4.5 Development of an effective public/private destination marketing company, Marketing Blackpool</p> |
| Activities | <p>Objective 4.1 Increasing the spend of visitors to Blackpool through delivery of a higher-quality, all-year-round experience and the conversion of substantial numbers of day trippers into overnight stays</p> <p>4.1.1 Development of Central Station site as a large-scale tourism attraction</p> <p>4.1.2 Improvement of overall accommodation offer, including regulation of B&Bs and reduction in poor-quality stock</p> <p>4.1.3 Creation of new sites and opportunities to attract “branded” good-quality hotels into Blackpool town centre</p> <p>4.1.4 Development of Winter Gardens into a contemporary conference and entertainment centre with a strong, year-round leisure offer including nationally-recognised content</p> <p>4.1.5 Joint marketing of Blackpool as a destination by working with private sectors via the Marketing Blackpool Co</p> <p>4.1.6 Working with key transport partners including rail operators, coach companies, and Blackpool Airport to open up Blackpool to new domestic and European markets</p> <p>4.1.7 Maximising visitor attractions and facilities to create a wider appeal to visitors with disabilities</p> <p>Objective 4.2 Maximise the potential contribution of tourism to local residents and businesses</p> <p>4.2.1 Establishment of support measures that encourage and facilitate private sector investment and job creation in key visitor attractions</p> <p>4.2.2 Lobbying of Government for Blackpool to be designated as a “Tourism Development Zone” with pilot schemes including reduction in VAT for visitor economy-related businesses</p> <p>Objective 4.3 Increase skills and salaries of workers in tourism economy</p> <p>4.3.1 Work with private sector partners to develop a programme of incremental skills improvement</p> <p>4.3.2 Explore new Government funding streams to facilitate private sector support and development of a “Tourism Skills Academy”</p> <p>Objective 4.4 Development of Illuminations into a more compelling visitor attraction that is commercially sustainable</p> <p>4.4.1 Development of Illuminations offer and associated signage strategy that encourages drivers to “park and walk” through Illuminations/town centre</p> |

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| Priority Four | RAISING QUALITY WITHIN THE VISITOR ECONOMY |
| | <p>4.4.2 Explore and develop new commercial funding streams that create the potential to refresh the Illuminations on an annual basis</p> <p>Objective 4.5 Development of an effective public/private destination marketing company, Marketing Blackpool</p> <p>4.5.1 Development of a high-level destination management plan combining the resources of key public and private sector partners</p> <p>4.5.2 Development of a compelling events programme to attract a wide range of new and existing visitors</p> <p>4.5.3 Expansion of the “Blackpool Resort Pass” concept through enhance private sector partnership working</p> |
| Interested stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Marketing Blackpool ■ Blackpool Council ■ Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company (Blackpool Bay Area Co) ■ Blackpool Business Leadership Group ■ Blackpool & The Fylde College ■ Blackpool Young People’s Council ■ Stay Blackpool ■ Visit England/Visit Britain |

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| Priority Five | SECURING INVESTMENT FOR BLACKPOOL |
| Rationale | <p>Over the past 10 years, Blackpool has benefited from substantial investment from Government. This has helped to create an infrastructure (particularly within the visitor economy) that has created a platform for investment and job creation.</p> <p>Despite the investment, Blackpool continues to struggle to shed external perceptions that it is a run-down seaside resort that is past its prime. This is exacerbated by often-used dated images of Blackpool that portray it as a “kiss me quick” resort that is over-reliant on stag and hen parties, thus undermining its chosen positioning as a mainstream family destination that is a good place to live, work or invest</p> <p>Against a backdrop of limited public funding, Blackpool now needs to find more innovative ways to bring in new sources of investment and funding</p> |
| Objectives | <p>Objective 5.1 Modernise external perceptions of Blackpool to ensure that views and attitudes reflect the “New Blackpool”</p> <p>Objective 5.2 To identify public and private sector investment and funding opportunities to maintain the momentum gained in the physical and social regeneration of Blackpool</p> <p>Objective 5.3 To ensure that Blackpool (and the Fylde Coast) secures a significant proportion of monies being channelled through the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership to stimulate economic growth and job creation</p> |
| Activities | <p>Objective 5.1 Modernise external perceptions of Blackpool to ensure that views and attitudes reflect the “New Blackpool”</p> <p>5.1.1 Enhanced collaborative working with media organisations to help change external perceptions</p> <p>5.1.2 Work with the private sector to create a team of business “ambassadors” who can disseminate positive messages across a wide and varied audience</p> <p>5.1.3 Development of a coherent marketing message for the town which is widely used by all sectors and partners to promote Blackpool to residents, visitors and investors</p> <p>Objective 5.2 To identify public and private sector investment and funding opportunities to maintain the momentum gained in the physical and social regeneration of Blackpool</p> <p>5.2.1 Establish an in-house team within Blackpool Council to generate robust business cases that will attract additional private and public interest and resources</p> <p>5.2.2 Work with key partners including Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company to prioritise promotion and re-use of employment land and premises for re-development opportunities</p> <p>5.2.3 Make a compelling case to the Coastal Communities Fund to facilitate further investment and job creation</p> <p>Objective 5.3 To ensure that Blackpool (and the Fylde Coast) secures a significant proportion of monies being channelled through the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership to stimulate economic growth and job creation</p> <p>5.3.1 Develop strong partnership working arrangements with the LEP to ensure that Blackpool (and the Fylde Coast) plays an influential role in decision making</p> <p>5.3.2 Work with (and influence) the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership and British Aerospace to ensure that the development of an Enterprise Zone at Warton has a positive impact for Blackpool and particularly for those residents at risk of losing their jobs at BAe</p> <p>5.3.3 Maximise the impact of already-approved Regional Growth Funds towards investment and growth (eg, the £7.5m Accelerating Business Growth Fund for Lancashire manufacturers)</p> |
| Interested stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blackpool Council ■ Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company (Blackpool Bay Area Co) ■ Blackpool Business Leadership Group ■ North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce ■ Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership ■ Blackpool Young People’s Council ■ Marketing Blackpool |

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| Priority Six | MAXIMISING POTENTIAL OF THE TOWN CENTRE |
| Rationale | Along with other towns and cities, Blackpool is finding it difficult to grow its town centre retail offer amid a climate of reduced consumer spend and failing High Street names. If it is to enhance its position as the sub-regional shopping centre for the Fylde Coast there is an urgent need for the town centre to be “re-invented” as a destination that is not wholly dependent on its retail offer to attract visitors, but can also offer high-quality entertainment and complementary cultural and leisure facilities |
| Objectives | <p>Objective 6.1 Re-establish Blackpool town centre as first choice shopping destination for Fylde Coast residents</p> <p>Objective 6.2 Create a town centre early evening economy that complements and adds value to the retail offer</p> <p>Objective 6.3 Create opportunities for commercial development that brings higher-paid employment into the town centre, thus supporting a higher calibre of shops, restaurants and bars</p> |
| Activities | <p>Objective 6.1 Re-establish Blackpool town centre as the first choice shopping destination for Fylde Coast residents</p> <p>6.1.1 Development and agreement of town centre action plan</p> <p>6.1.2 Establishment of “town centre team” comprising public and private sector partners to develop a more vibrant town centre offer and lead on town centre-related funding bids</p> <p>6.1.3 Work with new owners of Houndshill to develop future phases of the shopping centre</p> <p>6.1.4 Development of car parking pricing strategy that enhances the emerging town centre offer</p> <p>6.1.5 Work with commercial agents to develop a more compelling retail and leisure mix</p> <p>6.1.6 Development of year-round events and entertainment programme in association with the BID team that animates key parts of the town centre and is an attraction in its own right</p> <p>6.1.7 Create clear linkages between Prom, Tower Festival Headlands and Town Centre</p> <p>6.1.8 Identify usages of key sites (such as Winter Gardens, Tower Buildings etc) that bring in additional footfall and add value to the overall town centre offer</p> <p>Objective 6.2 Create a town centre early evening economy that complements and adds value to the retail offer</p> <p>6.2.1 Adopt the broad principles of the Purple Flag accreditation scheme in order to provide a safe, secure and more balanced night-time economy</p> <p>6.2.2 Proactive approach to broadening the town centre evening economy by targeting known “brands” in the food and drink sector</p> <p>6.2.3 Delivery of branded restaurant offer on the former Yates’s site.</p> <p>6.2.4 Eradicate areas of “conflict” between stag and hen economy and retail economy</p> <p>6.2.5 Work with retailers and the BID company to extend retail hours into the early evening</p> <p>6.2.6 Expansion of cultural offer to enhance the early evening economy</p> <p>Objective 6.3 Create opportunities for commercial development that brings higher-paid jobs to the town centre, supporting a higher calibre of shops, restaurants and bars</p> <p>6.3.1 Completion of first phase of Central Business District scheme</p> <p>6.3.2 Securing of funding for phase two of Central Business District scheme</p> <p>6.3.3 Identification and development of complementary commercial developments at key sites</p> |
| Interested stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blackpool Council ■ Blackpool Town Centre BID Company ■ Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company (Blackpool Bay Area Co) ■ Blackpool Business Leadership Group ■ Marketing Blackpool ■ Blackpool Young People’s Council ■ Private Sector: Muse; Blackstone & Catalyst Capital (Hounds Hill); Merlin Entertainments |

| Priority Seven | IMPROVING TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE |
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| Rationale | Strong transport links are critical for a town that is heavily dependent on tourists and conference delegates. With future inward investment likely to be focused on employment sites across the Fylde Coast, there is a more compelling need to connect areas of opportunity with areas of need by developing effective local transport networks. |
| Objectives | <p>Objective 7.1 Deliver improved rail service, together with an attractive, welcoming rail gateway to the town</p> <p>Objective 7.2 Produce a clear strategy for Blackpool Airport which maintains its position as a regional airport with the potential to provide strong business connections and deliver growing numbers of inbound visitors</p> <p>Objective 7.3 Further development of the tramway system so that it provides a viable means of linking attractions and employment sites to the main rail network</p> <p>Objective 7.4 Ensure bus transport networks and timetables respond effectively to commuter needs to access key sites of employment across Blackpool & the Fylde Coast</p> |
| Activities | <p>Objective 7.1 Deliver improved rail service offer, together with an attractive and welcoming rail gateway to the town</p> <p>7.1.1 Lobbying with the Blackpool Business Leadership Group to ensure that the re-franchising of the West Coast Main Line in 2013 results in the reinstatement of direct rail services to and from London</p> <p>7.1.2 Further Government lobbying to ensure there is continued commitment to the electrification of the Blackpool to Preston railway line to the agreed schedule</p> <p>7.1.3 Working with operators to improve the main rail arrival point at Blackpool North</p> <p>Objective 7.2 Produce a clear strategy for Blackpool Airport which maintains its position as a regional airport with the potential to provide strong business connections and deliver growing numbers of inbound visitors</p> <p>7.2.1 Development of enhanced business services in and out of Blackpool Airport</p> <p>7.2.2 Development of new services that carry the potential to open up Blackpool as a gateway destination for new European and overseas markets</p> <p>Objective 7.3 Further development of the tramway system so that it provides a viable means of linking attractions and employment sites to the main rail network</p> <p>7.3.1 Promotion of tramway as a viable “commuter” route for employees along the Fylde Coast</p> <p>7.3.2 Further exploration of funding opportunities to expand the tramway from Talbot Square to Blackpool North Station, and from Pleasure Beach to St Annes/Lytham utilising the South railway line</p> <p>Objective 7.4 Ensure bus transport networks and timetables respond effectively to commuter needs to access key sites of employment across Blackpool & the Fylde Coast</p> <p>7.4.1 Analysis of timetabling and convenience of localised bus networks to key employment zones outside of the town centre including business and technology parks and the proposed new Enterprise Zones</p> |
| Interested stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blackpool Council ■ Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company (Blackpool Bay Area Co) ■ Blackpool Business Leadership Group ■ Marketing Blackpool ■ Lancashire County Council ■ Blackpool Young People’s Council ■ North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce ■ Federation of Small Businesses ■ Blackpool Transport ■ Network Rail ■ Virgin Rail (and other franchise-holders) ■ Blackpool International Airport/Balfour Beatty |

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| Priority Eight | PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP |
| Rationale | Historically, Blackpool has held a strong reputation for flourishing enterprise activities. In more recent years, despite significant investment, this has been much poorer with relatively low rates of new business survival. If Blackpool is to regain its past strength in this area, there is a requirement to nurture and support entrepreneurial activity at all levels. |
| Objectives | <p>Objective 8.1 Facilitate a more enterprising culture so that local business leaders have the confidence to make bold and innovative decisions</p> <p>Objective 8.2 Increase the number of start-up businesses in Blackpool and improve the overall survival rate</p> |
| Activities | <p>Objective 8.1 Facilitate a more enterprising culture so that local business leaders have the confidence to make bold and innovative decisions</p> <p>8.1.1 Identify key sectors that can help provide a platform for repositioning Blackpool as a great place to start a business</p> <p>8.1.2 Engage with key partners including private sector, social enterprise, community group and education providers to devise a town-wide approach to enterprise</p> <p>8.1.3 Promote young enterprise activities and facilities, and develop opportunities to “test-trade” new businesses via a variety of methods (eg, use of vacant shops, indoor/outdoor market stalls, pop-up shops, exhibitions)</p> <p>8.1.4 Support enterprise activities in schools and colleges, building on the success of the HERO enterprise initiative</p> <p>Objective 8.2 Increase the number of start-up businesses in Blackpool and improve the overall survival rate</p> <p>8.2.1 Establish a package of incentives and measures to support new business start-ups in Blackpool</p> <p>8.2.2 Provide facilities that can harness clusters of complementary start-up businesses (eg, creative industries incubator)</p> <p>8.2.3 Maintain support for new-start businesses with quality advice, training and brokered financial assistance</p> <p>8.2.4 Support the development of mentoring of business owners, encouraging the growth of volunteer mentors from within commerce and industry</p> <p>8.2.5 Promote access to high-growth coaching support for smaller companies with growth potential</p> |
| Interested stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blackpool Council ■ Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Economic Development Company (Blackpool Bay Area Co) ■ Blackpool Business Leadership Group ■ Blackpool & The Fylde College ■ North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce ■ Federation of Small Businesses ■ Blackpool Young People’s Council |