BLACKPOOL BUSINESS LEADERSHIP GROUP

NOTES FROM MEETING HELD ON MARCH 31, 2017, AT THE HILTON, BLACKPOOL

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
ATTENDEES			
Martin Long (chair)	Napthen's	John Barnett	High Sheriff of Lancashire
Janine Marshall	Genting Casino	Shaun Bennett	Links Signs & Graphics
Alex McIntyre	Property Scene	Daryl Platt, Robby Ryan	Blackpool & The Fylde College
Andrew Hamilton, Ian MacMillan	Chamber of Commerce	Tony Carr	Social Enterprise Solutions
Jonathan Barnes	Santander	Barry Howard	McDonald's UK
Chris Calvert	Rushton's Accountants	Peter Rawlings	Tower Employment Services
Sarah Mortimer	Camerados	Carmen Parkinson	The Business Clinic
Samantha Bell, Aishley Doherty	Skool of Street	Matthew Burrow	Blackpool Teaching Hospitals
Philip Owen	Barclays	Aldo Errico	Drugline
Joan Blackburn	Spire Healthcare	Carmen Conquer, Helen Atkinson	Aspired Futures
Ian Mallam	Digitav	Steve Burns, Buzz Bury	Think Forward
Paul Crossley	Kenricks	Kevin Donnelly	XP Web Services
Geoff Moore	Canberra Hotel	Lucy Barnwell, Melanie Schwab	Rossall School
Frank Heald	Voiteq	Philip Helm	Tyson Construction
Tina Cooper	Blackpool Sixth	Tim Freshney	WJF Technical Support
Chris Maine	DPA Packaging	Paul Wilcock	Montpelier Group
Kerry Higginson	GP Strategies Training	Julie Holland	Viva Blackpool
Paul Isherwood	Stressbuster Works	Shirley Hunt	Cranstone Hotel
Pam Isherwood	Renaissance	Colin Taylor	Illuminations Ambassador
Jane Cole, Karen McDonald	Blackpool Transport Services	Stuart Livesey	Consultant
David Houston	Trinity Hospice/Dementia Action Alliance	Rachel Riches	The Village
Simon Brooke, Krisztina Szigeti	Happy Creative	Catherine Stringer	Chamber of Commerce
Frances Thorpe	Welcome Deaf Awareness	Pam Swain	British Association of Dental Nurses
Lindsay Campbell, Paul & Oscar Rowley	Campbell & Rowley	Ron Bell	Abbey Bell
Jane Littlewood	Rabbit Design	Lee Dumbrill	Sands Venue
Steve Singleton	Cuadrilla	Peter Lui	Luxsun/Blackpool Chinese Community
Bev Wood	BWD Design	Alison Gilmore	Imperial Hotel
Michelle Riley, Jo Kershaw	Blackpool & The Fylde College	Michael Pickthall	Pinpoint Management Consultants
Karl Worlsey	DWP	Nick Taylor	Hilton
Clare Taylor	Duxbury Commercial	Tom Metcalf	Little Touches
Cassie Troughton	Global	Grace Bennett	Vista Online
Dave Preston	Offigo	Paul Hardy, Victoria Cross	Napthens
Ruth Patton	Patton's Community	Duncan Hodgson	Freelance communications
David McGing, Angelique Gonzales	Ibis Hotel	Joe Tantrum	Rawcliffe & Co
Belinda Shore	Santander	Steve Whitehouse	Future Technology Services
Jane Hugo	Street Life	Paul Thompson, Helen Binks	Blackpool Housing Co
Roger Mellor, Andrew Jackson	Glasdon	Paul McCherry	Cloud 9 Computing
Lawrence McBurney	Cassidy & Ashton	Mick Grewcock	Burbage Holiday Group
David Chapman	Linksgate Leisure	Peter Jefferson	Visionistic
Robert Owen	Pleasure Beach	Steve Godfrey	Fujitsu
Melanie Whitehead	Electric Sunshine Project	Andy Atkinson	Voucher Packs
Mark Croasdale	Whitehead & Howarth	Deborah Terras	UR Potential
Graham Wood	Consultant	Sean Gibbs	Harrison Drury
John Salisbury	RBS Commercial	Colin Johnston	Grand Theatre
John and Jaki Armstrong	Majestic North West	John Holmes	Consultant
Dan Whiston and Karen Barber	Clip'n'Climb	Mark Smith	Yes Hotels
John Grady	Paramount Apartments	Vicky Reynolds	Ashworth Treasure
Sajid Mahmud	Enterprise 4 All	Susanne Johnson	Johnson's Emporium
Tom Willcox	Willcox PR	Fern Bennett	Marks & Spencer
Phil McVan	CarbonBit		
OBSERVERS/GUESTS			
Philip Welsh, David Slater	Blackpool Council	Nick Gerrard, Annabel Southern	Blackpool Council
APOLOGIES			
Richard Lefton	The Lefton Group	Mike Lovell	Cheetham Jackson
Kerian Barnes	Starboard Hotels	Tom Mercer	Handelsbanken
Matt Watts	Lancashire Cheesecake Co	Steve Gill	Fylde Promotional Merchandise
Jill Gray	Blackpool Sixth	David Hoyle	Happy Days Childcare
Viv Cuthill	Coaching Consultant	Ruth Eastwood	Blackpool Grand Theatre
Anne Catterson	Common Purpose	Paul Friday	Future Focus Energy
Coral Horn	Pink Link	Julia Eastwood	Artisan Tiles
Chris Hibbert	Henco	Susanna Boccaccio	Brilliant Trees Media
Damian and Helen Broughton	Danbro	David Jones	Thirty30 Media
Ashley Moore	Event Assembly	Fiona Reid	Ascroft Whiteside
Norry Ascroft	Entertainer/Consultant	Wendy Harrison	Café Fresch
Tom Nelder	Choice Hotels	Debbs Lancelott	Hounds Hill
Rob Green	Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre EDC	John Child	Sandcastle Waterpark
Greg Myerscough	RBS	Joan Nickson	Northern Rail
Michael Cuddy	Chartered Surveyors	Vicki Ivanov	Candy House
Joe Boniface	Boniface Architects	Phil Baron	Pentagull
Kim Jackson	Harry Ramsden		

1. Welcome and apologies

Martin Long (chair) welcomed members to the meeting. He also thanked the Hilton for hosting the meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting/Matters arising

Minutes noted, no matters arising.

3. New Attraction For Blackpool

Dan Whiston and Karen Barber gave a presentation on a new family attraction based at Whitehills, close to the M55. Clip'n'climb Blackpool represents an investment of more than £500,000 with the creation of 40 local jobs.

He said the activity centre was aimed at adults and children with 24 different challenges and obstacles, including the highest vertical drop slide in the UK at more than 29 feet.

The centre can also host children's parties and corporate team building events with food and drink facilities on site.

Dan said that businesses within the BBLG were eligible for a 20 per cent discount for corporate days up until the end of May. He said that a VIP opening day was also being scheduled for April 29, with invitations to go out via the BBLG database. Further information: sarah@rhodesmedia.com

The full presentation can be viewed at www.bblg.co.uk under Reports/Publications.

4. Dementia Training For Businesses

David Houston, the chief executive of Trinity Hospice and chair of the Dementia Action Alliance gave a presentation on the opportunities for businesses to become more dementia-friendly.

He said that the Alliance's objectives were around creating a dementia-friendly community across the Fylde Coast.

Jane Cole, (Blackpool Transport) gave an insight into how her company had embraced the dementia initiative as part of their wider disability awareness training for staff. She said she was happy to talk to any businesses about the benefits of getting involved.

David Houston added that Merlin Entertainments was also participating in the initiative via its Blackpool attractions.

Annabel Southern (Blackpool Council) set out two ways in which businesses can get involved in making Blackpool a dementia-friendly community:

- Access support to train dementia friends champions in each organisation to hold information sessions for all staff
- Register with the Alzheimer's Society site and encourage staff to watch a video made by a person with dementia, explaining their condition

Any businesses interested in participating, contact Annabel.southern@blackpool.gov.uk

The full presentation can be viewed at www.bblg.co.uk under Reports/Presentations.

5. Blackpool Carnival

Geoff Moore (Canberra Hotel) gave a presentation on a planned new event for Blackpool in 2017.

He said the Blackpool Carnival was planned for noon onwards on Sunday 23 July with a parade from Central Pier to South Pier, with an entertainment stage on the Waterloo Headland.

He said that the carnival would be a family event with an international theme.

The organisers were looking for various forms of support including:

- Acts and performers
- Sponsors
- Catering concessions
- Volunteers

For more information, go to www.blackpool-carnival.com

6. Investment In Blackpool Transport

Jane Cole (Managing Director, Blackpool Transport) gave a presentation on the significant investment made in the resort's bus and tram fleet.

She said that on the tramway, the investment in the new trams coupled with a huge revival in the heritage trams had resulted in passengers exceeding the five million mark in a year for the first time. She said the aim was now to break the seven million mark.

Jane said that on April 9, 25 new buses would be launched and showcased on the Comedy Carpet as part of a major investment in the fleet.

She said that when she took over the company, the average age of the 134-strong bus fleet was 10 years. The new replacement strategy means that buses will never be older than five years.

Jane said the company was particularly interested in growing the youth market and the new generation of buses included tables and USB charging points on the upper deck.

She said that further developments planned for 2017 included a new app that facilitated journey planning and mobile ticketing; a new website; enhanced customer service and improved internal and external communication.

A new bus "hub" was now being developed around the Market Street area of the town centre and in the longer term, Blackpool Transport was working with the Council to relocate from Rigby Road into a new, purpose-built bus depot.

Jane's full presentation can be viewed at www.bblg.co.uk under Reports/Presentations.

7. Blackpool Business Promotion

Dave Preston (Offigo) gave a presentation on a new online "marketplace" bringing together local businesses in one place.

He said that the Offigo marketplace was a location-based digital platform and would include food and restaurants; bars and nightlife; experiences; High Street deals; sports and fitness; and places to stay.

He said that the more events, offers and services that were gathered on the site, the more compelling the reason for visitors and residents to use local businesses.

Dave said that members of the BBLG could participate by:

- Joining the Offigo platform and sharing their business message
- Directing customers to visit the new online marketplace when it is launched in a few weeks' time
- Coming on board as a sponsor

Dave's full presentation can be viewed at www.bblg.co.uk under Reports/Presentations.

8. Business Partnerships Report

Philip Welsh tabled his report in advance of the meeting. He highlighted the following items:

Blackpool Dance Festival, China

He said that this event continued to grow and was also yielding significant dividends for the original Blackpool event, with the county of Jinxiu sponsoring the Winter Gardens event this year.

Fylde Coast Skills Fair

He drew the group's attention to an invitation from Paul Maynard, MP, for businesses to take part in a Fylde Coast Skills Fair to be held at the Bispham campus of Blackpool & The Fylde College on May 18.

Coastal Communities Fund

He reported that a couple of Blackpool bids (including one for the new conference centre) had been submitted and decisions were expected over the next few days.

9. Any Other Business

Imperial Anniversary

Alison Gilmore (The Imperial) advised the group that a 150th birthday ball was being staged at the hotel on the evening of Thursday 22nd June. She said it would look to recreate the first ever banquet. Tickets are on sale at £50 per person, £450 per table with all proceeds going to three local charities. Contact Caroline at crichardson@imperialhotelblackpool.co.uk

X Factor Auditions

It was noted that open auditions for ITV's The X Factor would be held between 11am and 5.30pm on Sunday 9th April at the Sands Venue.

Carmen Conquer
Martin Long (chair, BBLG) advised that Carmen Conquer of Aspired Futures was attending her last meeting prior to moving to Portugal.

He paid tribute to the contribution that Carmen had made to the young people of Blackpool and said when she had first presented her work to the BBLG, she had captured the imagination of the business community.

High Sheriff
John Barnett gave a brief presentation to the group on the work that he had undertaken during his year in office as High Sheriff of Lancashire.

He said it had been a hugely fulfilling year, giving him the opportunity to meet many inspirational people.

He said that when he stepped down from office in April, he would be taking up a Cabinet office role with Blackpool Council aimed at gaining recognition for deserving people and partnerships within the town.

Martin Long thanked John on behalf of the group for the way in which he had promoted Blackpool at every opportunity during his year in office.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting
The next meeting will be held at 7.30am for 8.30am on Friday 26 May at The Village, Heron's Reach, Blackpool.