



BLACKPOOL BUSINESS LEADERSHIP GROUP

NOTES FROM MEETING HELD ON JULY 29, 2016, AT THE WINTER GARDENS, BLACKPOOL

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
ATTENDEES			
Martin Long (chair)	Napthen's	Carmen Conquer, Helen Atkinson	Aspired Futures
Mark Gillingham	Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre EDC	Sarah Mortimer	Camerados
Colin Johnston	Grand Theatre	Susanne Johnson	Johnsons Emporium/FSB
Philip Owen	Barclays	Simon Brooke, Krisztina Szigeti, Nick Hyde	Happy Creative
Charlotte Gili-Ross	Ribby Village	Hugh Evans	Chamber of Commerce
Eileen Ormand	Blackpool Town Centre BID	Paul Wilcock	Montpelier
Zoe Fleming	Roland Robinson Fenton	Nicola Spencer	M&S Outlet, Freeport
Coral Horn	Pink Link	David Houston	Trinity Hospice
Tony Beswick	Kwizeen	Karl Worsley	DWP
Wendy Swift, Matthew Burrow	Blackpool Teaching Hospitals	Alex McIntyre	Property Scene
Neil Jack	Blackpool Council	Mark Fitzgerald	Sainsbury's
Stephen Lawton, Keith Blackburn	Clifton Buying Group	Jonathan Barnes	Santander
Nick Taylor, Tom Cobden	The Hilton	Shirley Hunt	Cranstone Hotel
Ian Mallam	Digitav	Yusuf Musa	Enterprise For All
Peter Rawlings	Tower Employment Services	Sunny Wang	Mayfaire Spa
Andrew Haworth	Bartle Hall	John and Jaki Armstrong	Majestic North West
Elaine Smith	Friends of Stanley Park	Nigel Kilgallon	Pleasure Beach
Jim Cross	Blackpool Carers Centre	Caryn and David Steele	Balloonatics
Steve Hodgkins	Jobs, Friends and Houses	Ruth Patton	Patton's Community
Peter Bennett	Assess, Design, Develop	Jackie Skeer	SESS Surveying
Rachel Riches	Village Hotel	Amanda Westgate	Big Impact Communications
Liam Hoyle	Ascent Trampoline Park	Stephen Bolton	Lancashire Business View
Jane Littlewood	Wyred Up/Rabbit Design	Steve Swallow	Portal Security
Sophie Coane	Napthen's	Mick Grewcock	Burbage Group
Joan Blackburn, Barbara Cummings	Spire Hospital	David Chapman	Linksgate Leisure
Mark Croasdale	Whitehead and Howarth	Katherine O'Connor	BIS – Cities and Local Growth
Ron Bell	Colossal Training	Norry Ascroft	Entertainer/Consultant
Gary Bell	AAA Safety Training	Dave McAllister, Helen Binks	Blackpool Housing Co
John Child, Jane Kelly	Sandcastle Waterpark	Tom Willcox	Willcox PR
Tony Carr	Social Enterprise Solutions	Michael Pickthall	Pinpoint
Annie Ogilvie	Blackpool Transport Services	David Jones	Thirty30Media
John Barnett	High Sheriff of Lancashire	Catherine Best	Best At Support Solutions
Richard Lefton	The Lefton Group	Joe Best	EWS
Samantha Bell, Ashley Doherty	Skool of Street	Vito Cinardi	Litigation Solutions
Bev Robinson	Blackpool and The Fylde College	Alison Gilmore	Imperial Hotel
Jim Firth	Genting Casino	Barrie Thompson, Carole Houston	China UK Business Centre
Kerian Barnes, Nicolette Webster	Starboard Hotels	Phil Baron	Pentagull
Kila Redfearn	Winter Gardens	Paul Isherwood	Stressbuster Works
Lindsay Campbell	Rowley's	Natalie Dobson, Debbie Hodson	Blackpool Sixth
Deborah Terras	UR Potential	Grace Bennett	Vista Online
Rosey Rihani	RR Legal	Alex Holt	Wyre Tourism
Mike Hardaker	Moore & Smalley	Shaun Pickup	Dahlia's Kitchen
Paul and Karen Friday, Andrew Green	Future Focus Energy	Jane Hugo	Streetlife
Steve Singleton, Sam Schofield	Cuadrilla	Nichola Howard	Blackpool Expo
Johnathon Townsend, Joanne Etherington	Lloyds Banking	David Cam	Under Sheriff, County Palatine of Lancaster
Craig Corrin	Marks & Spencer	Andrew Fairbrother	Blackpool Providers
OBSERVERS/GUESTS			
Philip Welsh, Peter Legg	Blackpool Council	David Slater	Blackpool Council
APOLOGIES			
Jill Gray	Blackpool Sixth	Kevin Donnelly	XP Web Services
Debbs Lancelott, Mark Hickey	HoundsHill	Vicki Ivanov	Candy House
Louise Logan	Career Ready	Philip Saunders	Nat West
Rebecca Murdoch	Total Finance	Chris Hibbert	Henco
John Salisbury	RBS	Andrew Wareing	Voucher Packs
Anne Catterson	Common Purpose	Ashley Moore	Event Assembly
Clare Taylor	Duxbury's Commercial	Bev Wood	BWD Design
Elaine Purves	Rossall School	Dianne Turner	Independent Business Consultant
Vanda de Freitas	Positive Steps	Robin Ross	Sand, Sea & Spray
Tony Raynor	Abbey Telecom	Amanda Thompson	Pleasure Beach
Frank Heald	Voiteq	Belinda Shore	Santander
Roger Mellor, Andrew Jackson	Glasdon	Steve Gill	Fylde Promotional Merchandise
Damian and Helen Broughton	Danbro	Sarah and Jon Rhodes	Rhodes Media
Matt Watts	Lancashire Cheesecake Co	Fiona Reid	Acroft Whiteside
Ruth Eastwood	Grand Theatre	Joe Orban	Otech Systems
Dale Lawrenson	RBS	Kelly Gilmore	GPS Training
Cath Stewart	Community Foundation	Stuart Livesey	Consultant
Barry Howard	McDonald's UK	Kate Shane, Lisa Pearson	Merlin Entertainments
David Hoyle	Happy Days Childcare	Dave Riche	LightPool
Tony Mercer	Handelsbanken	Martyn Reid	Revolution
Andrew Mellor	Primary Futures	Shaun Bennett	Links Signs & Graphics
Darrel Treece-Birch	St Annes Town Council		

1. Welcome and apologies

Martin Long (chair, Napthen's) welcomed members and thanked the Winter Gardens for hosting the meeting. At the start of the meeting, Philip Welsh (Blackpool Council) reported that Cllr Eddie Collett had died earlier that week after a relatively short illness. He said that Cllr Collett was a former Mayor of the town and had been a great advocate for business and employment opportunities. The group held a minute's silence in his memory.

2. Minutes of the last meeting/Matters arising

The notes of the last meeting were acknowledged. Philip Welsh confirmed that the chair had signed a letter on behalf of the BBLG, appealing for new services in and out of Blackpool when the new franchise for the West Coast rail line is renewed in 2018.

With regard to the forthcoming disruption on the Blackpool to Preston line as a result of rail electrification work, he said that he had invited Network Rail to present at the September meeting of the BBLG to talk about how they planned to mitigate some of the disruption.

3. BREXIT

Hugh Evans (Chamber of Commerce) gave the group an insight into the various implications of the UK's exit from the EU. He set out various possible options and scenarios, but said there was a great deal of uncertainty.

He said there may be some short-term benefits for domestic tourism, but added that the Northern Powerhouse initiative could be under threat. Mr Evans then hosted a short question and answer session.

Neil Jack (Blackpool Council) confirmed that Blackpool was not a particularly big beneficiary of EU funding and was therefore not exposed to the same level of risk as some other towns and cities.

Philip Welsh reported that one tangible statistic in relation to an upsurge in domestic tourism had come via booking.com which had reported a 50% increase in enquiries for guest accommodation in Blackpool in the week prior to the school holidays starting.

Note: A copy of Mr Evans' full presentation can be viewed at www.bblg.co.uk under Reports/Publications.

4. World Host

Peter Legg (Blackpool Council) and Nigel Kilgallon (Blackpool Pleasure Beach) gave an update on the work of the Blackpool Tourism Academy, a consortium comprising key businesses within the visitor economy.

It was noted that over a two-year period, the BTA had delivered almost 3,000 training places. It had also secured World Host destination status for Blackpool after 2,500 employees went through World Host training – the first time a seaside resort has achieved such recognition.

The chair of the BBLG congratulated the BTA partnership on its achievements.

Nigel Kilgallon said that the BTA board had agreed to continue its work and is now seeking further business membership. The board recognised that it was important to retain a collective voice for employers within Blackpool's visitor economy. Although the Employer Ownership of Skills funding was now coming to an end, the BTA would explore other opportunities for funded training.

Note: A copy of the full World Host presentation can be viewed at www.bblg.co.uk under Reports/Publications.

5. **Blackpool Provider Group**

Andrew Fairbrother (Blackpool Provider Group) gave a short presentation on work to help young people get into the world of work.

He said that as part of the initiative a temporary “Job Shop” had been created in the HoundsHill Shopping Centre in Blackpool town centre. This unit, donated by the shopping centre, was open seven days a week so that people aged between 14 and 24 can find employment, volunteering opportunities, advice and support.

He said that part of the aim was to instill a work ethic into the young people of the Fylde Coast.

Employers can help by contacting Andrew with any full or part-time vacancies (seasonal or permanent), volunteering opportunities or work placements.

Andrew can be contacted by email at: AFairbrother@vllancs.com

6. **Blackpool Expo**

Nichola Howard (Launch Events North West) gave a presentation on the forthcoming Blackpool Expo event, which will be held at The Village Hotel between 9.30am and 3pm on Wednesday 21 September.

She said that the purpose of these events was to encourage businesses on the Fylde Coast to work together to strengthen the local economy.

Benefits of participating in the expo include: Networking opportunities; pre and post-event advertising opportunities; brand awareness and promotion and sales opportunities.

Note: A copy the Blackpool Expo presentation can be viewed at www.bblq.co.uk under Reports/Publications. Nichola can be contacted by email at: launcheventsnorthwest@gmail.com

7. **Streetlife**

Jane Hugo (Streetlife) gave a presentation on the challenges facing young vulnerable people and the challenges facing her organisation in trying to help them.

She said that Streetlife supported around 400 young people, aged 16-25, each year.

However, it has now lost £150,000 of Blackpool Council funding as a result of the cuts in local government funding. She said there was also more competition for other grants.

Jane said that businesses could help in a number of ways:

- ✦ Provision of training and support eg, marketing (as demonstrated by Happy Creative)
- ✦ Sponsor events (as done by Fylde Law)
- ✦ Nominate local charities as Charity Of The Year (as done by Voiteq and Gordon Slater Solutions)
- ✦ Hold corporate fundraising events

Note: A copy of the full Streetlife presentation can be viewed at www.bblq.co.uk under Reports/Publications. Jane can be contacted by email at: jane@wearestreetlife.org

8. **Business Partnerships Report**

Philip Welsh tabled his report in advance of the meeting. He picked out a number of items for special mention:

New Conference Centre

He reported that the conference centre bid was now progressing and, if successful, would have a significant benefit for Blackpool's visitor economy. However, he said that there was still an economic argument to win in order to get through the bidding process.

Great Exhibition Of The North

PW reported that a combined Blackpool/Lancashire bid had been made to stage the planned Great Exhibition Of The North in 2018. He said the initial feedback to the bid had been very positive and an announcement on the shortlisted locations was expected later that day (**Note:** Blackpool was shortlisted in the announcement along with bids from Newcastle/Gateshead, Sheffield and Bradford. A judging panel is due to visit Blackpool in the w/c August 29, with the winning destination likely to be announced late autumn).

China Dance Festival

PW reported that the response to the Blackpool Dance Festival in China had been very positive with over 3,000 registered for the "Open To The World" festival before it had even started.

Ramsden At The Tower

Noted that this new restaurant in the former Tower Lounge had now opened for business. He said that it had a very strong Blackpool theme and was a great addition to the resort's new portfolio of restaurants. He added that a new Tower Circus exhibition had also opened in the space above the restaurant).

Scene Exhibition

PW said there was an opportunity for members of the BBLG to visit the Scene Exhibition in the Winter Gardens immediately after the meeting.

Tramway Extension

Noted that Martin Long had sent a letter of support for this initiative to the Secretary of State on behalf of the BBLG.

DIY SOS

Jim Cross (Carers Centre) was invited to address the group about the recent DIY SOS project which had resulted in the development of a new respite centre for young carers' at Newton Drive, Blackpool. He thanked all those businesses and volunteers who had come forward to make the project a success.

9. **Any Other Business**

Honours System

David Cam (Under Sheriff, County Palatine of Lancaster) gave a brief insight into the Honours System. He said that Blackpool was one of the places often under-represented.

He said that if this was to be addressed, then there was a need for strong nominations to be generated. He said that information on how to nominate could be accessed at www.gov.uk/honours

He said he was happy to give guidance and support on nominations to ensure that they were sufficiently robust. Email: david399cam@btinternet.com

10. **Date and time of next meeting**

Next meeting scheduled for 7.30am for 8.30am on Friday 30 September at The Imperial Hotel, Blackpool. Further details to follow.