



Blackpool Business Leadership Group

Business Partnerships Report – 28 November 2025

Top News

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL TO SUBMIT REORGANISATION CASE THAT IS “BEST FOR THE FYLDE COAST”



Blackpool Council has today released details of the business case it will submit as part of local government reorganisation.

Blackpool will support a model that sees four councils delivering services across Lancashire.

In the proposal, the areas of Blackpool, Fylde and Preston councils would combine along with the western half of Wyre borough up to the River Wyre.

The proposed new council would deliver services across the Fylde coast, as well as out to Preston. This would reflect the way many people on the Fylde coast live their lives with families and workplaces.

It also follows the physical geography of the River Wyre and River Ribble, the natural transport networks of the Blackpool tramway and the north and south Fylde train lines, as well as the A583, A584 and A585.

At Friday's meeting, we will have a presentation on the proposal and next steps.

Regeneration News

EXPERT FIRMS TO SEEK LEISURE INVESTORS FOR BLACKPOOL CENTRAL



Two leading firms have joined forces with Blackpool Council to spearhead plans to bring more private investment to Blackpool Central.

Acting through its Retail Consultancy & Analytics team, Newmark, the global commercial real estate advisory firm, will collaborate with theleisureway, a Spanish architectural practice with a strong track record in European master planning, to work with Blackpool Council on a new vision for Blackpool Central.

Both companies are committed to working with local residents and stakeholders to understand the best use of the land to benefit the local economy, ahead of attracting private sector investment to a new scheme.

The two companies were selected following an open tender process, after first hearing about the scheme and Blackpool's wider ambitions for regeneration at the major property event, MIPIM, earlier this year.

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL MOVES FORWARD WITH PLANS FOR FIRST DATA CENTRE AS PART OF SILICON SANDS



Blackpool Council is taking the next major step in delivering a first data centre as part of plans for Silicon Sands, a flagship digital infrastructure project at the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone.

The council's Executive has agreed the next step on the project, which has the potential to support thousands of high-value jobs across the region both directly and indirectly, through investment in Artificial Intelligence (AI) data infrastructure, renewable energy and innovation led growth.

Planning permission for a 6MW carbon friendly data centre and 20,000sqft office and research space is set to be submitted before Christmas, following significant interest from private sector investors.

The Silicon Sands plan builds on the arrival of the transatlantic Aquacomms cable and aims to position the Fylde Coast as a leading location for sustainable data centres and digital innovation.

Unlike other data centre projects around the world, Silicon Sands aims to tackle the climate crisis at the same time. Data centres would be powered by renewable energy, use liquid immersion cooling to improve efficiency and re-use heat to act as an energy source for other properties.

NEXT PHASE OF WORKS TO CREATE NEW ACCESS ROAD FOR BLACKPOOL ENTERPRISE ZONE



Works to create a new road from Common Edge Road to Blackpool Enterprise Zone on Amy Johnson Way are moving to the next phase.

The first phase of works to reconstruct Common Edge Road and create a junction to the new road are now complete.

Two new sets of traffic lights on Common Edge Road will now become operational, allowing traffic to safely access the new through road to Amy Johnson Way when it is fully open early next year.

In the next phase, works to widen the junction of School Road and Common Edge Road will start. To enable the works to be completed safely, three-way temporary traffic lights will be installed at the junction while the current traffic lights are out of use.

Once completed early next year, the improvements to this junction will reduce congestion for local road users by reducing the junction from four-way to three-way, as well as creating a filter lane from School Road onto Common Edge Road.

HAT TRICK OF AWARDS FOR BLACKPOOL DEVELOPMENTS



Three Blackpool developments as part of Blackpool Council's ambitious Growth and Prosperity programme have been named as the best in Lancashire at a recent awards ceremony.

The Insider Media Lancashire Property Awards celebrated Blackpool's quality of builds, property deal making and future ambition.

Fylde View, a new office for 3,000 Department of Work and Pensions staff, was named as the best new building. The £100m, 215,000sqft office opened on King Street in June this year.

A new office for the Ministry of Defence (Defence Business Services) was also named as the best deal of the year, for forward funding a new 53,000 sqft office next to Blackpool North train station. Once complete in 2027, the office will be home to 1,100 office workers.

Finally, a new campus for Blackpool & Fylde College was named as the county's most aspirational project. The Future Ambition award was voted for on the night from professionals in the construction business due to the impact it is expected to have on Blackpool town centre. The demolition work is currently being undertaken in order to prepare the land, with the construction expected to start next year ahead of 3,000 students and staff moving on to the site in 2028.

BRECK TO START £15M BLACKPOOL AFFORDABLE HOMES AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT



Property developer Breck is set to begin construction of a £15m mixed-use development in Blackpool including affordable homes and retail outlets, after signing contracts with affordable housing provider Progress Housing Group.

The site, on Cropper Road, was formerly a garden centre and has been disused for several years.

It will include 58 one to three-bedroom houses for affordable rent, in addition to around 5,500 sq ft of retail space across four units.

A children's play area and electric vehicle charging points are also part of the new community.

MULTIVERSITY WORKS STARTING

Work has started to clear the land ahead of construction of a new Multiversity campus.

Areas on Cookson Street are being cleared so the building can start later this year.

Once complete in 2028, the new campus for Blackpool and Fylde College will bring up to 3,000 more students and staff into the town centre.

LOCAL APPRENTICE HELPS BUILD THE TOWN



Local resident Nathaniel, 19, is working onsite with VINCI to help build the new office for MOD Defence Business Services in the town centre.

He started working with VINCI for work experience in January 2024 on the now complete Fylde View office building. Now working as a trainee quantity surveyor apprentice, Nathaniel is loving gaining practical experience alongside his qualification and said: “It’s really rewarding working on a project in my local community and being able to see unused land being turned into an office that will be used by people every day.”

After his apprenticeship he’s looking forward to a career in construction and hopes to remain working with VINCI on further projects, hopefully right here in Blackpool!

Apprenticeships are just one of the ways VINCI are benefitting the local community. Providing jobs and training helps build a skilled workforce in the town.

Once completed, the new office will see over 1,100 staff relocated into the town centre.

BUSINESS EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

Blackpool Unlimited is hosting a series of business events in the next few months, listed below. More information on these events can be found at www.blackpoolunlimited.com

December
2 nd – Introduction to Basic Accountancy and Cashflow
3 rd – AI in Action: Hands-On Innovation for SMEs and Entrepreneurs – UCLan
3 rd – Meta (Facebook) Ads Masterclass
9 th – Simple Social Media

Visitor Economy Updates

FYLDE COAST RESIDENTS UNLOCK EXCLUSIVE YEAR-ROUND DISCOUNTS AT TOP ATTRACTIONS



Residents with FY postcodes can now enjoy unbeatable savings at some of Blackpool's most iconic attractions, thanks to a new initiative from Blackpool Tourism Limited.

Whether its dancing beneath the chandeliers of the Blackpool Tower Ballroom, meeting celebrities at Madame Tussauds, or making a splash at Sandcastle Waterpark, locals can now experience the very best of Blackpool - for up to 50% off.

The exclusive offer includes discounted entry to:

- Blackpool Tower Attractions: The Dungeons, Circus, Ballroom and Tower Top
- Sandcastle Waterpark
- Madame Tussauds Blackpool

Available all year round, this resident-only deal is designed to make unforgettable experiences more accessible than ever.

The FY Locals' discount will start at 20% off and go up to 50% at off peak periods.

STRICTLY STARS OPEN CHRISTMAS BY THE SEA



Blackpool has launched a magnificent programme of Christmas entertainment – with a sprinkling of Strictly stardust!

Professional dancers from the BBC show officially opened this year's Christmas By The Sea village on Friday 21 November – the eve of last weekend's much-anticipated return of Strictly Come Dancing to the world-famous Tower Ballroom.

Now a firm favourite in Blackpool's events programme, Christmas By The Sea features a free-

to-use skating rink, festive light installations, themed log cabins with food, drink and gifts and magical snowfalls.

It will also includes a variety of themed children's attractions, exciting thrill rides including a 100ft-long snow slide, and an aerial swing ride, the Star Flyer. This year will also sees the return of a German Swing Grill, Snow Dome Waltzers, a Helter-Skelter slide and Ice Breaker thrill ride. New to the site this year is a Christmas themed fun house, set over three floors this new attraction will feature spinning barrels and discs, shuffle boards and special lighting effects.

Christmas By The Sea will be complemented by a full Illuminations display along the seafront until 4 January 2026.

The village will open every day between noon and 9pm until 4 January 2026 (barring Christmas Day).

JASON WILSHER-MILLS IS TAKING GRUNDY ART GALLERY ON A GREAT BIG COLOURFUL ADVENTURE



Internationally acclaimed artist Jason Wilsher-Mills MBE visited Blackpool's Grundy Art Gallery to officially launch his thrilling new art exhibition Jason Wilsher-Mills MBE: JASON AND THE ADVENTURE OF 254.

This major solo work from the renowned British artist is a Wellcome Collection exhibition and now leads the Grundy's vibrant autumn programme as part of its exclusive UK tour, spanning across Grundy's galleries 1, 2 and 3 to showcase an immersive installation of huge sculptures, vibrant illustrations and interactive dioramas in a joyful and subversive exploration of the human body.

Jason Wilsher-Mills MBE: Jason and the Adventure of 254 will run until Saturday 20 December 2025 at Grundy Art Gallery, Queen Street, Blackpool. Grundy is open Tuesdays to Saturdays from 10.00am to 4.20pm (last entry). Closed Sundays, Mondays and Bank Holidays. Admission is free.

Blackpool Rock: Jason Wilsher-Mills MBE is available to view outside Grundy Art Gallery until Saturday 20 December.

For further information please visit www.thegrundy.org or call 01253 478170.

love by Jason Wilsher-Mills MBE can be viewed as part of Blackpool's world-famous Illuminations which shine nightly until Sunday 4 January 2026. For further details please visit www.visitblackpool.com/things-to-do/blackpool-illuminations

AVIKTAS DELIVERED TO PLEASURE BEACH



Pleasure Beach Resort's much anticipated £8.72M ride has been delivered to the Blackpool theme park, and the huge mission to see it constructed is underway.

Fans of Pleasure Beach have been eagerly awaiting the new ride – which will be the tallest of its kind in the UK – since it was announced by bosses earlier this year.

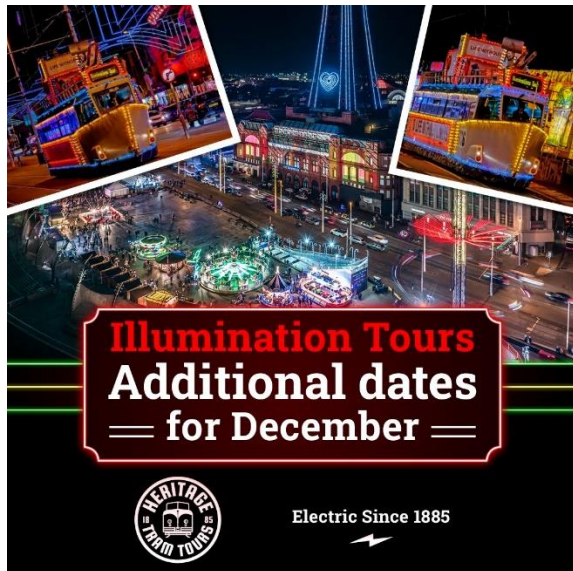
The new ride, which reaches 138 feet at its highest point, will see 40 riders swing 120 degrees skywards, over epic views of the coastline.

And the ride's sheer height (almost double the size of Drayton Manor's Maelstrom ride, which takes a similar format on a smaller scale) will drastically change the way Blackpool's famous coastline will look.

An opening date is yet to be revealed, but the ride will make its debut in the 2026 season.

Pleasure Beach Resort has announced that it's set to showcase a brand-new ice show next season: Alice, Frozen in a Wonderland of Dreams, while Hot Ice Show is returning for its 90th year in 2026 with a brand new production: Hot Ice XC

HERITAGE TRAM TOURS EXTENDED UNTIL NEW YEAR



Following the successful return of heritage tours earlier this month, Blackpool Transport plans to continue running special trips featuring one of its best-loved heritage trams throughout December.

On Friday and Saturday nights, HMS Blackpool (fleet number 736) will be setting sail along the seafront to the delight of both passengers and passers-by.

Enhance your festive plans and book now.

<https://www.blackpooltransport.com/blackpool-heritage>

BLACKPOOL TRANSPORT NAMED UK'S TRAM OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

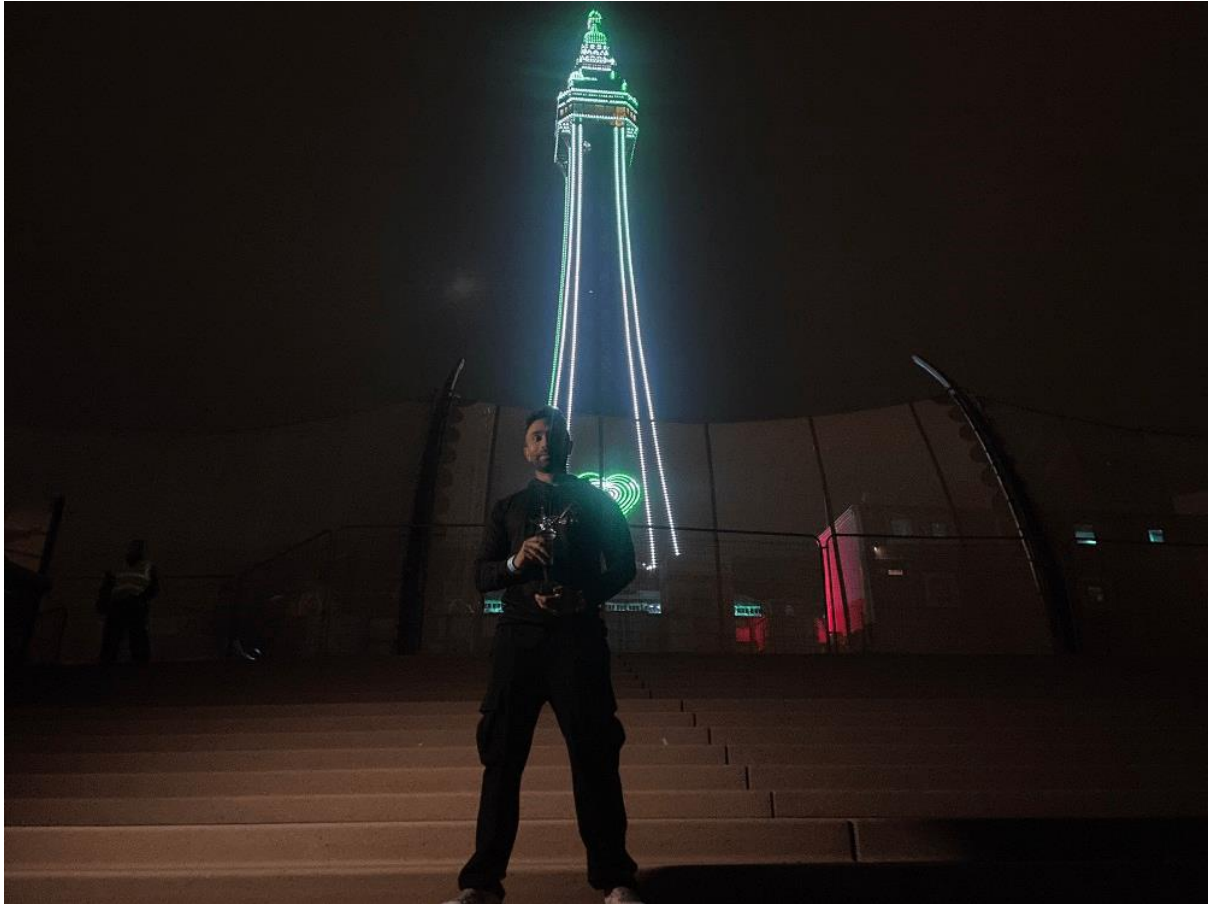


A host of popular service improvements, alongside the opening of an extension to North Station, has earned Blackpool Transport the prestigious title of Tram Operator of the Year.

BTS scooped the coveted accolade at the National Transport Awards and Jane Cole, our Managing Director, says it's an achievement the whole town, and surrounding areas, can be proud of.

"Following recent service improvements, our tramway is going from strength to strength, and to win this award in the face of strong competition from much larger networks is a testament to the dedication and professionalism of the Blackpool Transport team," she explained.

INDIA TRIUMPHS AT THE 2025 WORLD FIREWORKS CHAMPIONSHIP BLACKPOOL



Amir Morani Fireworks, a pyrotechnics team from India have been crowned our first champions of Blackpool's annual World Fireworks competition. They are now the first team to qualify for the prestigious Champion of Champions final taking place in 2028.

The display by the team from India set the bar high when they performed what they described as a "varied and diverse display" in the first of three spectacular shows staged on the Tower Festival Headland during September and October.

The judges, who scored them ahead of subsequent performances by Ukraine and Canada, described the display as "one of the best we've judged" and praised the synchronisation to the music and the use of new fireworks.

Amir Morani Fireworks (AMFW) is India's pioneering pyrotechnics and special effects company, with a legacy spanning over eight decades and has continuously redefined the standards of fireworks and special effects in India and across the globe.

STAY BLACKPOOL TRADE SHOW

StayBlackpool Trade Show returns on Tuesday 24th March 2026. The event, the 3rd at Norbreck Castle sees a LWC as a drinks partner and Trevor's delivering a food wholesale partnership with tastings and other delights

As Government launches a "Short Stay Accommodation License Scheme" there are more reasons than ever to get involved. [StayBlackpool Trade Show & Open Day tradeshow@stayblackpool.com](mailto:tradeshow@stayblackpool.com)

Business News

NEW HELP FOR BLACKPOOL BUSINESSES TO ACCESS GROWTH MONEY



A new way for businesses and charities across the Fylde Coast to access finance has launched in Blackpool. Business Funding Blackpool – Funding the Fylde Coast, which has opened in the heart of the town, has access to £3 million that has been made available in the North West through its umbrella company, Business Finance North West.

Business Funding Blackpool – Funding the Fylde Coast was encouraged to set up on the Fylde Coast by Business in the Community's Blackpool Pride of Place Partnership, with the support of one of its Board members, Lloyds Banking Group. This initiative will make it more attractive for people to bring their business ideas to the town, with start-ups and scale-ups now having better access to finance.

Business Finance North West supports small businesses, entrepreneurs, and social enterprises to access the funding they need to start, grow, and create jobs. The community loans will support local firms that have been overlooked when trying to access money and funding.

BLACKPOOL FEATURE IN LANCASHIRE BUSINESS VIEW EDITION



The November/December issue of Lancashire Business View is now live, including a Hotspots feature on Blackpool, featuring business, education and local government leaders about the challenges and opportunities shaping the town.

Click here to read the full issue <https://lnkd.in/gHQFpZiN>

WHAT THE FLOWERS: HOW GEMMA & NATALE'S FLORISTRY FLOURISHED WITH STRATEGIC SUPPORT



When friends of more than 10 years, Gemma Buntain and Natale McDonald, opened their florist, What The Flowers, in September 2024, their vision was to make a bold statement and deliver a unique floral experience. With over 40 years of combined expertise, Gemma in funeral tributes and Natale in weddings and creative displays, they wanted their brand to blossom as an experience, bursting with flair, individuality, and botanical artistry.

Even with their creativity in full bloom and following moving to a new and bigger premises in June 2025, Gemma and Natale recognised a need for some stronger foundations. They were recommended to contact the Blackpool Growth Business Academy, and what started as a quick exploration soon grew into a strategic partnership.

“We have very creative minds; we always have idea after idea for the business. But when it came to financial planning, strategy, and forecasting, we needed that extra support from an expert,” reflects Natale. [Read more](#)

GREEN IMPROVEMENTS BRING FRESH LIFE TO SOUTH SHORE



South Shore’s high street has been given a green spruce-up through two projects which are part of the High Street Improvement Scheme, led by Blackpool Council.

Work completed this month has seen green improvements including extensive planting and street cleansing in the Waterloo Road and Lytham Road area.

The goal is to breathe new life into the community’s public spaces and help create a stronger sense of civic pride among local residents and businesses.

The first project, delivered by NatureScape North West CIC, has given greenspaces a nature-friendly makeover.

Hardy coastal plants will soon brighten the roundabout alongside planters along the stretch, while hedgerows will help create more attractive and greener streets.

NatureScape, a local community interest company, specialises in nature-inspired gardens that support wildlife and boost wellbeing. The new planting scheme will make the area more welcoming, sustainable, and resilient to the seaside climate.

Alongside this project, HLS Cleaning was commissioned to deep-clean the streets around Waterloo Road and Lytham Road to improve pavement surfaces and shopfronts.

Together, these projects which have been funded through the government’s UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) mark an important step in improving the look and feel of South Shore.



‘WINTER WINDOWLAND’ COMES TO SOUTH SHORE FOR SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

Independent businesses along Lytham Road and Waterloo Road in South Shore are joining forces this December for Small Business Saturday, turning the area into a festive Winter Windowland to encourage local shopping and celebrate community spirit.

On Saturday 6th December, residents and visitors are being invited to shop local, shop small, and support South Shore’s brilliant independent businesses. To make things extra special, participating shops will be offering exclusive one-day discounts, special deals, and festive treats for customers.

Christmas in Blackpool is never short on community spirit, so each business taking part has had their shop front transformed into a snowy festive scene by North West artist Hand on Art, supported by Blackpool Council’s Business Growth team and government funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

TRAVEL VILLAGE GROUP MOVES TO NEW BLACKPOOL HEADQUARTERS

The Travel Village Group has moved into its new headquarters at The Pavilions in Blackpool as part of its “strategic growth plan”.

The move for the group, which comprises The Travel Village, The Holiday Village, Southampton Cruise Centre and RiverCruising.co.uk, will see the admin, care and finance teams join commercial, marketing, e-commerce, content and product work under the same roof to “strengthen interdepartmental collaboration” and “drive greater efficiency across the business”.

The relocation also aims to enhance the support available for Holiday Village business owners and create opportunities to develop The Travel Village’s retail space on Blackpool’s Highfield Road.

About 40 people are currently working from the new premises, with additional space for visiting tour operator partners.

ENGINEERING SPECIALIST CHRIS TO LEAD OPERATIONS AT AIRFRAME DESIGNS AS BUSINESS GROWS WORLDWIDE

Blackpool-based aerospace leader Airframe Designs has promoted Chris Fleet to a newly created operations director role as part of its plans to expand its specialist engineering and manufacturing services to the global aviation, defence and space sectors.

Based at its headquarters at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, Chris will oversee Airframe’s operations and internal processes while driving client and partner service delivery standards.

Airframe Designs has a team of highly experienced engineers providing System Integration, Airframe Engineering, and Additive Manufacturing services for defence and special mission platforms in parallel with support into civil aerospace for passenger and VIP business jet fleets. Its customers include a blend of defence primes including BAE Systems, Raytheon, and Lockheed Martin but also extend to support an array of special mission integrators and civil aerospace Part21J design organisations.

General News

APPLY FOR RED ROSE AWARDS

There's just over a week to enter the Red Rose Awards 2026 and earn a place at the county's biggest celebration of business success.

The awards, now in their 16th year, will take place at Blackpool's Winter Gardens on March 12 and feature 24 categories, including new additions: AI and Tech Innovation, Creative Business, and Deal of the Year.

The deadline for entries is midnight on December 5, and there's still time for companies of all sizes and sectors to get involved.

Last year, a number of Blackpool businesses won awards, including Thompsons Contract and Dennis Eagle.

Visit www.redroseawards.co.uk to start your application today.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON BLACKPOOL COUNCIL BUDGET 25/26

Are you a Blackpool resident, or do you own/manage a business in Blackpool?

If so, Blackpool Council wants to understand what is important to you and what changes to council services would have the biggest impact on you, your household, your community and/or your business.

Your feedback will help inform budget setting for the council's 2026/27 budget.

[Complete the survey](#)

HAVE YOUR SAY ON LANCASHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

People across Lancashire are being asked to have their say on an ambitious plan to deliver a local transport revolution.

The draft Lancashire Local Transport Plan (LTP) aims for better public transport, stronger east-west connections, infrastructure that helps businesses grow, rural access that works, safer and healthier streets, and to embrace the use of technology.

The Transport Plan will align with the LCCA's Growth Plan and Get Lancashire Working Strategy to ensure growth, productivity, and opportunity across Lancashire.

A public consultation has now launched and will end on Sunday 30th November 2025.

[Have your say on the draft documents](#)

'EXEMPLARY' SCORE FOR SPECIALIST SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Blackpool Council's supported employment service, which is delivered across Lancashire and South Cumbria, has been recognised as 'Exemplary', with one of the highest scores in the country, and the award of the prestigious Quality Mark following an outstanding independent review.

The Individual Placement and Support (IPS) service specialises in providing personalised help to people to secure employment or maintain their current job whilst they are managing and living with a severe mental health condition, such as schizophrenia, personality disorder or psychosis.

In addition to the 'Exemplary' review, the IPS Central and West Lancashire team also received the Quality Mark for their work in attaining a 40% plus success rate supporting people to secure jobs in sectors ranging from engineering, plumbing to animal care.

Since the service launched in 2020 it has supported over 800 people to get a job and expects by early next year to have achieved over 1000 successful job starts.

And finally

As always, I would like to know your thoughts on the membership and events.

Please do contact me on my email address with any comments, or please complete the post-event feedback form: <https://forms.office.com/e/w2i57Q7g75>

I look forward to seeing you all on Friday and even though it's early, have a great Christmas.

Adam Ogden
Head of Communications
Blackpool Council
adam.ogden@blackpool.gov.uk