

Agenda Item 3	
Report to:	Blackpool Town Deal Board
Subject :	Community Engagement Interim Report
Relevant Officer:	Jeff Scales, Locality
Date of Meeting:	05/06/2020

1. Purpose of the report

To provide the Board with an update on activity undertaken with regards to community engagement and the appointment of a consultant following the tender exercise.

2. Recommendations

For the Board to note the report on which a further report on progress will be given at the meeting.

3. Background

Following the last Board meeting at which the expedited process for appointing consultants to support the Community Engagement work was agreed , the outcome of the tender process and evaluation was reported to the Board by means of a report agreed with the Chairman on 18th May (attached at Appendix A).

4. Community Engagement Exercise

A partnership of Locality, Commonplace and CVS Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde was commissioned to undertake a Community Engagement exercise focussed upon obtaining the views of residents, other stakeholders (business community, VCSEF Sector etc) and visitors, linked to a forthcoming submission to the government's Towns Fund.

Locality is national charity and a membership organisation for community organisations, which believes in unlocking the power of community to transform communities and help create a fairer society. Their delivery model involves providing high quality consultancy services for community organisations, Local Authorities and others. Locality is the contract lead and will deliver most of the in-depth, qualitative aspects of the engagement process.

Commonplace provides a specialist digital engagement and consultation service for a wide range of built environment projects. They have over 250 projects behind them, have worked with over half the London boroughs and have won awards such as Planning Magazine's Best Stakeholder Engagement organisation. Commonplace will support online engagement using their highly sophisticated engagement tool.

CVS Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde supports VCFS organisations, helping to ensure that Blackpool Wyre and Fylde has thriving, strong communities. In recognition of their in-depth knowledge of the local area the CVS will facilitate access to specific VCFS organisations and support access to traditionally "hard to reach" groups.

The method statement underpinning this work was formerly signed off on 20th May which incorporates the following:

- A Blackpool Commonplace online engagement tool which can cope with high numbers of responses (see below)
- One to one and one to many Interviews with residents (prioritising face to face contact via webchats whenever possible)
- Wider stakeholder engagement (particularly focussed upon VCFS and Social Enterprise Leaders, Business Community)
- Working with the CVS and other VCFS organisations to target the most “hard to reach” or “seldom heard from” groups including BAME, young people, older people (lacking digital skills) and those who are more economically disadvantaged
- A marketing and social media plan which will underpin promote all engagement activity, provide information about the BTIP and particularly to drive activity towards the Commonplace platform

5. Progress to date

The engagement project at this stage is only a few days in and has not yet been publicly launched at the time of writing. Two project group meetings have taken place (the latest on 28th May 2020) so far, which have included:

- Discussing, revising, and approving the **project plan** to ensure it is more in-keeping with the aspirations of the project group
- The development and monitoring of a **Project Risk Register**
- Discussing and co-designing the engagement methodologies which are particularly designed to encourage reflection upon the **Town Deal five themes** which will underpin the engagement exercise:
 - Place (including housing)
 - Economy and enterprise
 - Skills and Education
 - Communities and Health
 - Infrastructure and the environment
- Substantial work on the **Blackpool Commonplace Platform** for which Project Group approval is now pending (see below)
- Development of a **Residents Interview Schedule** approval of which is now pending (which will also be adapted for use for other stakeholder groups). These will be structure interviews designed to obtain in-depth opinion on existing ideas/ proposals as well as providing an opportunity for interviewees to articulate their own ideas and priorities
- Development of a **Marketing Plan** which including branding and providing a common narrative used to promote the engagement exercise. This is largely focussed upon raising awareness of the Town Deal, the engagement exercise and driving traffic towards the Blackpool Commonplace platform

A substantial change to the original brief has been agreed which is related to the **BTIP Online Discussion Community** the basis of which was to create and manage online engagement based on a social media platform such as Facebook. Following Project Group discussion and subsequent internal Council discussion the decision was taken that Commonplace could and should fulfil the function which the BTIP Online Discussion Community was meant to have. The reasons for this amendment are as follows:

- The limitations on getting any significant traction on a new social media site in the timescale
- The inability to properly manage social media engagement on social media platforms managed by third parties
- The functionality of Commonplace - particularly in relation to enabling comments to be published on Blackpool Commonplace and shared through existing social media

6. Blackpool Commonplace

A key element of the Commonplace engagement tool is based on the use of a “Heatmap”, where specific areas of Blackpool can be pinpointed on a map and comments can be made. Overtime, and at scale, this builds up a picture of the issues important to local people. We have provided screenshots of the DRAFT Blackpool Commonplace to try and illustrate its potential. It can also be used to gather opinion on specific proposals and ask general survey questions.

Interactive Heatmap (Blackpool DRAFT)

Heatmap Example

Comments Page encouraging “Online

Landing Page







The Future of Blackpool - Have Your Say

Blackpool is one of 101 towns across the country in line for significant government investment through the £3.6 billion Town's Fund, aimed at strengthening the local economy and revitalising the town. This is your chance to have your say on how that money will be used.

The tiles below provide you with an opportunity to contribute in different ways including:

- Making general comments on an interactive map
- Commenting on the specific themes we have adopted which will help to structure our final plan
- An opportunity to comment on one of our key projects - improvements to Abingdon Street Markets

It would be great if you could complete every section but you do not have to complete the whole thing. All responses and comments will be read and used to structure our plans

<p>Provide us with your views of Blackpool on this interactive map</p>  <p>Click here to access our interactive map which allows you to identify and make comments on areas of Blackpool which are important to you</p> <p>View details</p>	<p>Theme 1: Place (including Housing)</p>  <p>0 comments</p> <p>Click here to comment upon Blackpool as a place for people to live and housing</p> <p>View details & comment</p>	<p>Theme 2: Economy and Enterprise</p>  <p>0 comments</p> <p>Click here to comment upon Blackpool as a place to work, for businesses to become established and grow, and on Blackpool's tourist industry</p> <p>View details & comment</p>
<p>Theme 3: Skills and Education</p> 	<p>Theme 4: Communities and Health</p> 	<p>Theme 5: Infrastructure and the Environment</p> 

Example Proposal Page

Proposal 7 of 11

Abingdon Street Market

0 comments

The property was built in 1862 and was originally used as the town's first major Police Station. The building originally included offices, a court house and three dwelling houses. It was enlarged in 1880 and finally, in 1928, it became premises for the market. In 2012 the Market was refurbished including restoring the mock-Tudor main frontage.

Prior to the Covid 19 lockdown the market provided access to a wide range of goods, services and products from over 70 experienced and friendly stall holders. The market is very well known for its fresh, quality produce. There was a fantastic selection of fresh fruit and veg, meat, fish, cheese, pies, scones, cakes, flowers and much more. In addition to this the Market also hosted a leather goods stall, a pet store, a sweetshop, jewellery vendors, a tattooist, a barber, fancy dress shop and a hairdresser. Shoppers used it's many cafes, enjoying a cup of tea and toasted teacake. Many were pleasantly surprised by the quality on offer and the value for money, particularly in comparison to supermarket prices.

Blackpool Council is working with architects and other specialists to explore the future of Abingdon Street Market with the aim of modernising the market. This includes changing the layout, creating an events space and a 'world street food' area, with various food stalls selling hot food of a wide variety. These plans are at an early stage, and essential to our plans for developing the market is to get the view from as many people as possible about these ideas and what else could be done to enhance the market.

For further information about Abingdon Street Market click on this link



Comment on this proposal

How do you feel about Abingdon Street Market currently?



What do you like about it (choose as many options as you like)?

- Good parking Friendly Nice environment Quality of goods on sale Events/ festivals Unique offer Heritage value
 Independent retailers Character of the place Easy to get to Variety of stalls/ shops Everything I need in one place
 A place to meet and socialize Value for money Cafe/ food offer The size/ layout Other

What do you most like about it (including anything that isn't mentioned in the list of options above)?

How do you feel it could be improved (choose as many options as you like)?

- Layout (too open) More events/ festivals Parking Cafe/food offer (variety) Cafe/food offer (quality) Quality of goods
 Needs to be cheaper Layout (too enclosed) Decoration Variety of shops/stalls Other

In your opinion, how should the market be improved to make it more attractive for people to use?

Your comment will be public. Please don't mention any personal details or names.
By commenting you agree to our terms of use. Read our privacy policy.

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Agenda Item 3 – Appendix A	
Report to:	Blackpool Town Deal Board
Subject :	Community Engagement
Relevant Officer:	Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director
Date of Communication:	18/05/2020

Community Engagement

1. Purpose of the report

To provide the Board with an update on activity undertaken with regards to community engagement and the appointment of a consultant following the tender exercise.

2. Recommendations

For the Board to note the report, the recommendation provided, and the decision of the Chair to approve the appointment of Locality, with support from Commonplace, on the Board’s behalf as agreed at the meeting on 1st May 2020, at a fee not exceeding £50,000.

3. Background

As reported at the Board meeting on 1st May 2020, a community engagement tender was submitted to nine consultancies with a closing date of the 4th May. Three submissions were received.

The Board agreed:

- that the evaluation panel would report to the Chair the outcome of their assessment;
- that the appointment would be endorsed by the Chair on behalf of the Board;
- that details of the appointment would be made available to the Board

The tenders were initially assessed and scored independently by an Evaluation Panel of 3 (Tracy Hopkins, Board Member, and Scott Butterfield and Robert Latham of the Council). The Panel then came together on 7th May to review collectively and to determine which consultant(s) would be invited further for interview.

Further to this review, one applicant did not achieve the minimal scoring threshold. The Evaluation Panel came to a unanimous decision that “**Locality, with support from Commonplace** ” was the most compelling tender and which achieved the highest score.

Positive elements of this bid included:-

- A clear understanding of the context within which the project will be delivered, particularly around timescales, Blackpool as a town, and the need to be adaptive to the continuing pandemic;
- Strong online engagement offer through a partnership with Commonplace;
- A good track record of previous engagement activity, including examples of instances where Commonplace has been used in similar ways;
- Sensitivity to ongoing legacy of project beyond timeframe with proposed innovative use of local organisations to contribute (Blackpool CVS);
- Very strong social value response;
- Very detailed cost breakdown;
- Very detailed method statement outline of delivery;
- Detailed approach to asset mapping provided;
- Good experienced delivery team in place;

- Good local knowledge of Blackpool, with delivery lead based in Blackburn;
- Availability of relevant policies and procedures to comply with relevant legislation.

The methodology will include a wide range of tools and techniques aimed at maximising the spread of views received, but also the depth of engagement required for this process:

- Provision of a tool which facilitates community discussion and builds a heatmap showing key issues and assets, and access to the tool beyond the timeframe of the engagement for a total of 12 months;
- A weekly digest of emerging views and findings to influence the development of the Town Improvement Plan;
- Methods to reach out to “hard to access”/“seldom heard” groups for their views;
- An open-access survey open to both residents and visitors;
- Stakeholder interviews;
- Resident interviews;
- A marketing and communications plan aimed at maximising public awareness and participation, including integration into partners’ communications channels;
- Development of community asset maps by liaison and discussion with appropriate parties;
- Involvement of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre CVS, with discussions also scheduled with Groundwork to explore opportunities to use their work “on the ground” for supplementary public-facing work

A Skype call was held with Locality on the 14th May, to discuss their approach and to clarify some operational points. The tender value was discussed and it was agreed that they would refine their approach, resulting in cost reduction of over 10% to a maximum value of £50,000 with these reductions not having an adverse impact on the quality of work and analysis. This budget includes provision for some optional items which may be included if they are deemed to be necessary as the commission proceeds e.g. the hosting of a Town Improvement Plan conference to further deepen engagement with participants; spot purchasing of additional resource to ensure further outreach into the community; and incentivisation of engagement in the event of a lack of participation.

Appendices A and B provide further information but note that some of the programme detail may change as a result of the inception meeting.

The Evaluation Panel are therefore content to recommend that Locality should be appointed.

Project Management Arrangements

Day to day project management will be undertaken by the Project Group, which will consist of:

- Policy, Strategy and Research Manager (Scott Butterfield)
- Project Development & Funding Manager (Rob Latham)
- Corporate Marketing and PR Manager (Kate Staley)
- Chair of VCFS Leaders Group (Tracy Hopkins)
- Blackpool Project Lead, BITC (Andy Charles)

They will receive weekly reports with emerging findings, and work with Locality. A full report on progress will be presented to each Board meeting.

An inception meeting has been arranged between representatives of the Project Group and other senior officers with Locality and Commonplace on Wednesday, 20th May, where detailed issues of issues to be addressed in the engagement relating to the Town Investment Plan and the links to the wider communications strategy.