

# Blackpool Town Deal Board Meeting No. 10

## Agenda Item 8

Report to: Blackpool Town Deal Board  
Subject: Community Engagement Update  
Relevant Officer: Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director  
Date of Meeting: 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021

### 1. Purpose of Report

To provide a further update on progress towards delivering the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

### 2. Recommendations

1. For the Board to review and comment on the Commonplace report.
2. For the Board to comment on the stakeholder engagement undertaken and that planned to July 2021, and make suggestions on additional activity required at either a programme or project level.

### 3. Background

As part of ongoing work to engage people across Blackpool in the development of schemes being delivered as part of Town Deal funding, the Council hosted an engagement exercise using the Commonplace online platform from February 22<sup>nd</sup> to March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2021. Led by the Council's in-house consultation and engagement team, Infusion Research, this built on a previous exercise using the same platform led by the community involvement organisation Locality, from June 9<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> 2020. The exercise was intended both to gather the views of those who had already registered their interest in being engaged via Commonplace, and also to bring new participants into the process, in line with the Stakeholder Engagement Plan submitted alongside the Town Deal Fund bid in July 2020.

Whilst the former exercise gathered comments on a thematic basis, the latest work presented a specific overview of the discrete projects developed under the leadership of the Town Deal Board, seeking detailed observations and comments from Blackpool residents, visitors and workers. This is part of the intended trend for Town Deal engagement activity to become increasingly specific to the projects and gather practical input to be used in constructing the business plan and final design and future development of the schemes.

The full report on this engagement exercise can be found in Appendix A. An overview of activity shows that when the site closed on 22nd March, it had received 2,587 visitors, just under half of the number of the first Commonplace exercise. 399 visitors responded to questions, and 350 of those chose to make detailed comments. 139 of these subsequently signed up for further updates on the project. Whilst over 40% of these chose not to give details of their relationship to Blackpool, 46% confirmed that they live in the town, 19% worked in the town, and 2% said that they studied here. The majority of comments were positive and welcoming of the work, however the details of the variations across the different projects are outlined in the report. Project leads had full access to the Commonplace website, reviewing comments through the duration of the exercise and an analysis of the key themes and full list of redacted comments were shared on 23rd April 2021.

The data shows that 45-54 and 55-64 year old men outnumbered other categories of respondent by almost 2:1. This finding is being used by the Engagement Team to ensure the views of respondents in other demographic groups are sought and captured. A handful of comments throughout the questions referred to the need to have more information on how the projects would consider the needs of people with disabilities, which will also be a focus of the Engagement Team's work in the months prior to the submission of the business cases.

## 4. Background

The connecting of Infusion Research with the HeadStart programme has provided a number of opportunities to review and develop the engagement activity for the Town Deal. HeadStart has both resources and expertise in co-production work offering the potential to develop a three-tiered approach to engagement, including consultation, structured group engagement and continuous engagement with opportunities for residents to work closely alongside project managers to support the development of projects until completion. The engagement activity developed will be guided by the nature and need of each individual project. This model will be discussed at the Engagement group and feedback outlined for the next Board. Meetings with all Project Leads have taken place, exploring the engagement needs of the projects and potential next steps. A template has been drafted to capture these plans and will be included in the overall engagement plan. This blended activity will complement the excellent engagement work that has already taken place rather than replacing it.

A priority for the engagement work moving forward is to address the gap regarding involvement of people with protected characteristics. Advice will be sought from Blackpool Council's Equality and Diversity Manager to ensure the engagement is not only compliant with legislation but provides platforms for those that are routinely missed from this type of activity. This work will be reflected in the engagement report to the next Board.

As noted at the last Board meeting, scheme leads are also undertaking some stakeholder engagement necessary as part of their work developing the projects and business cases. Appendix 2 gives an overview of the activity undertaken and planned by scheme leads between January and (approximately) May 2021. The planned activity has been

understandably affected by lockdown restrictions, with face-to-face engagement activity either postponed or moved into the digital space. It is also acknowledged that the sole use of digital platforms for engagement automatically excludes people without access to the internet. Lockdown measures allowing, this gap will be addressed as a matter of priority with the use of field researchers and existing connections to the wider community. The plan will be reviewed and updated alongside Project Leads and the Engagement Group and a full progress report developed for the next Board.

## Appendix 1 – Town Deal Projects Engagement



Town Deal Projects  
Engagement April 202

Appendix 2: Engagement undertaken and planned as part of business case development (January to May 2021)

1. Engagement across all schemes

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
February to March 2021	General Public - all Blackpool residents and visitors	Web portal with project details seeking feedback	Town-level engagement; signups for news items and future engagement activity; raising of awareness of Town Deal and specific projects
April to May 2021	Groups with protected characteristics (including Race, Disability, Age, Sex, Faith and Belief, Sexual Orientation, Gender reassignment, marriage and pregnancy) – via council equalities team, CVS (using model developed by Locality), Infusion Fieldworkers	Dependent on covid restrictions, mix of telephone and face-to-face engagement including via key local groups	Detailed opinions and perceptions of projects to inform business case development; gathering of contact details for use in future engagement
From April in line with business plan deadlines	General public – all Blackpool residents and visitors	Facilitated “coffee morning”-style discussions with scheme leads (online/offline as covid restrictions allow)	Rich dialogue with the public on schemes; collection of contact details for future engagement; views to inform business case development.
From April in line with business plan deadlines	Online surveys of key stakeholders with large audiences as required for each project (e.g. sports club members; college student; business networks) in collaboration with stakeholder organisation	Online survey promoted by stakeholder organisation	Stakeholder-level engagement; signups for news items and future engagement activity; raising of awareness of Town Deal and specific projects; ownership and active contribution

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
From April in line with business plan deadlines	Online surveys of the general public if projects need more detailed input than obtained from Commonplace exercise	Online survey promoted via social media	Town-level engagement; signups for news items and future engagement activity; raising of awareness of Town Deal and specific projects; detailed comments on individual schemes

2. The Edge

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
January 2020	UCLAN (2) and LUMS (1)	Meeting	Preliminary discussions on how the universities could help with The Edge.
February 2020	Blackpool & Fylde College (1)	Meeting	Initial discussions on working together on the Edge
December 2020 January 2021	Blackpool Innovation Group (formerly Blackpool Tech Hub) (10)	Online meetings	Input on different operating models including incubation and acceleration. Interest in Barclays Eagle Lab raised.
March/April	Existing tenants at the Enterprise Centre and FYCreatives. Plus Postal Service Clients. (55)	Survey	Input on facilities and services needed in The Edge
March/April	<p>Consultees in Demand Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lancashire LEP – Boost Business Lancashire services and providers</li> <li>• Fylde Coast Responsible Business Network</li> <li>• Federation of Small Businesses</li> <li>• North &amp; Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Key education providers: B&amp;F College, Lancaster University, UCLAN</li> <li>• Other managed workspace providers: Lancashire or further afield.</li> <li>• Local commercial estate agents</li> </ul>	Consultants	Input on demand, pricing, services and facilities

3. Blackpool Enterprise Zone – Phase 1 development (a: sports facilities; b: highways improvements; c: commercial development)

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
March/April 2021	EZ businesses c.200 -300 Local neighbourhood residents EZ Project Team EZ Security Team Marton Moss Neighbourhood Forum Cricket and rugby club AFC Social media followers Council leadership Local MPs Government Town Deal Board Planning Committee Local schools B&FC	Online consultation on EZ website E-Newsletter Social media Website updates Mail shot letter to residents and EZ businesses 1-1 briefings Workshops/site visits (subject to Covid restrictions) Media updates, press briefings and enquiry handling	Feedback will inform planning application for highways and sports facilities Potential lead generation for commercial plots which will inform demand and size of property required that can be fed into design and layout of employment land Increase social media awareness and engagement Increase newsletter subscriptions Increase traffic to the EZ website

4. Multiversity

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
<p>To Be Determined</p>	<p>Internal engagement to date with B&amp;FC Lancaster University &amp; Blackpool Council</p> <p>Future public &amp; stakeholder engagement to include:</p> <p>Blackpool Council Members</p> <p>B&amp;FC Board</p> <p>Blackpool Council Officers (Planning, Transportation, Highways)</p> <p>Business in the Community (BiTC)</p> <p>Business Improvement District (BID)</p> <p>Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP)</p> <p>Blackpool Business Leadership Group (BBLG)</p> <p>Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited (BECL)</p> <p>Town Deal Board</p> <p>Community Groups?</p> <p>Local Residents</p> <p>MUSE</p>	<p>The consultants have met with educational leads at B&amp;FC regarding requirements</p> <p>The consultants have surveyed the area of the town centre with regards to site selection</p> <p>The consultants have presented a stage 1 report to the CEO's of BBC, B&amp;FC &amp; LU</p> <p>Tracey Betts (Infusion Research) will be invited to a meeting following Stage 1 approval to discuss the wider stakeholder &amp; public consultation</p>	<p>B&amp;FC requirements for the new Multiversity (space &amp; type of space)</p> <p>Determination of an appropriate site</p> <p>Stage 2 consultation to be determined</p>



Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
	Network Rail / Northern Rail Hounds Hill Companies		

5. Youth Hub

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
<p>Ongoing meetings with Jobcentre Plus – every 6 weeks or so.</p> <p>Task &amp; Finish Group yet to be established.</p>	<p>Organisations:</p> <p>Jobcentre Plus</p> <p>B&amp;F College</p> <p>Wide range of other organisations may be connected with or deliver from the hub on a planned appointment basis. These local organisations are in part already mapped by JCP.</p> <p>Agreement needed on appropriate use of space.</p>	<p>Original idea was to form a steering group – met briefly but seen as ineffective, too many organisations involved.</p> <p>Intention is to form a Youth Hub Project Task &amp; Finish Group to develop TD business case and look at immediate uses for the hub (we hope to have keys to space by 1<sup>st</sup> April).</p> <p>Our priority has been to firm up a location for the hub and negotiate lease terms and practical fit out measures such as wifi, furniture, fire safety etc. These are still ongoing. Risk assessments will come next. We are not there yet.</p> <p>The reality is we will be testing the use of the facility for most of 2021 until the Towns Funding allows us to transition to full service.</p>	<p>Understanding how partner agencies want to engage with young people and the facilities they would like to see at the hub.</p> <p>Help shape the services that can be delivered.</p> <p>Ensure impartial multi agency approach; avoid duplication.</p> <p>Further meetings will help define core approach.</p>
<p>Prior to May business case submission.</p>	<p>Young people:</p> <p>JCP have engaged with some YP re JCP premises – general view is would prefer a</p>	<p>Engagement methodology includes a co-produced survey for YP alongside a focus group of YP, gaining insight into issues of</p>	<p>Full engagement report to inform the development of the youth hub and NEET</p>

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
	<p>different place for services to younger jobseekers.</p> <p>We will be looking to engage once we have a firm multi use plan and clear list of services.</p>	<p>NEET and what a youth hub would need to offer if successful.</p> <p>NEET youth champions will be recruited to advice and support the development of the youth hub on an on going basis as well as supporting the development and implementation of the wider NEET strategy</p>	<p>youth champions to support on an ongoing basis.</p>

6. Blackpool Central Courts Relocation

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
Jan 21	General Public	Following Exec Report regarding potential CPO of properties a number of complaints were received. Responses to complaints raised via Customer Service and Leaders Officer	No further action to date
25 <sup>th</sup> Feb 21	General public	Scoping exercise prior to planning submission – live on planning portal 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Feedback from public on proposals, will inform planning application submission.
25 <sup>th</sup> Feb 21	Property professionals/ local businesses & general public.	Press release issued to Commercial property / Trade press & Local Media	Potential questions relating to detail of the scheme.
25 <sup>th</sup> Feb 21	Council Leader, Cllr Lynn Williams (Claremont ward, Labour); Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Projects & Partnerships, Cllr Ivan Taylor (Claremont ward); Cabinet Member for Tourism & Culture, Cllr Gillian Campbell (Park ward). Site ward members - Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise & Job Creation, Cllr Mark Smith (Talbot ward, Labour); Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Jim Hobson (Bloomfield ward, Labour); Cllr Jane Hugo (Talbot ward); Cllr Graham Cain (Bloomfield ward)	First Stage Stakeholder engagement, notification that public consultation will commence soon, general briefing note.	Full presentation or 1:1 briefings as part of public consultation process
April/May	General Public	Public Consultation as part of statutory planning process. Press release to outline detail of planning submission	Feedback to inform the outcome of the planning submission.

7. Revoe/Southern Gateway

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
February-March	Extensive consultation has been carried out in the production of the Revitalising REVOE Community Led masterplan.	Consultation to ensure pitches will meet local needs and demand	Production of the REVOE Community Led Masterplan.
Jan-Feb	Blackpool Community Trust have carried out engagement in the community and with local schools as part of the vision to deliver community football pitches.	Phone calls and meetings between Blackpool Football Club Community Trust and Football Foundation.	Delivery of Community pitches, independent school and Changing facilities.
Jan – June	Football Foundation	Meetings and emails	Review and discuss potential opportunities for additional funding support.
Dec 20-Jan 21	Council’s Leisure Services Department.	Meetings and emails.	Discussion supply and demand needs across the borough and how provision will meet future needs
Dec-Jan	Local Education Department	Website	Discuss possible inclusion of education facilities on the site and wider health and well-being benefits for young people

8. Illuminations

Time period	Stakeholders Engaged	Type of engagement	Outcome
April to May 2021	Tourism Recovery Group; LeftCoast; Light Up The North Network and Arts Council	Meeting/Call	Receive feedback around season extension; Receive feedback around suggested artistic elements, involvement with local artists, strategic fit in local Arts planning; as previous plus potential fit in regional strategic picture across light festivals, how we can support Arts Council priorities post-COVID, acquisition of artistic collaborations.

Note that the balance of public and member engagement on the Illuminations project will take place after acceptance of the business plan (and up until 2025) around the selection process for new features and direct input into making this decision.