

## **LANCASHIRE REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE – COMBINED AUTHORITIES**

Members will be aware that all the Councils in Lancashire are exploring a number of governance options to consider the best way forward to put Lancashire in a strong position to benefit from devolution and contribute towards and influence the 'Northern Powerhouse' concept.

As in other areas across England, the Lancashire Councils are considering what benefits a Combined Authority model may bring to the area. Under existing legislation, the functions of a Combined Authority may currently include transport, economic development and regeneration. It is not a shared service model or a step towards local government reorganisation. Combined authorities offer the greatest opportunity for devolved control over local spending and better joined up working across local authority boundaries to the benefit of residents across the wider Lancashire area.

The Government have been very clear that robust governance structures in sub-regional areas will enable them to devolve powers and funding providing long term stability for investment. Leaders will continue to explore all options over the coming months and I report back to a future Council meeting.

## **LANCASHIRE ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP**

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) met recently. Members will recall that the Lancashire LEP was successful in attracting £250m Growth Deal funding allocated to 2021 and aim to deliver 5000 jobs and 6000 homes across the County. For Blackburn with Darwen this brings line improvements to the Blackburn/Bolton rail corridor, town centre improvements in Blackburn for transport and investment in the Making Rooms Fab Lab. To ensure the LEP has robust governance systems in place to draw down this funding the Government have asked that LEPs have an assurance framework in place. This has been agreed by the LEP Board and now submitted to the Government. The Board are due to meet again in October.

## **LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

The LSP met recently. I am pleased to advise members that Mo Isap has been voted to continue his role as the Chair of the LSP Board with Councillor Phil Riley appointed as Vice-Chair. The Board received a presentation on the Image and Marketing of Blackburn with Darwen with strong support and buy-in from those present to develop a Blackburn with Darwen brand identity to improve the image and

perception of our borough. The board agreed that improving the image and marketing of the borough was a huge priority but that it would only work if all partners worked together on the agenda and it was not just driven by the Council. In support of this we will also be co-ordinating, with stakeholders, a calendar of key activities in the town for the next 12 months ahead.

Members will be aware that the Plan for Prosperity was launched in November 2014 which sets out the LSP plan for the next six years to 2020. The Board have approved key performance measures and targets to monitor the delivery of the Plan and ensure the outcomes are achieved. For reference a copy of the Plan is on the council website at [http://theshuttle.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/BwD-Prosperity-Brochure-all\\_pps-LR.pdf](http://theshuttle.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/BwD-Prosperity-Brochure-all_pps-LR.pdf)