**Launch of Blackpool Museum**

Blackpool Museum will be filled with artefacts, film, music and performance, immersive, participatory and inclusive. Both museum and visitor attraction, it’s going to be memorable and distinctive – just like the lively spirit of Blackpool! It will celebrate Blackpool as the UK’s most popular seaside destination and its role in the development of British popular culture.

Showtown will also be the first permanent display in a UK public museum relating to circus, magic, variety and ballroom dance. Filled with over 800 objects from Blackpool’s internationally significant and extensive collections. Plus those on loan from the Victoria and Albert Museum and other private partners.

Along with invited guests we heard about the £13m museum’s vibrant new name ‘SHOWTOWN’. That’s the colourful, bold and playful brand which reflects the spirit and aim of the attraction. It celebrates Blackpool’s internationally significant story as the UK’s most popular seaside destination and its role in the development of British popular culture.

It’s anticipated that Showtown will open in 2021. It will be located in Blackpool’s first five star hotel ‘Sands Venue Resort Hotel’. That’s the building currently being developed in the prominent position on the Promenade, next door but one to The Blackpool Tower.

Open year-round the museum will be fun, accessible and fully-immersive. It will be filled with objects, film, music and performance. It mixes the best experiences of museums and visitor attractions – giving you a chance to look behind the scenes at what it took to make Blackpool special.

In January 2020 Blackpool Council has been awarded £75,000 from the Wolfson Foundation which will be allocated to Blackpool’s first museum – Showtown.

The Wolfson Foundation is an independent charity that supports and promotes excellence in the fields of science, health, education and humanities.

Lin Richardson, Deputy Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation, said: “Blackpool remains a popular UK seaside location which attracts millions of visitors every year. Wolfson is pleased to support this fun and unique museum which will engage and educate locals and visitors of all ages, focussing on both traditional and novel entertainment in this popular resort.”

Blackpool Council has today (24.6.19) been allocated £4 Million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the development of the Blackpool Museum Project. It’s the final piece in a £13 Million funding jigsaw that will see the project become a reality.

Blackpool’s new museum was selected by the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) as the county’s preferred project to be put forward for NCRF Funding (Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund). This followed a rigorous and independent assessment process. Eight proposals from different parts of Lancashire were independently appraised by external consultants.

Blackpool Council is thrilled that the Blackpool Museum Project was awarded a multi-million pound award by the Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund, and a development grant from the National Lottery.

In addition, the Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund has allocated £4 million towards the project.

Blackpool Council has been awarded £97,000 from The Collections Fund – delivered by the Museums Association to help preserve the Blackpool Tower Circus Collection and make it available to the public.

The aim of the Collections Fund is to develop collections and use them to achieve positive social impact.

The Collection Fund launched in 2011 and is offering a total of £3.5m in grants between 2017 and 2019. The award for the project in Blackpool is the twelfth round of awards the fund has made so far and is the largest grant awarded this round.

The final aim of the project is to add to the knowledge of the collection. Members of the local and regional circus community will be invited to the collection to share their stories, experiences and expertise which will add to the understanding of the collection and the history of Circus.

**About Blackpool Museum**

We are in danger of losing the wonderful memories from the older generation who have lived and holidayed in Blackpool over the years.

Blackpool’s heritage is about people and their stories and it’s this delightful, rich, community memory which brings our heritage so vividly alive. These stories lie at the very heart of the project – to capture that information now so it can be showcased to future generations.

Blackpool Museum will be a high quality, professional, self-sustaining business. It will have the capacity to reinvest resources to support heritage-based learning and community programmes.

It will create 40 full-time equivalent jobs, plus a range of volunteering and training opportunities. 210,000 visitors will be attracted each year, including 22,000 new staying visitors with an economic benefit of £12.3m to the region.

The Project will also enable the repair, restoration and reuse of the Grade II\* listed Pavilion Theatre and Horseshoe.