

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING SERVICES

Griffin Regeneration

The council has now acquired 137 properties from the 165 properties identified for clearance. There are 28 properties remaining to be purchased in the clearance area. Negotiations are ongoing to purchase these properties once residents have been re-housed.

Properties on Hancock Street, Stansfeld Street and Bombay Street are being prepared for demolition in the next few months.

Darwen – Orchard Grove – Queen Street Regeneration

This partnership development between TVH and the Council started on site in February 2011. The build programme is progressing well with the first phase of 30 properties due for completion during January 2012. The sales office is open and has started to take reservations. A show home is currently being prepared and will be open to viewings at the end of January.

Infirmary Area Regeneration

Places for People's final phase to build a further 28 homes on Infirmary Street, part of the Infirmary Waterside regeneration was completed in December. A press release and photo call is being planned for the New Year with our partners Places for People.

Boulevard Scheme

The scheme is complete and the centre is now fully occupied. An opening event to celebrate the opening of the centre was carried out by Blackburn Rovers player Damian Dunn and Councillor Maureen Bateson on the 8th December. For further information contact: Subhan Ali on (01254) 585768.

Winter Warmth

The GLOW professional referral scheme has provided a basis for attracting funding from the Department of Health (£114,500). This initiative will strengthen existing programmes by providing additional capacity during the winter period and will ensure co-ordinated prevention activities which contribute to the Cold Weather Plan.

The long-term strategic vision is addressed by the training of staff and volunteers providing skills which will provide year long interventions and not just emergency response in winter thus allowing timely interventions and signposting for vulnerable people.

Residents are involved in providing practical advice and there are winter home kits for those at risk. In severe weather volunteers will add capacity to support agencies providing practical support and caring for an individual's general health. Emergency heating repairs, emergency packs and specialist insulation work are also being funded.

Support Planning Network, made up of local voluntary organisations and groups whose role it will be to help people plan effectively how to meet their support needs within their estimated personal budget. This in turn will help drive the personalisation agenda.

We have taken the network member organisations through an accreditation framework (developed with advice from our Legal and Procurement departments) which sets the standards of service expected.

Nine local organisations and groups have expressed an interest in being part of a pilot – with another ten in touch with us and who may join the network at a later stage. We have developed an extensive training programme for those who wish to be involved. We expect to start the pilot in February 2012.

The key to the success of the network will be its sustainability in the long term through ensuring the organisations involved have capacity to respond to the demand for support planning, which will require support from the Council.

CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

A very successful and well attended workshop was held in November 2011 concerning the Centre for Independent Living, with a wide range of Council, partner and user representation. The output from this included three accommodation options for the Centre for Independent Living, which are to be taken forward by corporate asset management colleagues.

The three year vision for the Centre for Independent Living is that it will develop into *a vital community service delivered by local people with disabilities and older people and their families in partnership with community groups, the Council and local citizens.*

The Centre will provide information and advice as well as links to a range of community based services and support. It will cater for citizens of all ages and their families who need assistance to remain independent within their local community.

The shorter term objective for the Centre for Independent Living is to establish a board of interested parties who will agree to work in conjunction with the local authority to begin to provide valuable services to local people who need assistance to remain independent. To start this process we have run a workshop which was well attended and well received by community organisations, people with disabilities, carers and councillors.

A shadow board has been established to help plan the activity that will get the Centre for Independent Living development off the ground. A Centre for Independent Living Service Development Manager Post is currently being advertised across the Council and Care Trust Plus.