

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION****COUNCILLOR DAVE HARLING****PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: BRIAN BAILEY****DATE: 31st January 2013****MAJOR PROJECTS APPROVALS**

A number of major regeneration projects received planning approval at the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2012 Planning & Highways Committee, supporting the Council's Corporate Priorities on new jobs creation, investment, and housing growth. Cathedral Quarter Phase 1 development, the demolition of the former Blackburn market building and residential development on Pole Lane, Darwen were all approved. These developments will lead to over £30m investment in the borough, 350 new jobs, and 133 new homes.

**FLOODING AND DRAINAGE**

With almost continual rainfall over the last two months numerous locations across the borough are experiencing localised flooding. Currently 14 flooding investigations are being undertaken with landowners to rectify blocked, damaged or ageing drainage infrastructure. The Council is also working with partner agencies to raise local awareness of flooding issues and is in the process of bidding for further grant from Defra for Community Flood Pathfinder Works. Following the June and July 2012 flooding events, the approved programme of flood prevention and repair works will be completed by mid-March including culvert repair work at Knott St and Union St, Darwen. Officers are also working with the land owners at Bowling Green Close and the surrounding area prior to commencement of work on the Bury Fold Brook flood prevention scheme funded by Defra.

**HIGHWAYS FUNDING**

The Department for Transport have confirmed that the Council will receive an additional £334k in 2013/14 and £171k in 2014/15 for additional highway maintenance works. An assessment of suitable roads is being undertaken by the HAMIS Team.

The Council is also working with the Highways Agency to improve traffic flows around M65 Junction 5 and will be bidding into the Department for Transport's new Pinch Point Fund. A further bid into the "local" element of this fund to deliver additional improvements to the Haslingden Road corridor is also under consideration.

**CHRISTMAS 2012**

A packed Christmas programme helped to draw even more shoppers into Blackburn Town Centre beating the record highs of last year. Footfall in the week up to Christmas in the Mall and the market increased by 8% on last year. The major retailers reported increased sales and were very positive. Initial feedback from Darwen Market traders indicate that they had a good Christmas with a steady New Year.