

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION**

**COUNCILLOR MAUREEN  
BATESON**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR:  
BRIAN BAILEY  
DATE: 27.06.2013**

**PENNINE REACH**

The Council submitted the project to the Department for Transport (DfT) for "Final Approval" at the end of April 2013 and a decision is expected in the summer. Subject to DfT approval the Council is now in a position to begin delivering the project, the cornerstones of which are new Bus Stations in Blackburn and Accrington Town Centres, and a new link road running parallel with Burnley Road from M65 Junction 6 which will open up new employment and development opportunities. Contractors are now in place to deliver upgrades to key junctions, bus stops and shelters. New ticketing systems and real time information will be introduced which will make bus travel quicker, easier and more attractive.

**HASLINGDEN ROAD**

Under the DfT's Pinch Point Funding initiative, the Highways Agency has been successful with a bid to fully signalise M65 Junction 5 at Guide which will reduce local congestion and boost the local economy by enabling future developments. The scheme is due for completion in 2014.

**BWD CONNECT PROJECT**

Following a successful bid into the DfT's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), the Council was allocated £1.4m to deliver a package of investment designed to promote sustainable transport options along the Preston Old Road, Whitebirk Drive and Haslingden Road corridors as well as Blackburn Town Centre between 2012 - 2015. The project has already developed a website which for the first time provides a one stop shop for sustainable transport information and advice for the local area: [www.bwdconnect.org.uk](http://www.bwdconnect.org.uk)

Working with a select number of partners the BwD CONNECT Project aims to help remove transport barriers for residents wishing to access employment and training opportunities and reduce the number of single occupancy car trips by developing and promoting a range of sustainable transport options.

A full time travel plan coordinator is now working with local businesses to develop sustainable travel strategies and deliver personalised journey plans which have proved very popular. A community travel advisor is also working with Bootstrap, Training 2000, Job Centre Plus and local job clubs to assist the movement from welfare to work through financial assistance with bus travel and expert travel advice. Living Streets have also been appointed to work with local communities to help promote more pedestrian trips.

Schemes for 2013 include a cycling hub development at Witton Park, passenger waiting improvements at Mill Hill and Cherry Tree stations, town centre pedestrian improvements from Blackburn College to Blackburn Rail Station, a cycle path from Haslingden Road to Blackburn Town Centre, an off road cycle track alongside Whitebirk Drive and a journey planning kiosk in Blackburn town centre

### **CATHEDRAL QUARTER DEVELOPMENT**

The development is due to be on site in September 2013 and preparatory work is underway. Maple Grove the developer partner, is finalising detailed design work on the office and hotel and further site investigations will take place over the next few weeks prior to the start on site. The first 12 months of construction works will concentrate on enabling works including the strengthening of the culvert roof and walls, site remediation and preparation and the demolition of Jubilee House. The construction of the 'mini Boulevard' transport interchange will commence early in the programme and will be on site towards the end of 2013. It is likely to take around 6 months to construct.

### **FRECKLETON STREET LINK ROAD**

Progress is being made on all fronts to be in position to commence construction of the road by December 2013. In the next 6 months attention is focused on construction of a new spiritualist Church, exhumation of human remains in St Peter's Graveyard, relocation of PTS Plumbers and securing the demolition of all buildings. The construction of the road will take approximately 12 months and will be completed by December 2014.

### **MARKET IN THE MALL**

Stall occupancy has been maintained at 80% over the last few months which is encouraging and interviews for the new Commercial Manager are scheduled for early July. This new appointment will add impetus to the promotion and marketing of the new market and should see stall occupancy rates increase. The defective bi-folding doors are scheduled to be replaced over the next few weeks which should improve stall lettings on the Church Street frontage.

### **FORMER BLACKBURN MARKETS DEMOLITION**

Demolition contractors Sloyan Doyle have been appointed and demolition work is now underway on site with a duration of 17 weeks and completion by September. There will inevitably be a period of disturbance as the demolition is carried out and as work starts on the interim bus station. Matters are in hand to minimise the disruption to town centre businesses and visitors, and information has been made available to adjacent businesses and the public including at Blackburn Market. The demolition site will be fully secured during this period

### **29 RAILWAY ROAD, DARWEN**

Work has now been completed by Council appointed contractors to remove the dangerous elements, by partial demolition, of the out-building structure to the rear of no. 29. This rechargeable partial demolition work was carried in default due to the failure of the property owners to comply with the Magistrates Court Order granted under Section 77 of the Building Act. The work was completed on Friday 7th May and will now enable safe access to

the immediate back street area to allow a programme of works to be implemented with respect to Highway repair

**FRANKIES BAR, DARWEN**

This fire damaged structure will be the subject of further making safe works in terms of partial demolition of gable ends down to a reduced height, removal of affected burnt out structures along with detected asbestos materials. A demolition contractor has been appointed and assurances have been given that works are scheduled to commence on the 12th June, to start internal tidying up of the fire damaged areas in the first instance. A permit for the temporary road closure of Church Bank Street is currently being processed by Capita-Symonds to enable scaffolding to be erected to allow dismantling of the respective gable ends to occur.