

**LEADER'S COUNCIL FORUM REPORT  
COUNCILLOR KATE HOLLERN**7<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**Your Money, Your Call**

We recently held the first Your Money Your Call event. The purpose of the event was to give families advice, support and guidance on ways they can save money and keep their energy bills down.

Nearly 30 people attended the event which offered money saving tips and told people where they can access local support services.

East Lancashire Money Line and Advice for All staff gave presentations on the services they provide with people eager to learn more and requesting follow-up appointments.

Everyone is feeling the pinch and people told us an event like this really helps them to make ends meet.

I want more events to be held over the coming months as those who attended found the event very useful.

**Your Call road safety**

I am pleased to say we are extending our Your Call road safety project which has been running in schools in the borough which saw pupils come up with a radio jingle.

I have visited schools to thank the children who took part and came up with excellent ideas and put together very polished work.

The winning schools, Ashleigh, Pleckgate and St Anne's, will get the chance to take part in a further project where their jingles will be turned into a film which will be played on Youtube. The jingles will also be played on the Bee radio station.

I also visited Shadsworth Junior School and was really impressed by the art work they produce. I have asked for them to take part in an arts project, again to get young people and their parents thinking about the importance of keeping safe on our roads.

I look forward to seeing the results of their work.

**Foodbank**

This month sees the first year anniversary of the opening of the Blackburn Foodbank. The Foodbank has helped feed 5000 people over that first year.

More and more people are being forced to visit foodbanks and I believe it will get worse as the country faces more austerity.

I want to thank the volunteers who run this extremely important organisation and also urge residents, fellow councillors and staff to continue supporting them.

It is sad in this day and age that we need them but it is a blessing they exist.

### **Assisted Area Status**

The Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership has given its response to the Government's stage one of the Assisted Area Map consultation for 2014 to 2020.

Assisted areas provide an opportunity to drive growth in the area and there is some financial support to businesses and large enterprise in deprived areas.

The government's austerity and the sluggish economy have hit this area hard so it's vital we secure the maximum amount of support through this.

Getting maximum support could mean 11,750 jobs being created in Pennine Lancashire within the map areas which will stretch from Darwen to Pendle along the M65.

### **Heritage**

On October 1, Regenerate Pennine Lancashire held a Heritage event attended by reps from a wide range of organisations across Pennine Lancashire. The Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage gave presentations to outline the different grants ranging from £3k to £5m that they are able to offer. A number of information workshops and training sessions will be held in neighbourhood areas over the coming months.

### **Regional Growth Fund**

Members will be aware that Regenerate has been successful in securing funding from three out of four rounds of RGF meaning we can offer grants to local businesses up to £1m.

Accelerating Business Growth has been running for 12 months and businesses in Blackburn with Darwen have been granted almost half a million pounds which has generated over £5m investment. A further £270k of RGF grant applications are being considered which could generate £1.2m investment.

Given the Pennine Lancashire partnership's strong track record in delivering programmes we have been able to move quickly to launch these programmes and get grants out to businesses.

The Government has announced that RGF Round 5 is now open for applications. This fund will be entirely focused on private sector proposals which can generate significant private sector investment and create jobs. Round 5 requires bids to a minimum of £1m. Blackburn with Darwen and Regenerate will be offering support to any businesses who are considering putting forward a bid. BIS are holding a North West event on November 13 in Liverpool and we would encourage local businesses to attend.