

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN

Date: 6th OCTOBER 2016

LANCASHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY

As Members will be aware, the request to form a Combined Authority for Lancashire was submitted in June and the shadow Combined Authority held its first meeting on 11th July 2016. The new Secretary of State for CLG has now written to confirm they are considering our proposals and will be in touch shortly to discuss the way forward. This is likely to be in the form of a draft Order being developed which will require written consent from each council to confirm that the Order can be laid before Parliament. We expect the Combined Authority to be formally established from April 2017. In the interim period Cllr Simon Blackburn, Leader of Blackpool Council has been elected as Chair of the shadow Combined Authority and Cllr Alistair Bradley, Leader of Chorley Council has been elected as Vice-Chair.

The shadow Combined Authority is now developing a Lancashire Plan which will set out a vision for Lancashire based on the five core themes – Skilled Lancashire; Better Homes for Lancashire; Connected Lancashire; Prosperous Lancashire and Public Services Working Together for Lancashire. Each of these themes will be underpinned by an action plan with clear timescales for delivery and political leads have now been agreed to oversee direction and delivery. I have been appointed as political lead for Public Services Working Together theme.

Public Services Working Together is a key theme for the Combined Authority and three work streams have been identified at this stage – One Public Estate/Property Board, Shared Services/efficiencies and considering better models for better collaboration across the public sector services.

An early action for the shadow Combined Authority was to submit a bid of upto £500k to the One Public Estate programme, having received a £50k award to develop the bid. The One Public Estate programme is an initiative delivered in partnership by the Cabinet Office Government Property Unit and the Local Government Association, providing practical and technical support and funding to councils to deliver property-focused programmes in collaboration with central government and other public sector partners. As part of the bid we are seeking funding for feasibility studies on a number of partner projects across Lancashire as well as officer capacity to deliver the programme. If we are accepted onto the programme we can continue to make further bids for funding as projects come forward.

Over recent months Leaders have been developing a proposal for devolution to the Lancashire Combined Authority, which could enable greater control, power and influence over a range of programmes and funding delivered in Lancashire. These include a Growth and Productivity Fund worth £900m, devolved funding for strategic transport and development; influence and/or control over employment and skills programmes and delivery; housing funding; growth funding and aligning investment activity. Officers continue to work with civil servants from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to highlight Lancashire's progress and position. However, we are in a queue as Government wish to focus on signing off devolution deals with those areas who have already started negotiations.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRANSFORMATION

Blackburn with Darwen Council is playing a key role in efforts to transform the health and social care system both on a local footprint and across Lancashire.

The Pennine Lancashire Transformation Programme, which is aligned to and feeds into the regional change programme overseeing the Lancashire and South Cumbria Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP), continues to move forward at speed.

The Pennine Lancashire programme held its first engagement event at King George's Hall. The event was well attended. The programme's Case for Change, which outlines all the reasons why we need to change the system, was launched. The document contains some stark statistics about the health challenges we face here as well as the financial challenge we have to overcome.

There are two more formal events being planned across Pennine Lancashire and there will also be many other opportunities for people to get involved in the debate. The next formal event is being held on Wednesday 19th October, Turf Moor, Burnley. It is vital residents do so as their views will help inform any options being developed. Again, I hope members will encourage their constituents to get involved.

People can get more information by visiting www.togetherahealthierfuture.org.uk

YOUR CALL ANNUAL REPORT

The latest Your Call annual report has been published and is available on the Council's website. We put this report together to show what has been achieved by the campaign in the last year. Once again, I am really pleased to see so many people coming together to make the borough a better place.

This report shows residents from all walks of life, of all ages, from different parts of Blackburn with Darwen showing community spirit and doing different things that makes life here better. Nearly 9,500 people have taken part over the last 12 months, this means more than 29,000 people have been involved Your Call activities since it started.

We're in grim times in terms of the Council's budget but people are pulling together and fighting for this borough supported by councillors. The report is just a taste of some of the work going on. I know there are countless other examples of people taking part in Your Call activities.

The Council is not able to try to solve every problem Blackburn with Darwen faces on its own. But what we can do is work with residents, businesses, organisations and others to tackle issues.

YOUR CALL GOOD NEIGHBOURS AWARDS

A special event to celebrate all those nominated as Good Neighbours took place in July. It was a truly awe inspiring event and I got to meet many people who go out of their way to make their communities better places. I believe it is extremely important to recognise those who do make Blackburn with Darwen a better place to live, work and visit.

We had a record number of entries this year, more than 70 and every nomination told the story of someone who goes the extra mile to help their neighbours. Truly, Blackburn with Darwen would be a worse place without them. Picking nine winners from everyone who was nominated was difficult because everyone nominations was deserving.

The winners were: Nathan Pugh, Jordan Bentley, Richard Westhead, Hannah Goldthorpe, WEGS Girl Group, Janet Pearce, Fatima Dhira, Dr Mohammed Naushad, Zara Hussain.

I want to thank the sponsors. This year, Community Integrated Care, Capita, Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group, McDonald's and Blackburn Rovers all supported the awards and the event. And once again, we run the awards with the help of Lancashire Telegraph, a sponsor and our media partner. We couldn't run the awards without these organisations supporting us.

HATE CRIME AND COHESION

Hate Crime Awareness Week 2016 will take place 8th to 15th October. It exists to raise awareness of and to support people who are victims of Hate Crime. The Borough is one of four areas across the County to host a Say No To Hate roadshow alongside the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire, Lancashire Constabulary and partners. This event builds on the efforts we are already making to tackle hatred in this borough such as the Hate Crime Community conference February 2016 and the Hate Crime Motion agreed at Council Forum July 2016.

Other events planned include hate crime focus groups with young people, a two-day hate crime conference targeted at higher and further education, community awareness raising of hate crime and a social media *#saynohate* pledge campaign. These events involve all sections of the community to speak against acts of hate crime and foster community togetherness.