

## **REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN**

**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

### **LANCASHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY**

#### **Background**

Members will be aware that Lancashire has been operating in shadow from since July 2016 and continue to meet monthly.

The shadow Lancashire Combined Authority (LCA) has five core policy themes – Skilled Lancashire; Better Homes for Lancashire; Connected Lancashire; Prosperous Lancashire and Public Services Working for Lancashire.

#### **Progress**

The shadow LCA is already having a positive impact for Lancashire. The Area Based Review of Further Education provision in Lancashire now has political oversight from the Combined Authority, health partners are recognising the influential role the Combined Authority will have in delivering the Lancashire and South Cumbria Sustainability and Transformation Plan and we have recently been accepted onto the Government's One Public Estate programme and awarded £340k which provides capacity funding for two years and will finance feasibility studies on a number of projects across the county. Blackburn with Darwen are the accountable body for One Public Estate.

Each of the five core policy themes has a political lead with a work programme under development. I have been appointed as the political lead for Public Services. The Public Services work programme includes the establishment of a Lancashire Public Service Board with representation from public sector organisations, health, blue light services and government departments. I will also Chair an Executive group which will provide political strategic direction and oversight to the work programme for the Public Service Board. The first meeting of the Executive will be held at the end of January with the first meeting of the Public Service Board in early February.

#### **The Lancashire Plan and Devolution**

The shadow LCA is developing a Lancashire Plan which will set out a vision for Lancashire based on the five core themes. Each of these themes will be underpinned by an action plan with clear timescales for delivery and political leads will oversee direction and delivery.

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.

#### **Next Steps**

In order to establish the Combined Authority an Order must be laid before Parliament. We expect this to be agreed shortly and Leaders will be asked to write to the Secretary of State to consent to the Order being laid. We anticipate that the Lancashire Combined Authority will be formally established from April 2017. However, there is some frustration from Lancashire Leaders on the slow progress from Government, and this is also being reflected nationally. We will continue to lobby ministers and a further report on progress will be brought to the next Council meeting.

## **SUPPORTING COMMUNITY COHESION**

Supporting Community Cohesion is a key priority for this Council, and part of that is our commitment to tackling hate crime.

Since this Council agreed a motion in July, we have played a key role in efforts to tackle hatred in our borough. In October, Blackburn with Darwen Council supported Hate Crime Awareness Week. Events took place in and around Blackburn with Darwen to raise awareness of how hate crime affects people, to support people who are victims of hate crime and the different forms it can take. We have promoted formal and informal channels for people who may have been victims of hate crime to be able to talk to someone and report how they have felt.

Blackburn with Darwen was also one of four areas across Lancashire to host a roadshow alongside the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Constabulary and partners during the week. It was heartening to see so many people take part in such events. On the day several hundred people who were in the Town Centre signed a pledge. The event was a great success in raising awareness.

We have also supported partners to deliver hate crime training and awareness and secured funding to help with this agenda. Two examples of forthcoming initiatives include innovative work with The Sophie Lancaster Foundation and with The Anne Frank Trust.

However we do acknowledge there is also more that we as a Council and indeed everyone else can do. We will continue to look at ways in which we can facilitate, enable and support organisations and individuals to make a difference in supporting community cohesion.

Everyone has a role to play to ensure Blackburn with Darwen is free from hatred in all its form and remains a great place for people of all faiths and backgrounds to continue to want to live, work and visit.

In going to print with this update Members will be aware that we are holding a service in the Council Chamber on 24<sup>th</sup> January for Holocaust Memorial Day. I urge you to attend and support this service if at all possible and I hope to be able to report back positively in my report at the Council Forum.

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

Blackburn with Darwen Council continues to play a key role in efforts to transform the health and care system both locally and across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Members may be aware that the Lancashire and South Cumbria Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) was published in November 2016.

The plan sets out why change needs to happen. It says residents in Blackburn with Darwen and other areas have poor health and outlines if things stay the same there will be a gap of more than £570m between the demand for services and the money available. The Lancashire and South Cumbria Change Programme will soon be going out talking to residents to raise awareness of the STP and how they can get involved.

As members will also be aware, a programme of work to transform health and care in Pennine Lancashire has been progressing. The Together a Healthier Future programme, which is aligned to and feeds into the STP, is coming to the end of the first phase of talking to residents and stakeholders about what they think a new health and care system could look like.

Several public engagement events have been held as well as engagement through the media and social media.

This engagement has helped shape the proposals currently being developed. We expect a credible plan setting out how health and care will be transformed to be published soon. Residents, councillors and others will have many opportunities to get involved and give their views.

This is a vitally important piece of work. Our budget is under huge strain because of government cuts and more and more people are needing adult social care services. We need plans that help tackle that demand as well as making our residents healthier. This is the process which will hopefully produce those plans. However, given the significant funding pressure, it may prove impossible to close the £570m gap and therefore members are encouraged to lobby the Government when possible.

It is important that the Council continues to play a part in this process to influence and shape the future of health and social care, so that we can have confidence that the proposals are right for our communities.

Due to the importance of both programmes and of councillors being actively involved in the process, I have asked officers to organise a briefing session and I would urge all members to attend.

Finally, in what is great news for Blackburn with Darwen I am delighted East Lancashire Hospitals Trust (ELHT) and Lancashire Care Foundation Trust (LCFT) have both been rated Good by the Care Quality Commission in recent inspections.