

# Council Forum

Thursday, 22 March 2018

18:00

Council Chamber, Blackburn Town Hall,

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## AGENDA

### PART I: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PUBLIC

- 1 Chief Executive to read the notice convening the meeting
- 2 Prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain
- 3 Apologies for Absence
- 4 Minutes of the Finance Council meeting held on 26th February 2018  
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- 5 Declarations of Interest  
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- 6 Mayoral Communications
- 7 Council Forum  
To consider questions from members of the public received under Procedure Rule 12
- 8 To consider motions submitted under Procedure Rule 12  
No Motions have been received
- 9 Governance - Council May 2018  
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- 10 Policy and Corporate Resources Committee  
Report of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
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- 11 Reports of the Executive Members with Portfolios
- 11.1 Leader  
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<b>12</b>	<b>Draft Year Planner 2018/19</b>	
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**13**    **To consider any questions received from  
Members under Procedure Rule 11  
PART 2: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN  
PRIVATE**

There are no items to be considered under Part 2.

**PART 2: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

Date Published: Wednesday, 14 March 2018  
Harry Catherall, Chief Executive

**FINANCE COUNCIL**  
**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

**PRESENT** – *The Mayor Councillor Rigby C (in the Chair), Councillors; Akhtar H; Akhtar P; Ali; Bateson; Brookfield; Casey; Connor; Daley; Davies; Desai; Fazal; Foster D; Foster K; Gee; Hardman; Harling; Humphrys; Hussain I; Hussain F; Jan-Virmani; Johnson; Kay; Khan M; Khan Z; Khonat; Lee; Liddle; Mahmood A; Mahmood Q; Marrow; McFall; McGurk; Murray; Nuttall; Oates; Patel; Pearson; Perkins; Riley; Shorrocks; Sidat; Slater Ja; Slater Jo; Slater Ju; Slater N; Smith D, Smith J; Surve; Talbot; Tapp; Taylor; Vali; Whittle and Wright.*

**RESOLUTIONS**

**52 Notice Convening Meeting**

The Deputy Chief Executive read the notice convening the meeting.

**53 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gunn, Groves, Hollings, Maxfield, Hussain S, Mulla, Entwistle, Rigby J and Gibson.

**54 Minutes of the Council Forum Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Council Forum meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

**55 Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

**56 Mayoral Communications**

The Mayor updated Council Forum on recent activities and events, in particular a number of school visits.

Reference was made to the Festival of Making, and the attendance of Wayne Hemmingway at the launch event, which showcased a number of exciting activities that were planned.

The Mayor reminded Councillors that the Mayor's Ball would be held on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at Ewood Park and encouraged all Members to attend.

**57 Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2018/19**

Members were reminded that the Council was required to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year. It also had to set Treasury and Prudential Indicators and a policy for determining a "prudent" level of Minimum Revenue Provision for repayment of debt which was consistent with

the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

**RESOLVED** – That Finance Council approve:

- (a) the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19, including Treasury Management Indicators, as outlined in Appendix 1;
- (b) the proposed Prudential Indicators for 2018/19, as outlined in Appendix 2; and
- (c) the proposed policy for determining the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for repayment of debt, as outlined in Appendix 3.

**58 The Robustness of the 2018/19 Budget and the Recommended Level of Reserves**

A report was submitted which advised that Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 placed a statutory requirement on the Council's Chief Financial Officer to report on:

- a) The robustness of the estimates within the overall budget; and
- b) The adequacy of the proposed level of financial reserves

In setting the Budget for 2018/19, Council was required to have regard to this report when making its budget decisions.

The information provided was to assist Members in their review of the overall Revenue Budget and Capital Programme and to provide assurance to them that financial advice had been provided throughout the budget setting process.

**RESOLVED** – That Finance Council note that:

- a) An overall assessment of the current budget and the assumptions on which this is based, as well as future budget proposals, savings plans and activity forecasts, has identified that whilst there are risks, the overall budget provisions are considered sufficient to meet the Council's legal responsibilities and obligations.
- b) A review of risks, mitigations and contingencies has also been undertaken alongside the review of reserves and provisions.

Finance Council considered the assessment by the Director of Finance and IT of:

- the robustness of the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2018/19 (as outlined in the report of the Executive Member for Resources) and
- the adequacy and recommended level of proposed financial reserves.

59 **Revenue Budget 2018/19, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Programme 2018-2021**

The Executive Member for Resources, Councillor Andy Kay, on behalf of the Labour Group, presented proposals for the Revenue Budget 2018/19, together with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Capital Programme for 2018-2021.

Like all councils, Blackburn with Darwen had been facing unprecedented financial challenges since the period of the central Government imposed policy of austerity began in 2010 due to very large reductions in funding combined with a steep increase in demand for public services. In balancing the Council's finances to date, difficult decisions had been made, and Councillors were reminded of some of the key decisions made to date.

As 2017/18 had progressed, further pressures had emerged that were not built into the MTFS, including further rises in demand in both Adult Social Care and in Children's Services, with increases both in the volume of people using these services and in particular the complexity of service user needs, together with other cost increases due to legislative change within these services; 2017/18 had also seen increased demand pressures on highways and other cost pressures in relation to waste disposal.

To address these pressures both earmarked and unallocated reserves had been used, but as some of these additional costs were of a recurring nature, they required further support in 2018/19 and beyond and would need to be addressed through further savings, re-prioritisation of resources and from additional income.

In accepting the Government's offer of a 4 year funding settlement through to 2019/20, the figures included within the report for 2018/19 and 2019/20 were based on the latest data available and a set of reasonably firm assumptions, however the position was significantly less stable for 2020/21.

The report set out the Labour Group's proposed Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and associated Council Tax level for 2018/19 together with the MTFS for the period 2018-2021 based on a review of the existing assumptions and data to reflect the most current information available, and the report also set out the key issues in terms of Resources and Expenditure.

In light of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2018/19 and the financial constraints on the authority, the Leader and the Executive Members would work with Officers to continuously review the allocation and use of resources including continued review of all expenditure and income budgets, of contractual commitments and property holdings and implementation of savings plans as required, set within the context of the Council's statutory responsibilities and corporate priorities.

The MTFS highlighted a budget gap for 2019/20 of £4.93m, and for 2020/21 of £13.26m, although as noted throughout the report, there was significant uncertainty around the assumptions used to produce the figures for the final year of the MTFS given the lack of information provided by central Government. The

strategy to address the cost pressures faced in 2019/20 and beyond through a programme of thematic reviews would cover;

- Digital change
- Procurement
- Alternative service delivery models
- Income, commercialisation and traded services
- Council Tax – review of single person discount and a focus on empty homes

Within these reviews cross cutting themes would be considered, as applicable, including efficiency savings, potential for growth and income generation, invest to save options, prevention measures to either curtail or defer demand. Whilst the areas for review had been identified and agreed, the business cases and programmes to underpin each of them were currently in development and so savings attributable to each had yet to be quantified. The reviews would commence in the next couple of months and would start to deliver part-year savings in 2018/19 to offset any other pressures and/or replenish reserves ahead of more significant savings to be made in future years.

A proposed Capital Programme for 2018 through to 2021 of £72.9m was also recommended to Finance Council for approval, as detailed at Appendix D. The programme recognised the importance of investment in the Borough and the impact that the schemes themselves would have on the regeneration and economic growth of the area in the future.

As noted in the report 'The Robustness of the 2018/19 Budget and the Recommended Level of Reserves', the Director of Finance and IT was recommending to Finance Council that the minimum level of Unallocated Reserves for 2018/19 remained at £4.0m.

The assumptions made within the budget proposals, which were in line with those made by the Government, were that the Council would increase Council Tax in 2018/19 by 5.99% reflecting;

2.99% - general increase in Council Tax to cover increases in the cost of Council services

3.00% - to assist it in meeting expenditure on adult social care functions

The MTFs 2018 to 2021 had been reviewed and updated, incorporating;

- the indicative funding allocations for 2019/20, as included in the Government's multi-year settlement "offer" which was accepted by the Council in October 2016
- in the absence of any information or detail regarding the allocation of local government funding for 2020/21 and beyond (i.e. the mechanics of the future Business Rates Retention Scheme, the future provision and allocation of Government grant funding (if any) and the outcome of the Fair Funding Review), the figures for 2020/21 were based on a

continuation of the funding mechanisms and assumptions in place for 2019/20

- other projections, forecasts and assumptions as outlined in Appendix E.

The proposed revenue Budget Strategy would continue to focus on delivering the Council's priorities and would try to minimise the impact of spending cuts through the delivery of quality efficient and effective services to, and for, the citizens of the Borough, whilst ensuring the Council operated within the financial constraints imposed by central Government.

Following debate there then followed a recorded vote, with Councillors voting as follows:

### **For**

*Councillors: Akhtar H, Akhtar P, Bateson, Brookfield, Casey, Fazal, Harling, Humphrys, Hussain F, Hussain I, Johnson, Kay, Khan, Khonat, Liddle, Mahmood A, Mahmood Q, McFall, McGurk, Nuttall, Oates, Patel, Riley, Shorrock, Sidat, Smith D, Smith J, Talbot, Taylor, Whittle and Wright.*

### **Against**

*Councillors: Ali, Connor, Daley, Gee, Hardman, Lee, Marrow, Murray, Pearson, Perkins, Slater Ja, Slater Jo, Slater Ju, Slater N, Tapp and the Mayor.*

### **Abstention**

*Councillors: Davies, Foster D and Foster K.*

### **Not Present at time of Vote**

*Councillors: Desai, Jan-Virmani, Khan Z, Surve and Vali.*

## **RESOLVED – That Council Forum:**

**2.1** Approve the proposals for the Revenue Budget for the financial year 2018/19 as outlined in this report and specifically;

**2.1.1** Approve an increase in Council Tax rates of 2.99% (i.e. a weekly increase of £0.80 for Band D Council Tax payers and of £0.53 for Band A Council Tax payers);

**2.1.2** Approve an additional increase in Council Tax rates of 3.0% to meet the costs of Adult Social Care (i.e. a weekly increase of £0.80 for Band D Council Tax payers and of £0.53 for Band A Council Tax payers);

**2.1.3** Note the individual portfolio cash limit budgets for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix C;

**2.1.4** Note the work that is underway in developing a thematic savings plan (as outlined at **Section 7**) that will start to deliver part year savings in 2018/19

to offset any other emerging cost pressures in-year and/or replenish reserves ahead of more significant savings required from 2020/21;

- 2.1.5** Note the significant risks and uncertainty that underpin the assumptions contained within the MTFs for the financial year 2020/21, due to the lack of information that is yet to be provided by central Government including;
- the mechanisms for Business Rates Retention,
  - the outcome of the Fair Funding Review and the resulting redistribution of resource,
  - the Green Paper on Adult Social Care and the future plans for integration of health and adult social care and associated funding and
  - the impact of Brexit
- 2.1.6** Approve the utilisation of the Part-Year Slippage Reserve, as required, to support those savings that cannot be implemented with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018
- 2.1.7** Delegate authority for the agreement of hourly rates and contract changes for social care providers for 2018/19, arising from the impact of the increase in the National Living Wage, to the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources.
- 2.2** Approve the proposals for the Capital Programme for the period 2018-2021 as outlined in **Appendix D** and **Section 8** of this report
- 2.3** Approve the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-2021, as per **Appendix E** of this report, and to approve the subsequent publishing of the final version
- 2.4** Approve, subject to recommendations **2.1.1** and **2.1.2** outlined above, the consequent Council Tax levels detailed in the formal resolution within the report from the Director of Finance & IT
- 2.5** Approve the Pay Policy Statement prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011, including the changes to the Local Living Wage and Chief Officer posts, to have effect for the year 2018/19 unless replaced or varied by the Council, as set out in **Appendix F**.

## **60** **Council Tax for 2018/19**

A report was submitted on the Council's requirement to set amounts of Council Tax before 11 March in the financial year preceding that for which it was set.

In setting its Council Tax requirement, the Council had to take into account any funding from reserves, income it expected to raise and general funding it would receive from Government as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

In setting its Council Tax requirement, the Council took into account any funding from reserves, income it expected to raise and general funding it would receive from Government as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement.



The Council was also required to set a basic amount of Council Tax for the financial year 2018/19. The Council Tax was set on the basis of:

- a) The precept on the Collection Fund issued by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire.
- b) The precept on the Collection Fund issued by the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority.
- c) The Borough Council's precept on the Collection Fund, which is dependent on two factors:
  - (i) Its Council Tax requirement, and
  - (iv) The precepts issued by the seven Parish / Town Councils.

The Council was recommended to approve the draft resolution setting the Council Tax for 2018/19, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report submitted.

Following discussion, Finance Council moved to a recorded vote, with Councillors voting as follows:

#### **For**

*Councillors: Akhtar H, Akhtar P, Bateson, Brookfield, Casey, Davies, Fazal, Foster D, Foster K, Harling, Humphrys, Hussain F, Hussain I, Johnson, Kay, Khan, Khonat, Liddle, Mahmood A, Mahmood Q, McFall, McGurk, Nuttall, Oates, Patel, Riley, Shorrocks, Sidat, Smith D, Smith J, Talbot, Taylor, Whittle and Wright.*

#### **Against**

*Councillors: Ali, Connor, Daley, Gee, Hardman, Lee, Marrow, Murray, Pearson, Perkins, Slater Ja, Slater Jo, Slater Ju, Slater N, Tapp and the Mayor.*

#### **Abstention**

None.

#### **Not Present at time of Vote**

*Councillors: Desai, Jan-Virmani, Khan Z, Surve and Vali.*

**RESOLVED –**

### **Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council**

### **Draft Council Tax Resolution 2018/19 – Finance Council, 26 February 2018**

1. That it be noted that on 24th January 2018, the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for the year 2018/19 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the Act):
  - a) 34,341.92 being the Council Tax Base for the whole of the Council area (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Act); and
  - b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates, as detailed in Appendix 2.
  
2. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2018/19 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
  - a) £386,253,164 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
  - b) £335,751,693 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.
  - c) £50,501,471 being the amount by which the aggregate at 2 (a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2 (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
  - d) £1,470.55 being the amount at 2 (c) above (Item R) divided by the amount at 1(a) above (Item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
  - e) £156,230.84 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (see Appendix 2).
  - f) £1,466.00 Being the amount at 2 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2 (e) above by Item T (1 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
  
3. That it be noted that for the year 2018/19 the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and Lancashire Combined Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as indicated in the tables below.
  
4. That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2018/19 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

a) Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

<u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>
Eccleshill Parish	£994.10	£1,159.78	£1,325.47	£1,491.15	£1,822.52	£2,153.88	£2,485.25	£2,982.30
Livesey Parish	£982.84	£1,146.65	£1,310.45	£1,474.26	£1,801.87	£2,129.49	£2,457.10	£2,948.52
North Turton Parish	£988.17	£1,152.87	£1,317.56	£1,482.26	£1,811.65	£2,141.04	£2,470.43	£2,964.52
Pleasington Parish	£981.05	£1,144.56	£1,308.07	£1,471.58	£1,798.60	£2,125.62	£2,452.63	£2,943.16
Tockholes Parish	£1,000.83	£1,167.64	£1,334.44	£1,501.25	£1,834.86	£2,168.47	£2,502.08	£3,002.50
Yate and Pickup Bank Parish	£992.09	£1,157.43	£1,322.78	£1,488.13	£1,818.83	£2,149.52	£2,480.22	£2,976.26
Darwen Town Council	£986.15	£1,150.51	£1,314.87	£1,479.23	£1,807.95	£2,136.67	£2,465.38	£2,958.46
All other parts of the Council's area	£977.33	£1,140.22	£1,303.11	£1,466.00	£1,791.78	£2,117.56	£2,443.33	£2,932.00

b) Major Precepting Authorities

<u>Precepting Authority</u>	<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>
Lancashire Police Authority	£118.30	£138.02	£157.73	£177.45	£216.88	£256.32	£295.75	£354.90
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	£44.97	£52.47	£59.96	£67.46	£82.45	£97.44	£112.43	£134.92

c) Aggregate Council Tax

<u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>
Eccleshill Parish	£1,157.36	£1,350.27	£1,543.14	£1,736.05	£2,121.83	£2,507.62	£2,893.41	£3,472.10
Livesey Parish	£1,146.11	£1,337.14	£1,528.14	£1,719.17	£2,101.20	£2,483.24	£2,865.28	£3,438.34
North Turton Parish	£1,151.44	£1,343.35	£1,535.24	£1,727.16	£2,110.97	£2,494.78	£2,878.60	£3,454.32
Pleasington Parish	£1,144.32	£1,335.06	£1,525.76	£1,716.49	£2,097.92	£2,479.37	£2,860.81	£3,432.98
Tockholes Parish	£1,164.10	£1,358.13	£1,552.13	£1,746.16	£2,134.19	£2,522.23	£2,910.26	£3,492.32
Yate and Pickup Bank Parish	£1,155.35	£1,347.92	£1,540.46	£1,733.03	£2,118.14	£2,503.26	£2,888.38	£3,466.06
Darwen Town Council	£1,149.42	£1,341.01	£1,532.56	£1,724.14	£2,107.27	£2,490.42	£2,873.56	£3,448.28
All other parts of the Council's area	£1,140.60	£1,330.71	£1,520.79	£1,710.91	£2,091.10	£2,471.30	£2,851.51	£3,421.81

## Town and Parish Council Precepts

<u>Parish / Town Council</u>	<u>2017/18</u>				<u>2018/19</u>				<u>Council Tax Increase /</u>
	<u>Tax Base</u>	<u>Precepts</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>Council Tax Band D</u>	<u>Tax Base</u>	<u>Precepts</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>Council Tax Band D</u>	<u>(Reduction)</u> <i>Council Tax Band D 18/19 less 17/18</i> <b>£</b>
		£	£	£		£	£	£	
Eccleshill Parish	93.16	2,328.00	413.50	24.99	92.57	2,328.00	413.50	25.15	0.16
Livesey Parish	1,859.20	14,629.00	1,371.00	7.87	1,879.27	15,523.00	1,371.00	8.26	0.39
North Turton Parish	1,693.33	27,069.00	1,241.00	15.99	1,741.18	28,310.00	1,241.00	16.26	0.27
Pleasington Parish	249.72	1,450.00	0.00	5.81	259.81	1,450.00	0.00	5.58	(0.23)
Tockholes Parish	211.13	7,233.46	146.00	34.26	211.47	7,454.84	146.00	35.25	0.99
Yate and Pickup Bank Parish	137.35	3,040.00	260.00	22.13	138.74	3,070.00	260.00	22.13	0.00
Darwen Town Council	7,353.32	98,095.00	23,905.00	13.34	7,414.15	98,095.00	23,905.00	13.23	(0.11)
<b>TOTAL / AVERAGE</b>	<b>11,597.21</b>	<b>153,844.46</b>	<b>27,336.50</b>	<b>4.54</b>	<b>11,737.19</b>	<b>156,230.84</b>	<b>27,336.50</b>	<b>4.55</b>	<b>0.01</b>

Signed at a meeting of the Council  
on the                      day of  
(being the next ensuing meeting of the Council) by

MAYOR



**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN  
ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

**Members attending a Council, Committee, Board or other meeting with a personal interest in a matter on the Agenda must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and, if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Other Interest under paragraph 16.1 of the Code of Conduct, should leave the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.**

**Members declaring an interest(s) should complete this form and hand it to the Democratic Services Officer at the commencement of the meeting and declare such an interest at the appropriate point on the agenda.**

**MEETING:                      COUNCIL FORUM**

**DATE:                              22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018**

**AGENDA ITEM NO.:**

**DESCRIPTION (BRIEF):**

**NATURE OF INTEREST:**

**DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/OTHER (delete as appropriate)**

**SIGNED :**

**PRINT NAME:**

**(Paragraphs 8 to 17 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Council refer)**







<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF HR, LEGAL &amp; CORPORATE SERVICES</b>
<b>TO:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>ON:</b>	<b>22 MARCH 2018</b>

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**SUBJECT: GOVERNANCE – COUNCIL MAY 2018**

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

Further to the report to the report to Policy Council in December 2017, for the Council to recommend and approve some aspects of the corporate governance arrangements for the Council to take effect after the elections in May 2018.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Council is asked:

- 1 To recommend to the Leader following the elections on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018, that there should be 7 Executive Members with portfolios as set out in this report, with the final decision confirmed by the Leader at the Annual meeting of the Council on 17th May 2018.
- 2 To agree the revised cycle of meetings for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as set out in this report (and referenced in the draft Year Planner also on this Agenda).
- 3 Subject to 1-2 above authorise the Director of HR, Legal & Corporate Services to update the Council Constitution to reflect these proposed new Council governance arrangements to take effect in May 2018.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

As a consequence of the Boundary Review and the changes to wards, the numbers of councillors will be reducing from 64 to 51 in May 2018 and the wards will be reducing from 23 to 17. All 51 `new` Councillors will be elected with all current terms of office ceasing in May 2018.

In December 2017, Policy Council received a report and approved changes to the Council's governance arrangements consequent of the reduction of Wards and the new Council elections due to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018. A number of changes were agreed by Policy Council and this report proposes further revisions to governance arrangements as envisaged and referenced in that report.

The outstanding Governance arrangements will then be the subject of a further report to Annual Council in May 2018.

This report presents recommendations for consideration which will, if adopted, require the Council's Constitution to be updated and re-published in May 2018. The Constitution being the key document setting out the governance framework of the Council.

## 4. GOVERNANCE

### 1. Executive Arrangements – Leader & Executive Board

At the meeting in December, Policy Council agreed the retention of the Leader and Executive (Board) structure.

The current Leader's term of office will end alongside other councillors in May 2018. This will then require a Leader for the Council to be appointed at the Annual Council in May 2018.

Following the appointment of the Leader at Annual Council 2018, the composition and the individual Executive Board members will be confirmed. The Board can be a maximum size of the Leader plus 9 Executive Board Members or a minimum of 2 Members including the Leader.

Given the reduction in the number of Councillors overall, the Policy Council in December 2017 recommended the Leader in May 2018 review the composition of the Executive (Board) with the new Executive Board comprising the Leader plus 8 Members with 7 Executive Members with portfolio and the Leader of the Main Opposition Group.

In recognition of this recommendation the current portfolio responsibilities have been reviewed and it is suggested that Council Forum considers recommending to the Leader in May 2018, that the current `Children's Services` and `Schools & Education` portfolios be merged, and also that Young Peoples Services transfer into the new portfolio from the current Leisure, Culture & Young People portfolio. The revised 7 Executive Members portfolios becoming therefore:

Children, Young People & Education  
Environment  
Health & Adult Social Care  
Leisure & Culture  
Neighbourhoods & Prevention  
Regeneration  
Resources

### 2. Scrutiny Committees

It was also agreed in December by the Policy Council that going forward the Council operate with 3 rather than 4 scrutiny committees, with the number of elected members on each committee remaining at 11 seats. The 3 Scrutiny Committees to broadly cover People Services, Place Services and Policy & Resources. The frequency of meetings was to be considered further, and following some assessment of the position and experience of current arrangements it is suggested the frequency be amended to quarterly meetings. This is to reflect that the membership of each Scrutiny Committee is agreed at Annual Council each May with the annual report on the work of the Scrutiny Committees being presented to the final Council Forum each year in the following March/April.

Moving to a quarterly cycle therefore presents the best opportunity to ensure the work of the Committees can be planned and undertaken effectively throughout the year and proposals in this regard are now suggested in the proposed Year Planner also attached to this Agenda.

## 5. CONSTITUTION POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Constitutions set out the governance framework for local authorities, which provide the foundations for any local authority that aspires to be effective, progressive and successful. With the change to the Council elected member numbers, changes are required to ensure the continued effective operation of the Council.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to prepare, keep up-to-date and publicise their constitution.

The Executive arrangements, as detailed in this report are a permitted form of governance under section 9B of the Local Government Act 2000 (“the Act”). Such Executive arrangements must conform with the Act (Section 9C), which states that the executive may consist of a councillor elected as leader of the executive by the authority, and two or more councillors of the authority appointed to the executive by the executive leader . Under the Act the number of members of a local authority executive may not exceed 10 and must be at least 2.

Overview & Scrutiny – under section 9F local authorities with executive arrangements must include a provision for at least one overview and scrutiny committee with powers under section 9F(2).

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

The constitution when updated reflects changes in legislation and the various resolutions passed at Council, which would be subject to an equality assessment, if required. None is required in respect of this report.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

The Leader, Deputy Leader/Executive Member for Resources and the Deputy Chief Executive have previously attended meetings of the Policy & Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee to discuss and consider the Committee’s views on the governance arrangements for the Council from May 2018. Chief Officers have also been consulted.

Contact Officer: David Fairclough, Director for HR Legal & Corporate Services  
(01254 585642)  
Asad Laher, Head of Governance  
(01254 585495)

Date: 13th March 2018

Background Papers: None



## **REPORT OF THE POLICY AND CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Councillors Jim Shorrock**

**Kevin Connor**

**PORTFOLIO COORDINATING**

**DIRECTOR: Denise Park**

### **Progress of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.**

Set out below is the progress made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees on their work programmes during the January/ February Cycle of meetings. We will update the Council Forum on the work arising from the final round of Committees which take place just prior to the meeting.

#### **1. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

The Committee met on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January and looked at one of the major topics to progress their work programme.

The issues considered by the Committee and the progress made are as follows:-

##### **Youth Service**

The Committee continue to give a voice to the work being carried out by our Youth MP and Deputies supported by the Youth Service. The Committee noted that they have been very busy attending the events such as Holocaust Memorial and preparing for the youth MP elections. The Committee were invited to attend the declaration of the result which would be on the 12<sup>th</sup> February at 4.30pm in the council chamber.

##### **Ofsted Review of Children's Services.**

The Committee looked at the processes and recommendations from the Ofsted review carried out in the autumn of 2018. The review had been reported to the meeting of the Council Forum on 29<sup>th</sup> January and the Committee looked at the processes that had been followed and the conclusions, the review had found that the services were "Good" and that the Committee were taken through the positive issues that had been highlighted; also the list of recommendations noted and that they were already starting to be addressed. The Committee looked at the costs associated with placing children in care and the effects this had on the overall children's services budget. The Committee requested a detailed 'action plan' and were informed the next steps for consideration of the review, noted the recommendations and that an action plan to deal with these would be reported to the Executive Board at its meeting in March".

The Committee were informed of the next steps for consideration of the review and noted that the recommendations and action plan to deal with this would be reported to the Executive Board at its meeting in March. The Committee agreed that the action plan would be kept under review as part of the future scrutiny processes and

individual aspects examined where appropriate to ensure that the issues that arise are addressed.

The Committee looked at the recommendations of the judgement and how these judgements had been reached. The Executive Board on 8<sup>th</sup> March would consider an action plan and timeline to meet the recommendations of the report and this could be scrutinised by the Committee at a later date.

Members discussed the process with regards to scrutiny of action plans following reviews and how they scrutiny input could be best used. Members agreed that the benefits of pre decision scrutiny and the input of scrutiny into action plans should be looked at as part of the annual review of scrutiny.

## **2. Regeneration and Neighbourhoods**

The Committee continued with their work programme looking at the topics of car parking and enforcement income and road safety.

### **Car Parking and Enforcement**

The Committee looked at the progress towards income targets for car parking and enforcement. They were informed of the joint actions that were to be taken in the near future to prevent misuse of the disabled parking blue badge scheme. The Committee were also reminded that the money raised through parking and enforcement measures could only be spent on highways and road safety schemes.

The Committee welcomed the forthcoming action to address any issues of miss-use of Disabled Parking Permits in the borough. The Committee also noted that the economic impact of parking, its contribution to the Councils and that income could only benefit highways and road safety issues.

The Committee looked at the issue of road safety and the way the Council and its partners worked together to deliver on the issues. The Committee were informed that Road Safety was not designated as one of the Police and Crime Commissioners Key Priority issues. The Committee made the following recommendations:-

- 1 That the Executive Member be requested to raise with the Police and Crime Commissioner the effects that road miss use has on the community and that he be requested to make road safety one of his key priorities for the coming year.
- 2 That the Chair of the Licensing Committee be requested to raise the issue of acceptable driving of taxi drivers at the next meeting of the taxi forum and restate the standards expected by the Council and the residents of the Borough.
- 3 That information on road safety on a ward basis be forwarded to each member to ensure that they are aware of the issues in their area and also what is being done to mitigate this and improve safety.

- 4 That information be made available to School Governors and to Head Teachers through the Head Teachers Bulletin setting out the assistance that is available to schools in relation to road safety and traffic issues around schools.

### **3. Health and Adults OSC**

#### Health Watch

The Committee looked at the work of Health Watch and the way in which they operated in relation to other health bodies. The organisation was commissioned by the Health and Wellbeing Board carried out work on their behalf. The Committee agreed to receive an update on the key areas and reviews and how these could be fed into the Committees work programmes at the next meeting of the Committee.

#### The Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Committee received an overview of the work of the Health and Wellbeing Boards and how they were progressing in meeting their strategic targets. The key achievements were outlined and these were broken down into Start Well, Live Well and Age Well. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy was also outlined. This was an overarching plan 'through which the public, private, community and voluntary sectors, as well as residents themselves would work together to improve health and wellbeing for and with local people'.

Members were informed of the key priorities for 2017/18 and the issues that may affect delivery and achievement of these. The Committee were informed of the ratings for this Borough in comparison with comparator authorities and how well this Borough was rated.

The Committee agreed that the future of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the introduction of a Pan Lancashire Board be maintained as a key focus for the future scrutiny.

### **4. Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

The Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee continued its work programme looking at key issues relating to RIPA, Health, Safety and Wellbeing and IT and Data Protection.

#### Regulatory and Investigative Powers Act 2000.

The Committee also considered the procedural guide for use of Regulatory and Investigatory Powers under the 2000 Act. The guide set out how the Council's powers should be used and took account of the inspectors report on use of the process. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Executive Members for Resources that the procedure guide be approved.

### Health and Safety and Wellbeing.

The Committee looked at the issues of Health and Safety and how the Council keeps its employees safe whilst at work. The Committee looked at the statistics relating to accidents and near misses per department, how this was reported to the Health and Safety Consultative Committee and how this was followed up to ensure that lessons learned could lead to improvements and safer working condition and practices. The Committee looked at how raised awareness in reporting procedures could lead to higher levels of reports received and how with reorganisation of departments could lead to fluctuations in departmental reporting levels. Reporting could on line or through managers for those staff who did not have easy access to a computer.

The Committee were informed that the Health and Safety Consultative Committee considered reports of all accidents and near misses and included members of the trades unions. This ensured that the concerns of employees could be raised and considered. Audits were carried in on work procedures throughout the Council and this highlighted issues that needed to be addressed.

The Committee looked at the work that was being carried out on promoting wellbeing within the Council and how this was having a positive effect on employees. The Committee were made aware of the positive actions campaigns including lunch time walks, wellbeing warriors, eating well and getting active. The aim of the work on wellbeing was to

- Reduce sickness absence
- Increase productivity
- Give employees the opportunity to build positive workplace arrangements
- Increase employee engagement, satisfaction and retention.

The next steps of the wellbeing strategy was outlined and how this would further the work on wellbeing. This strategy included training employees to become qualified Mental Health First Aiders by the end of March 2018, Health and Wellbeing champions, and work towards the National award for England – the Workplace Wellbeing Charter. Work would also take place during 2018 to

- Create a dedicated wellbeing page
- Creation of toolkit/comprehensive schemes
- A joined up approach
- Promoting awareness of existing wellbeing initiatives
- Promoting the 5 ways to wellbeing, and,
- Encourage managers to be supportive looking at alternatives.

Members drew attention to the positive effects of the wellbeing strategy on both people employed by the Council and how this benefited the wider community and partners organisations through dissemination of behaviours learned at work.



The Committee noted the actions being taken to ensure that the Council employees are as safe as possible whilst at work and that work practices are reviewed to ensure this and agreed that all Members be reminded of the work the Council did as part of Health and Safety. The Committee has asked that Health and Safety of Members be included in the induction programme for Members of the Council. The Committee also recommended that Members be encouraged to take up the challenge offered by wellbeing and to make positive changes to their life styles.

### IT and Data Protection

The Committee were updated on the Councils policy with regard to the use of IT and data protection and looked at the issues relating to the sharing of data in particular which was a particular difficult area for members of the Council. The Committee looked at the guidance the Council produced on this and the dangers that exist. Members discussed the benefits of including this in the guidance given to Members of the Council during induction and particularly at the next election which will see a Full Council election. This recommendation will be forwarded to the Standards Committee who were responsible for this area with a recommendation that this be included in the list of mandatory training. The Committee also looked at the Councils Cyber Security Strategy which outlined the Council response protecting the information assets and reputation.

### The future?

The final round of Committees are now under way with all meetings looking at what they have achieved over the year and how they have made a positive difference to the services provided to residents of the Borough. The Committees have also looked at ways that they could better influence service provision and delivery and how they can ensure that these lessons are passed on to the new Committees and Members through the annual review and new Member's induction programme.

**Jim Shorrock Chair, Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

**Kevin Connor vice- Chair, Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

**March 2018**



## REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN**

**Date: 22nd March 2018**

### **National Festival of Making 2018**

The National Festival of Making returns for a second year on May 12-13 after last year welcoming 30,000 people to Blackburn.

Residents and visitors alike can look forward to another year of free hands-on workshops, street performance and art installations within Blackburn town centre, Cathedral Quarter and venues in the town centre.

The range of events and projects announced to take place this year, with many more to be announced, are:

- **Art in Manufacturing:** Forging connections between some of the country's most talented artists and the manufacturers of Pennine Lancashire.
- **Making Activities:** A broad range of activities on offer for all ages with many completely FREE.
- **Food & Drink Makers:** Fusion Asia-meets-Lancashire pies and the unmissable, ale-dispensing double-decker bus gave visitors flavours to savour last year and 2018 will be no different, welcoming both local and international food producers and their wares.
- **Makers Markets:** Textiles, ceramics, paintings and prints from some of the most imaginative and dedicated makers from around the UK gathered in Blackburn in 2017, each warmly invited for the quality of their products. More of the same is planned this time around.

However, much of the success of last year's event and one of the reasons why the festival is returning was the outstanding response from our residents, not only those who attended and enjoyed the activities, but also the hundreds of people who gave their time and volunteered over the festival weekend.

If we are to build on last year's success, we need to encourage more people to volunteer and I would recommend that you all share the details of this wonderful event and the volunteering opportunities available to all.

Further information can be found via <https://festivalofmaking.co.uk/volunteer/>

We are working with many partners to ensure that this is a huge success and I invite all members to attend the festival and promote our borough as the great place that we know it to be.

### **Our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018**

As you know twenty years ago the Council became a Unitary Authority. We intend to use various opportunities throughout the next municipal year to recap on the two decades, highlight key milestones and celebrate achievements. This is still time for members of the Council to submit any relevant material and memories which could be used at one or more of the events and activities.

## **Social integration**

The Government launched its Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper on March 14 initiating a 12 week consultation period. Council will recall that we endorsed our social integration strategy at our last meeting following a full community consultation.

We have been ambitious in our approach to making the borough a more prosperous and cohesive place. As a result we have been invited to be one of the five Integration Areas, working in partnership with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. The vision is to 'build strong integrated communities where people, whatever their background – live, work and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities'.

This partnership will help us build on our strong track record and accelerate our efforts, providing resources and opportunities to pilot new approaches and learn from others.

We look forward to developing this programme for the benefit of our communities.

We have many powerful examples of integration in action. We have very strong partnerships at all levels, with enthusiastic people keen to work with us on all aspects of integration for the good of the borough.

Last month I was honoured to present the One Voice Council Leader Award to Stuart Parker. This award acknowledges people that have promoted community cohesion through leadership. Stuart is a scout leader and through his work he has brought people together from many different backgrounds.

We also recently hosted the Your Call Good Neighbour Awards. These awards were established to recognise and celebrate people who make their streets, communities and neighbourhoods better places. We had a record number of 100 nominations this year and support from many partners.

## **Community funding portal**

We have been working with Community CVS and other partners to identify and provide external funding opportunities for local people, community groups and organisations. Thousands of potential grant funding opportunities can now be quickly accessed through the new, free to use, BwD Open4Community online search tool.

To register and find out more, please visit:

<http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/Pages/funding-opportunities.aspx>.

## **Health and social care update**

Work continues on developing the Pennine Plan following feedback from residents on a draft plan published in December.

The programme team held a number of engagement events across the area including several in Blackburn with Darwen. I want to thank all members who contributed and helped highlight this to their constituents, as it is really important that residents had a chance to have their say on the plan.

Work also continues on developing a governance framework for the shadow Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) with a view of launching the shadow partnership on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

The ICP will take shared responsibility for delivering our agreed performance goals and improving on our shared health and care goals, and provide the overarching framework within which partnership arrangements at the district and neighbourhood levels will operate and deliver for our residents. The ICP will be discussed at the next Partnership Leaders Forum, which the Chief Executive and I sit on and I will update members accordingly after that meeting.

If you have any queries about the programme please contact the programme director [Dionne.standbridge@nhs.net](mailto:Dionne.standbridge@nhs.net)

You can also send your questions and queries to me and I will make sure they are received by the programme. More details can be found at: [www.togetherahealthierfuture.org.uk](http://www.togetherahealthierfuture.org.uk)



## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN  
DATE: 22 MARCH 2018**

### **YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES**

#### **BwD Youth Forum**

This year's BwD youth elections took place between Monday 29th January and Friday 9th February. All secondary schools, colleges, youth clubs and youth organisations participated. A total of 8,240 young people took to the ballot boxes to choose their next BwD Youth MP, which was a 2,000 vote increase from last year's result. YPS supported schools, colleges and youth organisations over the two week voting period.

The announcement took place in the council chambers on Monday 12th February. Elle Walsh was elected as the BwD Youth MP 2018/2019 with Deputies Sameer Ali and Aliyah Shah. The young people are passionate and dedicated in continuing to raise awareness of the issues they have chosen in their manifestos which include a curriculum to prepare us for life, mental health, increasing support for young carers and votes at 16 to name some.

### **LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES**

#### **Cotton Town development**

January saw the launch of an additional image gallery, The Talbot Collection, which features a selection of the work of Wally and Howard Talbot, the Blackburn based photographers who built an amazing stock of Blackburn and Lancashire based photographs. The images provide a wonderful archive of local life that will increase in value as a vital piece of social documentary photography in a regional and national context.

Cotton Town volunteers have already published over 180 of the digitised images but with thousands to go this will be a lengthy project. The project has already sparked interest and led to more volunteers joining the team to develop this new resource.

#### **Supporting the roll out Universal Credit**

The Council's libraries, with their public access IT facilities and IT skilled staff, are key to supporting residents to get online, access digital services and apply for UC (Universal Credit) and subsequently manage their claims. In preparation for the roll out of UC library staff have attended information sessions and are currently undertaking online UC training made available via the SCL (Society of Chief Librarians) Learning Pool, this is in addition to other digital learning already received covering services offered via Gov.uk.

The library service is also leading the Digital Borough Workstream, working with colleagues from the Customer Services and the Adult Learning Teams to review and document all the Council facilities and support available to citizens to “get online” and to identify what is needed and how best to progress.

### **Venues**

2018 began with 2 sold out Brian Blessed, a sold out Jason and a sold out children’s theatre production during the February half term. The Darwen Comedy Club has enjoyed fantastic audiences with a MC residency by Justin Moorhouse and we have invited the Darwen Comedy Club booker to take over the George’s Comedy Club programming at King George’s Hall.

A Courteeners warm up date is secured for March 2018 which sold out in a record breaking 7 minutes. Both An Evening with Ant Middleton and The Proclaimers for the autumn season also exceeded expectation for their on sale dates and are both close to 50% capacity after only being on sale for 2 weeks.

The Penny Appeal, a faith charity have booked multiple events in the first quarter of the next financial year and the team are currently working with other similar charities to secure additional dates. We have three BME artists performing comedy shows in the Windsor Suite so far during the year which is a positive step towards diversifying our programming, and something that we are working to extend into other entertainment offerings.

### **BwD Wellbeing Service’s national success**

Staff from Blackburn with Darwen’s award-winning Wellbeing Service have been praised in a national report by a leading health think tank.

In its new report: ‘Tackling multiple unhealthy risk factors’, the King’s Fund looks into ways of tackling the risks of unhealthy habits like tobacco use, alcohol consumption, diet or physical activity via integrated health and care services – which it considers the best way of managing demand.

The Wellbeing Service is cited as an example of best practice for its innovative approach to bringing together a wide range of services that support health and wellbeing and making them accessible via a single contact point.

The work of the service’s health trainers were praised in the report; staff who provide face-to-face consultations and personalised sessions as well as follow up meetings and ongoing support.

Last year the Wellbeing Service scooped an award for Transformation in Health and Social Care from public sector improvement organisation iESE (Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise). It was also shortlisted as one of only four finalists for the NICE Shared Learning Award 2017.

The praise for the Wellbeing Service comes as Local Government and NHS organisations, including the Council and Blackburn with Darwen CCG, continue to work together across Pennine Lancashire to improve health and care services in the area.



## **COMMUNITY ASSETS**

### **New Community Activities**

Through the Community hub development grants the community centre volunteers are working hard on planning and delivering a range of new activities in the centres supporting agendas such as worklessness, health & wellbeing and social isolation.

- Accrington Road Community Centre will be starting new healthy cooking classes with a focus on cooking on a budget, supporting local families to develop healthy eating habits and manage budgets.
- Darwen Valley Community Centre aims to start activities for local residents 50 plus to support individuals for confidence building and reducing social isolation.
- Greenfields Community Centre have launched a new job club and the grant has helped contribute towards tutor time as well as some new computers in the centre. Structured support will help local people to gain confidence via volunteering towards the journey to employment.
- Ivy St Community Centre will be holding 'Afternoon get-togethers' for vulnerable older people in the community. Providing a regular opportunity to come to the centre and potentially learn new skills of their interest (i.e. sewing/knitting) or even just have a brew and chat, aiming to reduce social isolation.
- Little Harwood Community Centre will also be holding social clubs for local people helping them to become active physically or mentally, helping to reduce social isolation and provide an opportunity to meet and interact with new people.
- Mill Hill Community Centre have bought additional laptops to help increase the number of people they can support in their job clubs which are well attended, helping to increase employability as well as potentially exploring volunteering and participation in centre activities.



## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS & PREVENTION**

**COUNCILLOR  
ARSHID MAHMOOD**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING DIRECTOR:  
SAYYED OSMAN**

**DATE: 22 March 2018**

### **KEEPING OUR ROADS SAFER**

A 'Senior Road Users' event supported by the Road Safety Partnership took place at Ewood Park on 14<sup>th</sup> March. The constabulary, fire service and local authority were amongst a range of agencies, voluntary groups and charities in attendance to collectively offer advice and guidance on everything from basic vehicle advice to safety on public transport. The event promoted the benefits of the 'drive safely for longer' course available to all drivers over 60 who are resident in the area and want some support to keep them safe on the road.

### **COUNTERING EXTREMISM & TERRORISM**

Over 100 people from public and voluntary sector agencies across Blackburn with Darwen attended sessions hosted by the Council's Community Coordinator Rebecca Ramsay on 'Extreme Right Wing Awareness'. The sessions were delivered by former members of far-right organisations who began to question their motives and beliefs and gave first hand insights into the way in which people can be drawn into such groups and how this can be mitigated.

The Building a Stronger Britain Together Fund opened for a third window in the early part of this year and the Community Coordinator supported local groups to submit applications for projects up to £50,000 which directly counter extremism.

Over a hundred delegates from educational establishments in the borough attended a Prevent Education Conference hosted by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council at Ewood Park on 25<sup>th</sup> January. Speakers included Lancashire Police, the Department for Education and Ofsted alongside emotional first-hand accounts from Figan Murray, whose son Martin was killed in the Manchester attack and Michael Evans whose brother was killed fighting for Al-Shabab.

### **HOUSING & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

The new Homeless Reduction Act will come into force on 3rd April 2018 as part of the biggest change to homelessness legislation since 1996 with the prevention of homelessness becoming a statutory duty on every Local Authority. Work is well underway with preparations for the new Act and we are confident that Blackburn with Darwen will be Homeless Reduction Act compliant from day one.

## **HOUSING STANDARDS UPDATE**

The government has confirmed that licensing for all 'Houses in Multiple Occupation' occupied by 5 or more persons will be extended from April 2018. Banning orders for landlords who commit the most serious offences will also be introduced and issued by the First Tier Tribunal. These will last for a minimum of 12 months and will not be retrospective. There will also be a national database of rogue landlords which local authorities can view and this will include landlords with banning orders and landlords who have committed other offences as set out in the regulations.

From April 2018 the Domestic Private Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards will apply to all new tenancies. The Energy Performance Rating of each domestic privately rented property must be at a minimum of level E and from April 2020 this will apply to all (new and existing) tenancies. There is also an aspiration that the minimum level will reach level C by 2030.

There is currently a consultation on amendments to these regulations to reduce the exemptions available to landlords from April 2019.

## **HIGHERCROFT ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACE) MOVEMENT**

Led by the East Neighbourhood Transforming Lives Team, partners in Highercroft came together to develop an awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and learn about their impact on health-harming behaviours and diseases in adulthood. The team wanted to better understand the longer term impact of ACEs and how to prepare to be an ACE informed community. The awareness session was well attended and included representatives from Healthy Living, Health Visitors, School Nurses, St James's Church, three local primary schools, Pupil Well-being Officers, Newground, Roman Road Health Centre and Care Network Hub.

Partners reported recognising the benefits of services working together in an ACE informed way. Following the session a Highercroft ACE network was created which will continue to meet to share good practice and support each other. The network plans to look for funding opportunities to further develop the work. The East and Darwen Transforming Lives teams are exploring the possibility of similar events in their neighbourhoods.

## **STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES, VOLUNTEERING IN LANCASHIRE (SCVL)**

Led by the Council and delivered in partnership with Adult Learning teams and CVSs across Lancashire, the 'Strengthening Communities, Volunteering in Lancashire (SCVL)' project works with those furthest away from the labour market with the aim of moving them closer. CVS Key Workers provide one to one intensive support to address barriers and provide access to appropriate training and volunteering opportunities to give participants relevant work skills and experience. The project, funded by the European Social Fund until at least December 2019, will support 726 people from across Lancashire. Since starting the project in June 2017, 101 Blackburn with Darwen participants have received support (56 men and 45 women) and of these 29 people are from BME communities and 63 people have a disability.

If you would like more information please contact the SCVL Programme Manager Lorraine Collings [lorraine.collings@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.collings@blackburn.gov.uk) 01254 585593 @SCVLancs

## LANCASHIRE VOLUNTEER PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Since the Lancashire Volunteer Partnership recruitment campaign for volunteers in September 2017 there has been an increase of 129 volunteers working across the council.

Service	No of volunteers 16/17	New Volunteers	Total volunteers 17/18	No of volunteers signed up
Children's Centres	42	1	43	1
Community Support		11	11	11
Environment	110	30	140	63
Highways	53	39	92	57
Health & Wellbeing	90	17	107	30
Libraries	90	17	107	19
Museum	3		3	
Neighbourhoods and Learning	33	6	39	24
Young People's Service	4	8	12	12
Youth Justice	7		7	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>218*</b>

\*191 volunteers signed up, 27 volunteers carry out more than one role.

For more information about Lancashire Volunteer Partnership and all the opportunities visit the website: <https://lancsvp.org.uk/>



## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018

COUNCILLOR ANDY KAY

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
CHIEF OFFICER: DENISE PARK

### **Audit & Assurance**

Following the completion of a sector lead procurement exercise, which was managed by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA), Grant Thornton was confirmed as the Council's external auditor for a five year period commencing with the audit of the accounts for 2018/19. The PSAA has an option to extend the contract for a further two year period, to a total of seven years, if it chooses to do so. This appointment was formally confirmed to the Council following the PSAA Board meeting on 14 December 2017. The Council will benefit from reduced fees in 2018/19 as a result of the success of the procurement process. The PSAA has estimated that the savings will be the equivalent of approximately 18% in the scale fees payable by local bodies. The fees for the statutory audit of the Council for 2016/17 were £102,839.

Audit & Assurance Team will report its progress in delivering the 2017/18 Annual Audit Plan to the April Audit & Governance Committee meeting. As well as the internal audit outcomes achieved to date the report will include commentary on the progress of work to follow up the data matches highlighted from the 2017 National Fraud Initiative (NFI) exercise. In addition, the team is preparing the draft annual internal audit plan for 2018/19 for approval by the Committee at this meeting. This will set out the work that Audit & Assurance will carry out during 2018/19 to support the Section 151 Officer's statutory obligations to maintain an adequate and effective internal audit of the Council's accounting records and its systems of internal control, governance and risk management, and enable an annual internal audit report to be produced in accordance with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

### **Financial Services**

The 2018/19 Revenue and Capital budgets and the Medium Term Financial Strategy were approved at Finance Council on 26th February 2018. Budgets are now being finalised in the Civica system. The restructure of the Finance Team is currently being developed prior to consultation with staff and the Trade Unions. The team needs to identify savings of circa £500k. The restructure will include a digital review of all areas which is already underway. The Finance team are also preparing for year end closure with new templates and information to be circulated to managers across the Council to enable working efficiencies to be generated from the new Civica system.

### **Benefits**

Universal Credit 'full' service was rolled out on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Despite the so called "efficient" service, and to improve the coordination between the council, the DWP and claimants on Universal Credit issues, 3 council funded posts have been co-located in the DWP office (two of our own customer service staff and resources from Shelter). Whilst it is still early days in the roll out, the number of individuals and families requiring support with debt and budgeting advice has increased significantly beyond that which was originally indicated to the council. The council will continue to monitor the impact of Universal Credit and will report back to members and the management board on a regular basis. Because of the lack of support from DWP to claimants, we will continue to give support to claimants in whatever way we can so that any negative impact on their lives is minimised as far as possible.

## **Digital**

The Digital Board and dedicated Digital Task Team (DTT) have continued to review individual service areas within the council to support digital improvements. A business case has now produced for the replacement and modernisation of the current website with a decision expected shortly. The team working on the '*digital borough*' workstream have now mapped the digital facilities and support available in the borough from the council. The details will now be shared across the council and with partners. It is envisaged that increasing the awareness of the facilities and support available will enable improved digital participation by residents. This workstream will continue to look at developing the support and facilities further and improve usage, particularly in hard to reach groups.

## **IT**

IT continue to implement new and upgraded systems to deliver improved services and efficiencies. The New Leisure system (Legend) and payments for Registrars on-line are now live. Various projects are in train including a new ticketing system for King George's Hall and Darwen Library Theatre, Planning Services and Property Management with other system implementations in the early stages of development including a new Legal Case Management system and implementation of a new Pennine Lancashire Building Control system. Work is also continuing on the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which takes effect in May 2018 and sets out clear guidelines on how EU citizen data is handled and on the ownership rights of each citizen over their data.

## **HR & Apprentices Update**

The team reports that we have been successful in all schools re-signing SLA's with the service for the up and coming year and new business is being achieved through continued successful engagement with schools and some local CIC's. The transition to one monthly payroll for all Council employees has now been completed successfully and this completes the programme of efficiency changes which has resulted in savings for the council.

The annual apprenticeship recruitment process has commenced and the Council will be advertising for apprentices in March. We are looking to recruit another 20 apprentices for the September intake. HR will continue to work with local education partners to ensure the most suitable courses can be offered to the new intake which will benefit the Council in having a range of different apprenticeships across departments. HR also continue to monitor the use of the apprentice levy to ensure the Council can maximise the opportunities for employees.

## **Governance & Democracy**

Plans are progressing for the delivery of the elections in May. Special arrangements are in place to ensure that the majority of voters are able to attend similar polling stations as in previous years although with the change in polling district boundaries, this has not always been possible.

## **Legal Services**

Compensation claims can be made by people who have been physically or mentally injured because they were the victim of a crime. Under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2012, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority ['CICA'] determine a victim's eligibility by following a set of criteria, with minimum conditions which must be met before an innocent victim of crime can make an application. No conviction is required. In the last 6 months Legal Services have secured 2 compensation payments for children in social care related matters totalling almost £13,700. This money is then held on trust by the CICA.



## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

COUNCILLOR DAVE HARLING

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING

DIRECTOR: LINDA CLEGG

DATE: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018

### SCHOOL INSPECTIONS UPDATE

Four schools have retained their 'good' judgement following recent Ofsted short inspections. For St. Bede's Roman Catholic High School, Ofsted praised the school for making considerable changes to subject leadership in key areas. Inspectors commented that subject leaders "*relish taking on new ideas and responsibilities and play an important role in securing improvements in the quality of teaching and in the rates of pupils' progress in those subjects which underperformed in the past.*"

Daisyfield Primary School was commended for having taken effective action to address areas for development since their last inspection. These actions have included enhancing the quality of teaching and improving the proportion of pupils making expected and more than expected progress in writing and mathematics in key stage 1.

Shadsworth Junior School was praised by the inspector for having "demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement" since the last inspection. The school is working towards achieving an 'outstanding' judgement.

The Inspector at Lower Darwen Primary School highlighted the positive feedback from parents, with one parent commenting that "this is an amazing school run by a very dedicated and talented Headteacher."

All four reports can be viewed on the Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/find-ofsted-inspection-report](http://www.gov.uk/find-ofsted-inspection-report).

### SECONDARY SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS

On the 1st March, parents and carers of 2172 children applying for Blackburn with Darwen schools found out which secondary school their child will be attending in September as Year 7 pupils. Over 91% of children received an offer of a place at one of their three preferred schools with 76.1% being offered their first preference.

The Place Planning and Admissions Team continue to support the drive for online services with 90% of secondary applications being made online, up from 88% in 2017. The greater use of online applications has led to a saving for this year of approximately £6,300 in staff time and cost of materials. The national offer date for primary schools is 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

### ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACE) PATHFINDER

Work has continued with St. Cuthbert's Primary School on the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Pathfinder programme. Since their 'outstanding' Ofsted judgement in April 2017, the school has continued to build on the training received to develop and embed good practice within school. Learning from the pathfinder has been developed into a programme to use with a wider group of primary schools, and 23 schools have committed to participate. Detailed programme planning and phasing is underway.

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The principles underlying the ACE pathfinder are that pupils with adverse histories can thrive in an ACE informed school environment. Building resilience of pupils through the curriculum and the implementation of new systems is a long-term focus of the programme with a move

towards understanding the message that a child's behaviour is trying to convey rather than to punish.

## **NEWFIELD SCHOOL NEW AUTISM FACILITY**

The local authority capital programme has paved the way for a new build and extensive landscaping for Newfield School on the former Crosshill School site. A brand new single storey Autism specialist facility for teaching will feature a sensory space, multi-use areas, hall and kitchen facilities, which will be linked through a corridor back into the existing Newfield school.

The anticipated completion date for the work is 11<sup>th</sup> May 2018 with the school being furnished and commissioned ready for use from September 2018 following the £5.6m investment.

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH & ADULT SOCIAL CARE COUNCILLOR MUSTAFA DESAI**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING DIRECTORS:  
DOMINIC HARRISON (HEALTH)  
SAYYED OSMAN (ADULT SOCIAL CARE)  
DATE: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

### **HEALTH**

#### **TIME TO CHANGE EMPLOYER PLEDGE**

1 in 4 British workers are affected by conditions like anxiety, depression and stress every year and mental ill-health is the leading cause of sickness absence in the UK, costing an average of £1,035 per employee per year.

In February, the Council signed up to the Time To Change Employers Pledge in support of staff mental wellbeing. Time To Change is a campaign which encourages employees to talk about their mental health which can make a real difference to sickness absence rates, presenteeism levels, staff wellbeing and productivity.

By signing the Employers Pledge the authority has demonstrated a commitment to change how people think and act about mental health in the workplace and make sure that employees who are facing mental health problems feel supported. It is hoped it will also act as a catalyst for other employers in the Borough to sign the pledge and improve staff wellbeing further.

#### **DIGITAL PUBLIC HEALTH**

There has been important progress for two major Digital Public Health projects:-  
The Connected Healthy Communities 'Passive Sensors' project has received support from the Lancashire Digital Health Board and is included in the Lancashire and South Cumbria Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STP) Investment Portfolio for NHS England Digital investment for 2018/20. The partnership with East Lancashire Health Trust (ELHT); Lancaster University, and a number of key third sector partners, plans to implement low cost passive sensors for vulnerable older adults and develop decision dashboards for relatives/carers and Integrated Neighbourhood Health and Care Teams, starting with 6 months of co-designed development in Higher Croft and Edgworth.

A Community Assets Register and Social Prescribing partnership with the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), Care Network, Age UK and the Wellbeing Service is developing a combined database of multi-agency assets. These will be integrated and delivered back to neighbourhood integrated teams and individual professionals through web based and SMART phone apps to help identify appropriate neighbourhood provision to meet individual need. The project was one of four shortlisted at the recent National iNetwork awards.

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PREVENTION AT SCALE**

The Pennine Lancashire Transformation Programme has been chosen by the Local Government Association (LGA) to pilot 'Prevention at Scale', starting in Blackburn with Darwen from April. Working with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), GP practices and staff, we aim to increase the benefit to citizens aged 40-74 of having an NHS Health Check, through increased referrals to and take-up of the National Diabetes Prevention Programme and the Council Wellbeing Service.

With around 5,000 NHS Health Checks undertaken each year in the Borough, this is a great opportunity to shift the focus towards non-clinical interventions, to maximise wider health,

wellbeing and social benefits and reduce future demand on General Practice and other NHS services.

## **CANCER SCREENING**

Some of Blackburn with Darwen's poor cancer outcomes could undoubtedly be improved by higher uptake of the three national cancer screening programmes: breast and cervix for women and bowel for both men and women. While NHS England commissions cancer screening, the council's public health role is to support and challenge delivery arrangements, in order to improve local outcomes.

During national cervical cancer prevention week (22<sup>nd</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> January), social media promoted #25ItsTime, a Pennine Lancashire initiative we have developed with the CCGs, GP practices and NHS England, to increase uptake by women who are invited for their first smear test, and who are least likely to attend.

We have also worked with the Lancashire Bowel Screening programme to successfully pilot 'call for a kit clinics' in local practices with the lowest uptake, and are working with the new Patient Navigator for the East Lancashire Breast Screening Programme to identify similar opportunities to increase uptake.

## **ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

### **CARE NETWORK HUB**

Following on from the launch of the Care Network Hub in December, a community social work representative is now based in the hub one day per month. The benefit of this approach is that customers can speak to a social worker in person rather than by telephone, if they prefer. Customers can also pre book appointments with the social worker or walk into the hub to have a face to face discussion and receive advice. The social worker also provides support to hub staff with social work related queries. The plan is for this support to grow as the type and number of queries received are analysed.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS**

A new approach to promote referrals for support from community connectors, volunteers and transforming lives has started with the Reablement, Home First and Reviews teams. Neighbourhood Locality Managers have been linked to these integrated teams who meet weekly to discuss potential and actual cases. Initial indicators are that this is working well.

### **FINANCIAL ABUSE CAMPAIGN**

Financial abuse is the third highest category of abuse affecting adults with care and support needs both in Blackburn with Darwen and across England. In November, BBC Radio Lancashire broadcasted a feature on financial abuse and a local resident who had been a victim of financial abuse spoke about how it had impacted on her and her family. She also shared her experience of the support she had received from the Adults Safeguarding Team and the Safeguarding Development Manager informed listeners about the prevalence and impact of financial abuse locally.

Following the show a number of listeners completed an on-line survey about their experiences of financial abuse and the Pan Lancashire financial Abuse Group will use the feedback to influence policies and direction.

## **SHARED LIVES**

The Shared Lives scheme continues to grow with five more carers approved to support vulnerable adults in the home of the carer. The scheme enables care and support to be provided in a different setting to the family home or the supported accommodation in which the vulnerable adult usually lives. There are currently 21 long term carers with 2 of these offering day support and respite care as well. A further 4 carers provide a mix of day support and respite.

As part of the ongoing awareness campaign to promote the benefits of Shared Lives and recruit more carers, the service is exploring social media opportunities.

## **HOME FIRST SERVICE**

Home First is a community-based service that provides assessment and interventions to people identified by hospital trusted assessors. The 'discharge to assess' model is used to support faster recovery from illness, support timely discharge from hospital and maximise independent living. Early qualitative and quantitative data shows that the team is supporting hospital flow and enhancing lives.



## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION**

**COUNCILLOR: PHIL RILEY**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: IAN RICHARDSON  
DATE: 22 MARCH 2018**

### **LANESIDE CPO**

Despite intensive negotiations with the owner to bring the property back into use, it remains an eyesore and a target for anti-social behaviour. Approval has now been received to proceed to make a CPO for the disused building and land and the report is to be published on Friday 16th March 2018. It is anticipated that the CPO will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing and Communities by June 2018. If any objections to the CPO are received, this may cause a public local inquiry to be held.

### **HOUSING COMPLETIONS 2017/18**

The Council can report that the expected housing completions for the year ending 2017/18 are circa 430. This comprises all new build, affordable housing, long term conversions from empty homes and residential conversions. Our affordable housing delivery is expected to be 120 new homes, accounting for around 28% of all completions and exceeds the Council's planned target of 20%. Housing completions are now at the highest in Blackburn with Darwen for over 15 years. The Council can also report that planned Section 106 infrastructure contributions to be received now exceed over £5m. The Council will release a full report over the summer detailing a summary of all contributions and the committed or planned expenditure areas.

### **LAND RELEASE FUND**

Blackburn with Darwen Council has been successfully awarded £737,000 under the Government's Housing Land Release Fund to help bring brownfield sites in the borough forward for development. £32,000 was awarded for the Newfield Development Area and £35,000 for Fishmoor Drive, both in the SE Blackburn Housing Zone, and £670,000 for the Griffin Regeneration Site. This funding is for infrastructure works including site access and mains services, site surveys and remediation works to deal with poor ground conditions and remove any contamination.

The application was made by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council as part of Lancashire's One Public Estate round 6 funding submission. The Council acts as lead authority for the Lancashire One Public Estate partnership which submitted Land Release Fund bids on behalf of several local authorities in the county.

## **WINTER MAINTENANCE UPDATE**

The winter season so far has been challenging through an early onset of a cold period and then with a cold snap in late February along with a heavy snowfall on 8th March 2018.

The grit bin refills have continued to take place when resource has permitted in order to gain access to salt stock in over 400 locations. Our salt barn has had an estimated 5,000 tonnes worth of salt use this season alone, which is over and above a normal winter season which would usually see around 3,500 tonnes worth of use. The barn itself holds around 2,500 tonnes.

A service review of the 17/18 season will commence during April and put in place additional measures for resilience into the 18/19 season.

## **BwD ROADS**

The Councils Highways Facebook page continues to grow with the number of followers steadily rising since the relaunch on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 to over 15,000.

User reviews consistently rate the page with a 5 star rating, and the feedback from members of the public highlights the page as their first stop for information relating to Highways in Blackburn with Darwen.

	01/09/16 – 28/02/17	01/09/17 – 28/02/18	% Increase
<b>Impressions</b>	1,044,989	4,336,034	414%
<b>Engagements</b>	8,288	37,404	451%
<b>Clicks</b>	1,653	5,374	325%
<b>Likes</b>	584	3,445	589%
<b>Video Views</b>	32,000	189,000	590%

Snapchat Channel was also launched on 01/01/18 - featuring Highways related information and has over 100 followers currently.

The recent snowfall in Blackburn with Darwen led to 643,920 people accessing the information over a three day period, with 10,207 likes, comments or shares. This also features a number of videos to show CCTV imagery of the conditions on the road network, which attracted 159,000 views.

All of the statistics have been through organic growth; none of our content has been boosted by paid for services.

## **ALASKA STREET UPDATE**

Council has appointed Places for People as preferred developer for an all affordable housing scheme at Alaska Street in Blackburn. The scheme further strengthens the commitment of the Council and PFP to the area following the completion of the Infirmary Waterside development by PFP. Proposals will be submitted by PFP in March which will show a development of 73 dwellings with a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bed homes in addition to a small number of bungalows. The development will be the first affordable scheme developed by



PFP using their modular housing product manufactured by their in-house company Modularwise.

## **DARWEN MARKET AND MARKET SQUARE UPDATE**

Market traders in the Market Hall are reporting improved footfall and optimism for the future as new stalls are created for businesses relocating into them from the Annex building. By the end of March, up to 6 businesses will have moved into new and improved pitches in the Market Hall as opportunities become available for new traders in the Market Annex with a Craft Ale Bar already signed up. A regular fresh fish offer every Friday is now trading outside the market entrance and opportunities for new businesses to try out ideas to encourage entrepreneurship as well as events and activities to attract more footfall and new customers will be available.

The detailed design has been completed for the Market Square improvements and a contractor will be appointed in April ahead of a May 2018 start on site. Early works will be planned to ensure very little disruption to Darwen Music Live weekend with the project completed in time for the Christmas trading period. More customer and business awareness sessions have been taking place in the markets and the detailed proposals shared via social media and the Council's website. Overall, feedback has been very positive with residents, market traders and local businesses excited at the opportunities the space will open up for the town centre once complete. Plans to support businesses and encourage customers to keep shopping and visiting the centre during the works will be implemented and include pop up markets, town centre performances and other activities programmed into the Market Annex. An artist with international profile has been appointed very recently to the scheme and will begin consultation with the community from April.



## **NUMBERS OF CHILDREN IN CARE & CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE INFORMATION**

Recent regional analysis and national publicity has pointed to increasing demand pressures on children's services. The North West region and the North generally has seen rising numbers of children in care over the past 12 months, especially children and young people in older age groups with very complex social and behavioural issues. Blackburn with Darwen has moved towards the regional norm with a marked rise in the number of children in care and the number placed in the most costly residential placements.

The number of cases open to Children's Social Care has risen through the autumn and winter and currently stands at 1669. The number of Children in Care is 385: 20 higher than the equivalent period 12 months ago. There has been a fall in the number of children subject to child protection plans – down to 274 having been as high as 370 during the late Spring 2017. Over 500 children are being supported by Early Help services, 18 children have been adopted since April 2017 and 24 children are currently placed in adoptive placements.

## **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ACTIVITIES**

To celebrate International Women's Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March, the Children's Services Disability Service, Appletrees Hub and Parents in Partnership hosted a pamper event at Appletrees offering treatments to mothers and female carers including henna painting, threading, makeup, massage, nail painting and hairstyling. Local agencies including Refresh, the WISH centre, Carers Service and MIND joined in with the celebrations and promoted the range services they offer to encourage participation.

Across the Children's Centre network, mums, grandmothers and female carers enjoyed spending time with their babies and children through interactive craft and play sessions with an emphasis on celebrating how important they are to each other. The day was also an opportunity to share a wealth of information on topics such as Positive Mind courses, flexible childcare options, advice on how to get back into work and healthy weight.

## **FOSTER CARERS THANK YOU**

A number of retiring and long serving foster carers have been recognised for their dedication to the children and young people that they have fostered over many years. I presented certificates and flowers to the following retiring foster carers at a ceremony at the Enterprise Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> March: Audrey and Fred Wearing who fostered over 100 children over a 50 year period; Arlene and Barry Pickup who made a difference to the lives of 76 children over 36 years; Valda and Tony Creech who supported 24 children over 16 years; Margaret and John Bromage who fostered 17 children over 13 years and Sandra and Bill Murray who cared for 15 children over 14 years.

Additionally four foster carer families were recognised for their 10 year long service award and I presented £50 Mall vouchers to Christine Henderson, Kay and Nigel Margerison, Paula and Michael Chambers and Beverley Barber.

Thank you to all these carers for the loving care and support shown to 311 Blackburn with Darwen babies, children and young people.

## **GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARDS 2018**

It was fantastic to see two supporters of Children's Services receive Good Neighbour Awards in February. Kat Zaman picked up an award for the Summer Lunchbox campaign which provided over 17,000 free packed lunches to all children and families across the borough via the charity project Kingdom Outreach. Another deserving winner was Phil Boulding who set up the Secret Santa not for profit organisation which attracted donations and raised enough money to provide 700 new Christmas gift bundles to children and young people in need across the borough. Congratulations to both very worthy winners!

## **INVESTING IN CHILDREN ACCREDITATION SUCCESS**

The Engage service and the WISH Centre are both celebrating having retained their Investing in Children Membership accreditation for another year. The Award recognises active inclusion and dialogue with children and young people to bring about change. For both applications the young people were interviewed about how they felt about the services they received before the decision to award was made. The evaluation report for Engage concluded that *"this dedicated team of people provide a vital service to young people in a way that respects their human rights to be involved in the decisions affecting their lives"*.

For the WISH centre this is a double celebration as the centre is this year marking its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of supporting men, women and children who are affected by domestic violence or domestic abuse. The celebrations will kick start with a launch event at Radio Lancashire on International Women's Day and include an exhibition to highlight their 30 year journey.

Both Engage and WISH help to stem the growing pressures on Childrens Services and in recent months a number of additional new programmes have been introduced to also provide early help for families. These are the Caring Dads Programme which provides opportunities for fathers in the borough to make positive changes in their relationship with their children and the mother of their children, and the Recurrent Care Proceedings programme which offers support to parents post care proceedings to prevent similar situations from recurring.

## **DISABILITY INFORMATION DAY**

The 9th annual Blackburn with Darwen Disability Information Day took place at Ewood Park on 15<sup>th</sup> March to raise awareness of the range of services, organisations, groups and leisure opportunities available to children and young people and adults with disabilities in the borough, and their families and carers. More than 60 organisations were invited to take part and showcase what they have to offer. This year the event took place in term time to attract more parents and carers following feedback from the previous year.

## **OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES UPDATE**

The Children's Services post inspection action plan has been submitted to Ofsted in line with their inspection framework and will continue to be monitored by Ofsted. Progress against the action plan will be overseen by the Children's Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group.

## **FOSTERING RECRUITMENT RADIO CAMPAIGNS**

The Fostering Service has secured free air time on a new radio station based in the Ribble Valley, 'Ribble FM'. The station is planning a show on fostering and a Blackburn with Darwen carer and a social worker will talk about the positive impact that fostering with the council has had on the children and young people supported. The service has also partnered with radio station 2BR to promote the Fostering Service during Foster Care Fortnight in May to raise the profile of fostering.

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT**

**COUNCILLOR JIM SMITH**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN  
DATE: 22 MARCH 2018**

### **ROGUE BUILDER SENTENCED TO 19 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT**

A rogue builder who has previous convictions for similar crimes, operating from addresses in Cavendish Street, Darwen and Albert Street, Bolton has recently been prosecuted at Preston Crown Court.

The prosecution was brought by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Trading Standards for three counts of fraudulent trading under section 9 of the Fraud Act 2006 – one of which was committed whilst he was on bail awaiting trial for similar offences. The prosecution case in relation to the first two counts against the builder was that he took payments from two victims totaling £38,000 before he completed the works but then failed to complete them, leaving one premises in a dangerous condition and the other uninhabitable.

The court was informed that the first victim paid £20,000 to do extensive work to a shop premise in Darwen. The builder then demolished the extension at the back of the shop leaving all the debris and bricks in the footings, erected scaffolding to the front and did a small amount of work on the roof but then did nothing else, leaving the shop in a dangerous condition. The second victim borrowed £18,000 for extensive work to their ‘forever home’, which was never completed. The builder failed to deliver and install windows, doors, patio doors, flooring and a bathroom. The court was told the family was left “virtually homeless” as he left the house uninhabitable and that the family had been left devastated. The builder was sentenced to 19 months and 18 months for each count, to be served concurrently.

For the third count against him, the court was informed that the builder failed to pay a roofing contractor to whom he had subcontracted some roofing work. He had given the roofer three cheques in order to try to pay a debt of £1,500 to him on sequential dates, all of which were dishonoured. For this he was sentenced to an additional 12 months to be served concurrently.

### **GARDEN WASTE**

The garden waste subscription service has seen just over 10,000 households benefit from the “early bird” discounted rate of £20 for the subscription. With a further 1,500 having signed up since at the £25 rate.

Householders can sign up to the subscription scheme online, or over the telephone via the councils contact centre, or with cash/cheque payments accepted at the libraries across the borough and also at Davyfield Road depot.

The first collection weekend for the service was impacted upon by the weather, with the snow meaning collections scheduled for Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March being postponed, with residents having a collection added to the end of their collection schedule in November. The collections scheduled for Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March went ahead as planned.

## **LITTER AND DOG FOULING ENFORCEMENT**

Kingdom Services Group continue to respond to those seen dropping litter and leaving dog fouling, with since the start of the initiative in October 2017, some 3104 fixed penalty notices issued, with a payment rate of 64%, which is considered in the early stages of a contract by Kingdom Services, to be a good rate. The first prosecutions are now with Legal Services and once convictions are publicised; the payment rate is expected to increase.

Since the launch 16 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for dog fouling, and the Team is now running a targeted dog-fouling patrol one day a week, with both uniformed and non-uniformed officers using intelligence received from the community, in order to target problem areas.

## **PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER**

To help tackle the problem of dog fouling, the council has introduced a new Public Space Protection Order requiring owners to remove dog faeces; to keep dogs on leads in cemeteries and for dogs to be excluded from play areas.

If any of the conditions are breached, a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100 can be issued and failure to pay, may lead to prosecution and being liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding Level 3 (currently £1,000) on the standard scale.

## **YOUR CALL CLEAN UP VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY**

Although several clean up events were cancelled due to the bad weather in early March, and despite the recent downturn in event numbers, several things are giving cause for optimism :-

- *Lancashire Volunteer Portal (LVP)* – residents are signing up in increasing numbers to be volunteer litter pickers, recording their hours, locations and engaging with the Council. To date approximately 80-people have signed up (to add to the over 350 people already signed up to the Council prior to LVP coming on stream). This is a tremendous resource with a great deal of potential and Your Call has benefitted from being on board from its inception
- *Resident leads on social media* site – Keep Darwen Tidy, a new group on Facebook, has done some great work to mobilise and motivate local people to action, with Environment officers actively engaged to support the individuals involved

- *BT Corporate volunteer programme* – Officers have had useful conversations with the 100 strong local office at BT, to engage staff on volunteer initiatives, with only the bad weather preventing the first event in Corporation Park, which was shrub clearance, from going ahead. All BT staff can spend 3 working days per annum taking part in local volunteer initiatives, as part of their corporate social responsibility programme.
- *Costing Your Call volunteer hours* – using a widely accepted methodology of costing volunteer time, shows that from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to the end of January 2018, Your Call clean up volunteers contributed approximately £45,000 of volunteer time, to the benefit of their neighbourhoods.





# Year Planner 2018-2019

Please note that all meeting dates are subject to change

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018

## YEAR PLANNER 2018

	May	June	July	August	September	October
Monday						1
Tuesday	1 <b>DTC</b>					2 <b>DTC SACRE</b>
Wednesday	2			1		3
Thursday	3 Election			2		4 <b>CF</b>
Friday	4 Election Count	1 Half Term Ends		3		5
Saturday	5	2		4	1	6
Sunday	6	3	1	5	2	7
Monday	7 May Day BH	4 Schools Reopen	2	6	3 <b>PEOPLE OSC</b> Schools Reopen	8
Tuesday	8 <b>GLSC</b>	5 <b>DTC SACRE</b>	3 <b>DTC</b>	7 <b>DTC</b>	4 <b>DTC</b>	9 <b>GLSC</b>
Wednesday	9	6	4	8	5	10
Thursday	10	7	5 <b>SC</b>	9 <b>EB</b>	6	11 <b>EB</b>
Friday	11	8	6	10	7	12
Saturday	12	9	7	11	8	13
Sunday	13	10	8	12	9 Rosh HaShannah	14
Monday	14 New Member Induction	11 <b>PEOPLE OSC</b>	9	13	10 <b>PLACE OSC</b>	15
Tuesday	15 Ramadan starts	12 <b>GLSC</b>	10 <b>GLSC</b>	14 <b>GLSC</b>	11 <b>GLSC</b>	16 <b>LASC AUD</b>
Wednesday	16	13	11	15	12	17 <b>CI/T</b>
Thursday	17 <b>AC</b>	14 <b>EB</b>	12 <b>EB</b>	16 <b>PH</b>	13 <b>EB</b>	18 <b>PH</b>
Friday	18	15 Eid al Fitr	13	17	14	19 School Closes – Half Term
Saturday	19	16	14	18	15	20
Sunday	20 Civic Sunday	17	15	19	16	21
Monday	21	18 <b>PLACE OSC</b>	16	20	17	22 Half Term Starts
Tuesday	22	19 <b>LASC</b> <b>HWB</b>	17	21 <b>LASC</b>	18	23
Wednesday	23	20 <b>CI/T</b>	18 <b>CI/T</b>	22 <b>CI/T</b> Eid al Adha	19 <b>CI/T</b> Yom Kippur	24
Thursday	24 <b>PH</b>	21 <b>PH</b>	19 <b>PH</b>	23	20 <b>PH</b>	25 <b>SC</b>
Friday	25 School Closes – Half Term	22	20 School Closes – Summer Holidays	24	21	26 Half Term Ends
Saturday	26	23	21	25	22	27
Sunday	27	24	22	26	23	28
Monday	28 Spring Bank BH Half Term Starts	25 <b>RESOURCES OSC</b>	23 Summer Holidays Start	27 August BH	24 <b>RESOURCES OSC</b>	29 Schools Reopen
Tuesday	29	26	24 <b>AUD</b>	28	25 <b>HWB</b>	30 <b>L</b>
Wednesday	30	27	25 <b>L</b>	29	26	31
Thursday	31	28	26 <b>CF</b>	30	27	
Friday		29	27	31 Summer Holidays End	28	
Saturday		30	28		29	
Sunday			29		30	
Monday			30	Page 58 of 60		
Tuesday			31			

## YEAR PLANNER 2018/2019

	November	December	January	February	March	April
Monday						1
Tuesday			1 New Years Day			2 <b>DTC</b>
Wednesday			2			3
Thursday	1		3			4
Friday	2		4	1	1	5 Schools Close - Easter
Saturday	3	1	5	2	2	6
Sunday	4	2	6	3	3	7
Monday	5	3 <b>PEOPLE OSC</b>	7 Schools Reopen	4	4 <b>PEOPLE OSC</b>	8 Easter Holiday Start
Tuesday	6 <b>DTC</b>	4 <b>DTC</b>	8 <b>GLSC DTC</b>	5 <b>DTC SACRE</b>	5 <b>DTC HWB</b>	9 <b>GLSC</b>
Wednesday	7 Diwali	5	9 <b>SC</b>	6	6 Ash Wednesday	10
Thursday	8 <b>EB</b>	6 <b>PC</b>	10 <b>EB</b>	7	7	11 <b>EB</b>
Friday	9	7	11	8	8	12
Saturday	10	8	12	9	9	13
Sunday	11 Remembrance Sunday	9	13	10	10	14
Monday	12	10 <b>PLACE OSC</b>	14	11	11 <b>PLACE OSC</b>	15
Tuesday	13 <b>GLSC</b>	11 <b>GLSC HWB</b>	15 <b>AUD</b>	12 <b>GLSC</b>	12 <b>GLSC</b>	16 <b>LASC AUD</b>
Wednesday	14	12	16 <b>CI/T</b>	13	13	17
Thursday	15 <b>PH</b>	13 <b>EB</b>	17 <b>PH</b>	14 <b>EB</b>	14 <b>EB</b>	18 <b>PH</b>
Friday	16	14	18	15 School Closes – Half Term	15	19 Good Friday BH Easter Holidays End
Saturday	17	15	19	16	16	20
Sunday	18	16	20	17	17	21 Easter Sunday
Monday	19	17 <b>RESOURCES OSC</b>	21	18 Half Term Starts	18 <b>SC</b>	22 Easter Monday BH
Tuesday	20	18 <b>LASC</b>	22	19 <b>LASC</b>	19	23 Schools Reopen
Wednesday	21 <b>CI/T</b>	19 <b>CI/T</b>	23 <b>L CI/T</b>	20 <b>CI/T</b>	20 <b>CI/T</b>	24 <b>L CI/T</b>
Thursday	22	20 <b>PH</b>	24 <b>CF</b>	21 <b>PH</b>	21 <b>PH</b>	25
Friday	23	21 School Closes – Christmas	25	22 Half Term Ends	22	26
Saturday	24	22	26	23	23	27
Sunday	25	23	27	24	24	28
Monday	26	24 Christmas Eve	28	25 <b>FC</b> Schools Reopen	25 <b>RESOURCES OSC</b>	29
Tuesday	27	25 Christmas Day	29	26	26	30
Wednesday	28	26 Boxing Day	30	27	27	
Thursday	29	27	31	28	28 <b>CF</b>	
Friday	30	28			29	
Saturday		29			30	
Sunday		30			31	
Monday		31 New Years Eve				
Tuesday						
Wednesday						

## YEAR PLANNER 2019

	May	June	KEY
Monday			<b>Council, Executive and Council Committee Meetings</b>
Tuesday			<b>AC</b> – Annual Council 6.00 pm
Wednesday	1		<b>FC</b> – Finance Council 6.00 pm
Thursday	2 Elections		<b>CF</b> – Council Forum 6.00 pm
Friday	3 Election Count		<b>PC</b> – Policy Council 6.00 pm
Saturday	4	1	<b>EB</b> – Executive Board 6.00 pm
Sunday	5	2	<b>PH</b> – Planning & Highways Committee 6.30 pm
Monday	6 May Day Ramadan	3 <b>PEOPLE OSC</b> Schools Reopen	<b>AUD</b> – Audit and Governance Committee 5.45 pm
Tuesday	7 <b>DTC</b>	4 <b>DTC SACRE</b> Eid al Fitr	<b>SC</b> – Standards Committee 6.00 pm
Wednesday	8	5	<b>LASC</b> – Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee & <b>GLSC</b> General Licensing Sub Committee 6.00 pm
Thursday	9	6	<b>L</b> – Licensing Committee 6.00 pm
Friday	10	7	<b>SACRE</b> - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education 9.00 am
Saturday	11	8	
Sunday	12	9	
Monday	13	10 <b>PLACE OSC</b>	
Tuesday	14 <b>GLSC</b>	11 <b>GLSC</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committees</b>
Wednesday	15	12	<b>PEOPLE OSC</b> – People Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6.00 pm
Thursday	16 <b>AC</b>	13 <b>EB</b>	<b>PLACE OSC</b> – Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6.00 pm
Friday	17	14	<b>RESOURCES OSC</b> – Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6.00 pm
Saturday	18	15	<b>CI/T</b> – <u>provisional</u> dates assigned for Call Ins
Sunday	19 Civic Sunday	16	
Monday	20	17	
Tuesday	21	18 <b>LASC</b> <b>HWB</b>	
Wednesday	22	19 <b>CI/T</b>	<b>Partnership Meetings:</b>
Thursday	23 <b>PH</b>	20 <b>PH</b>	<b>LSP Board</b> – Local Strategic Partnership Board 5.30 pm
Friday	24 School Closes – Half Term	21	<b>HWB</b> – Health & Wellbeing Board 5.30 pm
Saturday	25	22	
Sunday	26	23	
Monday	27 Spring Bank Holiday	24 <b>RESOURCES OSC</b>	
Tuesday	28	25	<b>Other Meetings: These Meetings are open to the Public</b>
Wednesday	29	26	<b>DTC</b> Darwen Town Council 7.00 pm
Thursday	30	27	
Friday	31 Half Term Ends	28	
Saturday		29	<b>Other:</b>
Sunday		30	BH – Bank Holiday      Blackburn with Darwen School Holidays