

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN

Date: 5th October 2017

Local Government Boundary Commission update

We have now received the final report on the new ward boundaries from the Local Government Boundary Commission. This will reduce the current number of 23 wards and 64 councillors to 17 wards and 51 councillors. This will be implemented by next May as we prepare for all out elections in May 2018.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to this difficult task and I look forward to the local election in May 2018. The full report can be found via <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/8907>.

Boundary Commission for England update on Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Review

Members may be aware of the upcoming 2018 Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Review. The Boundary Commission will be publishing its revised proposals for new constituency boundaries on 17th October. The consultation will run for eight weeks until 11th December and this will be the last opportunity to contribute views to the Commission before recommendations are made to Parliament.

The Boundary Commission are seeking views from as many citizens as possible, however there will be no public hearings. Information on the proposals and how to contribute will be on their website from 17th October and we will be publishing this on our own council website soon.

Health and Care

As I outlined at the last Council Forum when discussing health and care changes, I have invited representatives from the Together A Healthier Future programme to come and update councillors on where the programme is up to and how it fits in with the wider regional changes as part of the Lancashire and South Cumbria Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP).

As councillors will be aware, there have been several public information and engagement sessions held in Blackburn with Darwen and part of the briefing will focus on what residents have been saying.

The briefing will be delivered by Graham Burgess, Chair of Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group and Dionne Standbridge, Together A Healthier Future's Programme Director.

It will take place on Wednesday, October 11, 5.30pm to 6.30pm in the Council Chamber. I would encourage councillors to make every effort to attend as it is important they are fully up to speed with health and care changes.

Social Integration

Promoting and supporting social integration is a key priority for this Council. I believe the most valuable thing we can do as a Council is to continue to create opportunities for people to interact with one another and as a result break down barriers.

This includes everything from helping schools to create successful partnerships, to supporting high quality events and major cultural activities, to running sports and leisure and youth facilities. Since July's Council Forum, there have been many examples across the Borough and with our partners to showcase social integration. For example, Heritage Open Days, the summer National Citizen Service programme which brought young people together through community and social action, community fun days, intergenerational and older people celebrations events.

I value the importance of social integration, and am aware that it cannot and should not be delivered in isolation. I encourage everyone to recognise social integration as their business, and support the Council and its partnership approach.

As part of our ongoing efforts, a Borough-wide draft social integration strategy has been developed and is available to access at <http://bit.ly/bwd-dsis>

Feedback and contributions received on the draft strategy will inform the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) approach and the council's strategic priorities at Policy Council 2017.

Blackburn with Darwen Council's 20th Anniversary

In April 2018 it will be the 20th anniversary of Blackburn with Darwen Council becoming a unitary authority.

We will be taking the opportunity to reflect on our achievements, celebrate the various milestones and focus on the highlights from the past two decades. We can showcase the many projects and events which people have put so much effort into and which have made a difference to the communities we serve.

Planning for the anniversary has already started and I would like to see as many people as possible get involved as the date approaches.

Fairer Energy partnership

To help support our residents to save money on their energy bills, we are working on becoming partners alongside Preston City Council and Cheshire East Council to offer our residents access to a new low cost energy tariff.

The not-for-profit partnership has been developed under the brand Fairerpower Red Rose. Once launched, residents will be able to switch to the tariff, supplied by the company OVO, and be guaranteed a fairer and simpler energy tariff, supported by high levels of customer service.

The council with its partners will promote this to residents and I will provide further details on this soon.