

**Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee 9th July
2014**

**Work of Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Customer
Services, Councillor Yusuf Jan-Virmani**

Introduction

The Portfolio is quite broad and diverse therefore it isn't as simple as being able to identify 5 key priorities above anything else. Therefore I have tried to bring to Members attention key priorities by service and then sought to highlight which I think are key in bold and italics. For ease of reference we have pulled out the key priorities and included a summary at the head of this briefing paper.

It is important to note some over-riding priorities such as the need to:

- Continue with the downsizing programme in line with Council's budget reductions.
- Continue to modernise and improve the efficiency and accessibility of our services.
- Continue to manage the Council through a difficult period of Welfare reforms and continued period of austerity.

Summary of Priorities

1. Promote housing growth and bringing empty properties back into use.
2. Effective regulation of the private rented sector through selective licensing and regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation.
3. Deliver Troubled Families contract and effect integration with the 'Transforming Lives' Agenda.
4. Promote behaviour change through the Your Call agenda, including targeting gateways in 2014/15.
5. Modernisation of Customer service contact through digital by default.
6. Delivery of change through Welfare Reform.
7. Address impact of environmental crime and hygiene on neighbourhoods.
8. Effective use of PCSOs in collaboration with Constabulary to affect a better approach to 'Street Scene'.
9. Strategic role of CCTV in helping manage crime and disorder.

Key Risks

1. Viability of developments for housing growth and bringing empty properties back into use in the absence of any Government Support for capital investment.
2. Welfare Reform pressures, budgetary constraints and partner engagement to modernise customer services to achieve transformation.
3. The role of Neighbourhood services in assisting the achievement of early intervention and integrated neighbourhood delivery of 'Transforming Lives'.
4. Risks to not being able to achieve effective Licensing of private rented properties, including regulation of HMOs.

Housing

- 1. Completion of our Strategic Housing Market Assessment and develop projects for new market and affordable housing on a range of sites. Overall we will deliver 250 new properties in support of housing growth including delivery of new developments for older and vulnerable people including extra care. We will also continue to build on the success of the empty homes strategy with emphasis on bring more vacant properties back into use.**
- 2. Housing Standards we will deliver the Selective Licensing schemes for Griffin and assess re-designation of schemes in Darwen and Infirmary. Invest in early intervention work to ensure higher housing standards for HMOs will also be enforced and rogue landlords targeted for housing and other enforcement.**
3. Formation of a partnership with Public Health and Lancashire Public Health and Local Authorities to deliver further home energy efficiency measures under the Energy Company Obligation and Green Deal and address fuel poverty at local level.
4. Production of an Integrated Homelessness Strategy mobilising a wide range of health, housing, social care, and voluntary sector support agencies to prevent homelessness in response to pressures on housing needs from welfare reform and economic pressures.
5. Decent and Safe Homes service is forging a close partnership with the voluntary sector including Care Network to improve customer access

and service delivery and attract external funding to help meet financial pressures. There will be a new Urgent Repairs Grant targeted at the most vulnerable whose health is affected by the worst housing conditions and there will be closer working with DFG delivery. Vulnerable people will be targeted for professional referral via Your Support Your Choice, and GPs (starting with a pilot at Bentham Road Surgery).

Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Community Safety

- 1. Continuing to deliver on Troubled Families programme and maximise PBR. Continue to ensure TF is integrated and influences the Transforming Lives agenda**
2. Securing new National Careers Service Contract - delivering for new prime contractor, Manchester Economic Solutions – new look contract
- 3. Continuing to drive the Your Call agenda, maintaining levels of activity in Clean Ups and extending reach of Your Call to include target areas (eg Infirmary) and gateways**
- 4. Delivering Skills Funding Agency contract (3000 learners) – prime aim to equip people with the skills and support they need to access work. Also ensuring the provision compliments and adds value to Transforming Lives Agenda and Universal Credit roll out**
5. Balancing the conflicting demands on the Community Safety team and driving the activity of the CSP to ensure it adds value and impacts on reductions in crime and ASB.
- 6. Work closely with Environment Portfolio to ensure Council is getting best value from its investment in PCSOs. To look at ways of smarter working and authorisation for enforcement at a 'Streetscene' level.**
- 7. To look at the role of CCTV more strategically as an effective crime and disorder management tool.**
8. To support the work of the Council in delivering effective early intervention support for domestic violence, repeat offending, substance abuse, support for operations targeting HMOs and ASB.
9. To ensure effective partnerships and collaboration with the Police and the Police Crime Commissioners Office.

Customer Services

- 1. Ensure efficient and effective delivery of Customer services including modernisation of customer access through various media such as the**

web, internet, phone and self service. This to allow greater transition towards a paperless environment encouraging all services to have forms digitised and available as the default service.

- 2. To support the Council through the Government's welfare reform programme, providing frontline support and services for the most needy in terms of housing and council tax benefit and support.**
3. To provide advice and support to those in crisis. Working closely with the third sector to ensure appropriate service level agreements for the provision of essential welfare rights and debt counselling Advice.

Public Protection

1. To work strategically to target and enforce standards for trade, consumer protection, food law, health and safety.
2. To promote targeted work in partnership with Public Health to reduce incidences of underage sales of tobacco and alcohol.
- 3. To work closely with Environment Portfolio to address community hygiene and environmental crime. Using Environmental health and housing standards powers to effect improvement of inner urban terraced areas.**
4. To continue to work closely with health, environment and the Police on managing risks of SHISHA bars.

Further information please contact Sayyed Osman, Director EHN Dept, Portfolio lead Director for NHCS.

