

Council Forum

Thursday, 3rd October, 2019

6.00 pm

Council Chamber, Blackburn Town Hall

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain**
3. **Minutes Of The Previous Meeting**
Minutes July 2019 5 - 10
4. **Declarations of Interest**
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM 11
5. **Mayoral Communications**
6. **Council Forum**
To consider questions from members of the public received under Procedure Rule 12
7. **To consider Motions submitted under Procedure Rule 12**
One Motion has been submitted as follows:

Human Rights Violation in Kashmir

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council is deeply concerned that the Indian Government has revoked Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution.

This decision is in violation of United Nation Security Council Resolution 47.

There is a huge concern among the BwD BME Community and also many people from Indigenous community about the ongoing human rights violation in Kashmir.

In occupied Kashmir, the imposition of a strict curfew, the detention of the entire political leadership, large- scale

arrests of thousands of innocent Kashmiris coupled with the extremely harsh suppression of all human rights and a freeze of land line, mobile and internet communications is fast leading to a major humanitarian crisis for more than 8million people. The supply of food, medicine and other necessities of life are also deliberately withheld.

Since 5th August India has transformed Jammu and Kashmir into the largest prison on the Planet.

The Indian Government has moved 18,000 troops into Kashmir in addition to the existing 700,000 occupational armed forces. They use Cluster ammunition, pellet guns and heavy artillery in flagrant disregard of the fundamental norms of International humanitarian law.

The Kashmiri people in the occupied territory have been waiting for seven decades for their right of self-determination and now they face grave threats to their lives from a murderous, misogynistic and xenophobic regime.

The Council:

- a) Request the Chief Executive to write to the both MPs of Blackburn with Darwen requesting them to ask the Government to make representation to all whom they can to demand India to reverse the revocation of Articles 370 and 35A and to raise with the Foreign Office the need to work for the implementation of UN Resolution 47 on Kashmir and push for a diplomatic solution.

Also

- b) that the Chief Executive write to Dominic Raab the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs - to
 - i) Urge the Indian government to immediately restore power and to lift all communications and media blackouts and the draconian curfew conditions and to allow the people of Kashmir to have immediate access to food and medicine.
 - ii) To demand that all political leaders are freed and all obligations under the United Nations Security Council Resolutions and various human rights instruments restored as required by international law.
 - iii) To request that the International Human Rights Observers Group in Kashmir, including Amnesty

International, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Commission are allowed access again and that the Indian armed forces immediately cease unlawful operations in Kashmir.

Mover- Councillor Mustafa Desai

Seconded – Councillor Andy Kay

8.	Hate Crime Update	
	Hate Crime Update	12 - 15
9.	Updates from other Committees	
	Overview and Scrutiny Report	16 - 19
	The Chairs of the Policy and Resources, PLACE AND PEOPLE Overview and Scrutiny Committees will update Council Forum on the work of their Committees.	
10.	Reports of the Executive Members with Portfolios:	
10.1	Leader	
	Leader	20 - 23
10.2	Growth & Development	
	Growth & Development	24 - 26
10.3	Children, Young People & Education	
	CS&YP	27 - 29
10.4	Environmental Services	
	ENV SERVICES	30 - 31
10.5	Public Health & Wellbeing	
	Public Health Wellbeing Council Forum Report 03.10.19	32 - 35
10.6	Adult Services & Prevention	
	AS&P	36 - 37
10.7	Digital & Customer Services	
	D&CS	38 - 39
10.8	Finance & Governance	
	F&G	40 - 41
11.	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.

Date Published: Wednesday, 25 September 2019
Denise Park, Chief Executive

COUNCIL FORUM **Thursday, 18 July 2019**

PRESENT –*The Mayor Councillor Jim Shorrock (in the Chair), Councillors; Afzal; Akhtar P; Batan; Bateson; Browne, Brookfield; Casey; Connor; Daley, Davies; Desai, Fazal; Floyd; Gee; Groves; Hardman; Harling; Hussain I; Hussain M; Hussain S; Jan-Virmani; Kay; Khan M; Khonat; Liddle; Mahmood Q; Marrow; McGurk; Oates; Patel; Pearson; Rawat; Riley; Salton; Sidat; Slater Jo; Smith D; Smith J; Talbot and Whittle.*

RESOLUTIONS

12 Welcome and Apologies

Following the reading of the notice convening the meeting by the Chief Executive, the Mayor welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors Hussain Akhtar, Julie Gunn, Zamir Khan, Pat McFall, Colin Rigby, Jean Rigby, Jacqueline Slater, Julie Slater, Neil Slater and Brian Taylor.

13 Minutes Of The Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - The Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 16th May 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

14 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

15 Mayoral Communications

The Mayor updated Council Forum on recent events and activities and welcomed back returning Councillors Paul Browne and Mustafa Desai, as well as welcoming new Councillor Zainab Rawat. The Mayor also requested that all Members behave appropriately in the Council Chamber during his Mayoral Year.

16 Council Forum

One question had been submitted under Procedure Rule 10, from Sarah Jeal as follows:

This is a question for the Lead Member for Children and Education.

I am the mother of a very intelligent, frustrated 18 month old daughter.

I moved up to Blackburn with my husband a few years ago. I also have a 4 year old son who attends Shadsworth Infant School, he started in September after attending Shadsworth Children's Centre from the age of 2.

My son found it very difficult in social situations and was a very shy little boy, with little support network he and his sister are very isolated.

However, my husband's yearly income was below the criteria to qualify for

the free 15 hours a week nursery place. So I enrolled him in Shadsworth Children's Centre. The change in my son was remarkable, he went from shy and withdrawn to a bright and excitable little boy with many friends. This was in September 2016.

However, my daughter who will be 2 in September this year does not qualify for the free 15 hours. My husband's yearly wage has slightly increased in line with the recent national living wage rises. This now means that we are over the criteria to qualify for the free child's place.

My daughter will not be attending nursery until she is 3 although my friends (who does not work) child will be attending when they turn 2 this year. My child will be held back from education because one parent works and earns a low income.

Could the Member for Children and Education explain why as a working family we do not qualify for something that was put in place to encourage employment, that will impact on mine and many others children?

Thank you, please will the Member for Children and Education support me and the other families of this Borough and write to the Secretary of State for both DWP and Education to lobby them to increase the maximum earning limits in line with national minimum wage?

Councillor Maureen Bateson in response advised that she had every sympathy for Mrs Jeal's position, and that it was hoped that assistance could be given. Councillor Bateson referred to the Motion later in the meeting where the benefits freeze would be further discussed and representations to the Government were proposed.

17 To consider Motions submitted under Procedure Rule 12

Two Motions had been received under Procedure Rule 12 as follows:

MOTION 1

Motion to DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

BwDBC notes:

1. Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt around the world. Global temperatures have already increased by 1°C from pre-industrial levels. Atmospheric CO₂ levels are above 400 parts per million (ppm). The latest report from the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in October 2018 gave us 12 years to implement changes to keep global warming to a maximum of 1.5°C in order to avoid widespread drought, food scarcity, heat related deaths and loss of biodiversity including insects and vital food crop pollinators.
2. At present the world is on track to overshoot the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit before 2050. In order to reduce the chance of runaway global warming and limit the effects of climate breakdown, it is imperative that we as a species reduce our CO₂e (carbon equivalent)

emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible.

3. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, and infrastructure to make low carbon living easier and the new norm.
4. Carbon emissions result from both production and consumption.
5. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council has already made some positive progress, but this is not enough. More can and must be done. The Independent Panel on Climate Change in its Oct. 2018 report was very clear that action from all parts of society is necessary and local government has a responsibility to lead the way.
6. Town and city councils around the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and taking action to address this emergency.

BwDBC believes that:

1. All levels of government (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts of climate breakdown. Local councils that recognise this should not wait for their national governments to change their policies.
2. Towns and cities are uniquely placed to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions, as they are in many ways easier to decarbonise than rural areas.
3. The consequences of global temperature rising above 1.5°C are so severe that preventing this from happening must be humanity's number one priority.
4. Bold local climate action can deliver economic and social benefits in terms of new green jobs, economic savings and market opportunities, as well as much improved well-being for Blackburn *with* Darwen residents – for example through reducing fuel poverty and energy bills, encouraging healthy, active travel and improving green spaces and access to nature.

BwDBC decides to:

1. Declare a 'Climate Emergency'.
2. Commit to a target of making Blackburn *with* Darwen carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3 of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol - GHG Protocol establishes comprehensive global standardised frameworks to measure and manage greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from private and public sector operations, value chains and mitigation actions).
3. Request an update report within six months setting out the immediate actions the Council has taken and will take to address this emergency and a plan to measure annual borough-wide progress towards meeting the 2030 target.
4. Work with partners across our towns and across the region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans and drawing on local and global best practice.
5. Actively lobby the Government to provide the additional powers and resources needed to meet the 2030 target.

Proposed by:- Cllr Andy Kay

Seconded by:- Cllr Tasleem Fazal

The Motion was debated and then Members moved to the Vote.

RESOLVED - That the Motion as submitted be carried.

MOTION 2

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council calls upon our Chief Executive to write to the MPs for both of our towns, requesting that they too write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, as well as the Secretary of State for Education to demand an urgent cumulative impact assessment of the austerity programme that has been driven by the Coalition government of 2010-2015 and the Conservative government since 2015.

As a result of the “benefit freeze” many families are unable to qualify for the 15 hours of 2 year olds free child care because the national minimum wage now exceeds the qualifying income level.

In addition to this, our Chief Executive and our MPs must also ask what the Government is going to do to alleviate the increases of poverty, including in work poverty levels now internationally recognised by the UN and others.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council calls for the reversal of the freeze of benefits, and demands an increase to all benefits and eligibility criteria in line with inflation, including the 15 hour offer of childcare for 2 year olds from £16,180 per year, which is the rate set in 2014.

Proposed by Cllr Vicky McGurk

Seconded by Cllr Sylvia Liddle

In moving the Motion, Councillor Vicky McGurk advised that the figure quoted of £16,180 a year should read £16,190.

Members then debated the Motion and a Recorded Vote was proposed and this was agreed, with Members voting as follows:

FOR: Councillors Afzal, Akhtar, Batan, Bateson, Brookfield, Browne, Casey, Davies, Desai, Fazal, Floyd, Groves, Harling, Hussain I, Hussain M, Hussain S, Jan-Virmani, Kay, Khan, Khonat, Liddle, Mahmood, McGurk, Oates, Patel, Rawat, Riley, Sidat, Smith D, Smith J, Talbot, Whittle and the Mayor, Councillor Jim Shorrocks.

AGAINST: Councillors Connor, Gee, Hardman, Marrow, Pearson, Salton, and Slater.

ABSTAIN: Councillor Daley.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be carried.

A report was submitted advising the Council that the Constitution has been updated to reflect changes to the Portfolios and Chief Officer structure of the Council following decisions made throughout 2018/19 and at the Annual Council in May 2019.

Members were asked to note that the Constitution had also been updated by the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer (as appropriate) under their delegated responsibilities to ensure continued compliance with legislation and also where appropriate to improve clarity and ease of reference.

The Pay Policy 2019/20 had now been updated to include Trades Union Facility Time information.

The proposed updated Constitution and Pay Policy Documents would be published and publicly available on the Council's website following the meeting.

RESOLVED – 1) That the revised Constitution be approved, adopted and published on the Council's website;

2) That the updated Pay Policy be noted and published on the Council's website.

19 Councillor Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

Further to the approval of recommendations relating to the introduction of DBS checks for Councillors at the Council March Council Forum meeting, at their meeting in June the Standards Committee received a report from the Monitoring Officer and now recommended the Policy as attached (Appendix A) for approval by the Council Forum. Following approval, a letter and supporting information would then be issued to all elected Members.

The Council Forum in March also resolved that the Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, to express the view that in support of the Code of Conduct for Councillors and the expectations as referenced in the Section 27(2) of the Localism Act 2011, all elected members of Council's should be subject of 'enhanced' disclosure and barring services checks. As at the end of June 2019, the Council had not received a response from the Secretary of State.

RESOLVED: That the DBS Policy as per Appendix A of the report submitted, as recommended by the Standards Committee, be approved.

20 Update from other Committees

Update reports from the Standards Committee and from the Policy and Corporate Resources, PEOPLE and PLACE Overview and Scrutiny Committees were presented by the respective Chairs.

RESOLVED – That the update reports be noted.

21 Reports of the Executive Members with Portfolios:

The Leader and Executive Members presented their update reports to the Council Forum, providing verbal updates as appropriate.

RESOLVED - That the reports of the Leader and Executive Members be noted.

22 To consider any questions received from Members under Procedure Rule 11

No questions had been received from Members under Procedure Rule 11.

Signed at a meeting of the Council Forum
on Thursday, 3 October 2019
(being the ensuing meeting on the Council Forum) 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: **3RD OCTOBER 2019**

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)



REPORT OF:	Leader of Council
TO:	Council Forum
ON:	Thursday 3rd October 2019

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update members and for the Council to confirm that it condemns any form of discrimination or racism and will tackle this to ensure all members of our community are supported and valued.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council:

- condemns any form of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and hate crime unequivocally and supports people of faith as well as non-faith.
- adopts the definitions of Islamophobia and Antisemitism as outlined below.

3. BACKGROUND

Blackburn with Darwen Council is proud of the diversity of the Borough and recognises this as a huge asset.

We have a strong history and track record of promoting cohesion and integration. We have always been united and supported each other in the fight against racism and discrimination in all its forms.

Previously the Council passed a motion at Council Forum on Thursday 21st July 2016, which agreed:

“Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crime unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable.

Blackburn with Darwen Council will work to ensure local bodies and programmes have the support needed to fight and prevent racism and we reassure all people living in Blackburn with Darwen that they are valued members of our community.”

Hate crimes are covered under existing legislation through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) and Section 145 of the Criminal Justice Act.

However, in recent months there have been a number of challenges faced by people across the UK triggered by national and international events. The Council recognises these sensitive times and as the leader of ‘place’ it has stood firm on its principles to defend all communities.

Islamophobia

The inquiry by the all-party parliamentary group on British Muslims held sessions in Manchester, London, Birmingham and Sheffield. Members heard about a wide

spectrum of Islamophobic experiences, including multiple incidents of physical and verbal abuse.

Those who worked on the definition of Islamophobia wanted it to capture the reality that, while Muslims are not a race, abuse against them amounts to a form of racism. At the same time, it was felt important that the definition did not silence non-racist criticism of Islam.

The definition was produced by the group to build a common understanding of the causes and consequences of Islamophobia. It was decided upon after a six-month consultation with academics, lawyers, elected officials, Muslim organisations, activists, campaigners, and communities. More than 750 British Muslim organisations, 80 academics and 50 MPs have backed the definition.

The definition reads:

“Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

Antisemitism

There have also been a number of antisemitic incidents in the UK and it has been rising over the years. To support the Jewish community against hate crime, the council supports the definition of Antisemitism as:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

The Council will not tolerate prejudice and discrimination against any group in society on the ground of religion, race, gender, age sexuality and disability.

Blackburn with Darwen is one of five national Integration Areas invited by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to work closely with them on innovative plans to address social integration. The borough was selected because of its strong track record for building bridges between diverse communities and its willingness to try new approaches.

MHCLG is funding a three-year programme in Blackburn with Darwen that aims to boost the borough’s economic prosperity and build stronger, more integrated communities.

This work is an important priority for the Council and we have worked with a wide range of local partners to develop Blackburn with Darwen’s social integration programme – called Our Community, Our Future.

The Our Community, Our Future strategy sets out how these partners will work together to strengthen relationships between people from different backgrounds, to help the borough become a place where diversity is valued, and where people’s faith and cultures are understood and respected.

The strategy has four priorities for making our borough stronger:

1. To increase economic prosperity for all the borough's communities as an essential prerequisite for social integration
2. To strengthen relationships between the borough's diverse communities
3. To build connections and strengthen relationships between young people who live in the borough's diverse communities
4. To connect the borough's disadvantaged communities to shared spaces – linking people and neighbourhoods to zones of employment, physical assets, community shared spaces and social action.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Council promotes harmony, cohesion, social integration and wellbeing for all its communities. It values the diversity of its communities, whether this is culture, religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, age and ability.

Alongside this via legislation under which Hate Crimes are an offence the Council has been pro-active in promoting more cohesive and integrated communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council is bound by the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Council's position will support this.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications.

8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The Council is bound by the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Council's position will support this.

9. CONSULTATIONS

There are no consultations at this stage.

Background Papers:	Available on the Council's website: Social Integration Strategy Corporate plan 2019-2023
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Report to the Council Forum

3rd October 2019

Progress of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The report sets out the progress of the People, Place and Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committees that met in September.

Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee met on 9th September and looked at a number of issues that affected the portfolio areas covered by the Committee.

Dialysis Services in the Region

The Committee received a presentation on the review of the renal and haemodialysis service. The Committee agreed:

1. To support the review of dialysis services in Lancashire and South Cumbria to improve access to treatment closer to home for in-centre dialysis patients in East Lancashire
2. To support the expansion of dialysis capacity in East Lancashire whilst reducing the number of units to 2 from 3 and ensuring that travel times are no more than 30 minutes.
3. To support the desire to ensure that patients wanting home dialysis have suitable local support to develop their skills and confidence.
4. To support the aim of improving patient experience during dialysis treatments in East Lancashire and in particular through the enhanced service delivery proposals in Blackburn.
5. To welcome the opportunity to discuss further following the conclusion of the retender process.

The Committee welcome the positive outcomes proposed for patients in East Lancashire and this borough in particular with the replacement of temporary accommodation with purpose built facilities and improved services especially for those patients who required treatment in isolation. The Committee were informed that this consultation was the first in a series of service reconfigurations that would be consulted on in the near future. As these cover services delivered on a regional footprint across Lancashire, South Cumbria, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen, a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with powers to consider and make recommendations on these is being considered with representation from the four upper tier Local Authorities.

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Inspection.

The Committee received information on the SEND inspection that had taken place in June of this year. The inspection was a joint inspection undertaken by OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission and included the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Public Health, NHS England, Early Years settings, Schools and Further Education Providers.

The review highlighted Key areas of strength and areas for improvement and areas have been identified for further improvement. This will form the basis of the revised SEND Strategy Action Plan for the local area. This plan will be co- produced with stakeholders and

co-owned between the Council and the CCG. The Committee congratulated those responsible for the positive outcome of the review and the continued successful development of services to Children and Young People with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Feedback from the Youth Forum

The Committee received an update on the work of the youth forum and the projects that they were involved in. The forum had been looking at many issues including

- The Takeover Challenge which will focus on knife crime and prevention.
- The Regional Youthforia event
- The annual Youth MP conference in August at Leeds University.
- Solutions to Integration in BwD
- BwD Youth Integration Forum and “Eat, Rave, Repeat”

The Committee continue to value the input of the Youth Forum into the work of the Committee.

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 16th September and continued its work on the key corporate priorities. The Committee looked at the issues facing the Waste disposal contract, Kerbside Recycling and Government consultation on Waste Strategy.

Members have agreed to focus on the Corporate Priorities as the work programme for the year with Members seeking to add value to the work of the Executive and work with them on the delivery of these. This report sets out progress on the Kerbside Recycling Project and the Waste Disposal Contract which as members will appreciate is one of the key areas of service delivery to residents of the borough and contributes to the corporate priorities.

The Committee looked at the issues the service was facing particularly around the lack of companies willing to take on the contract for recycling collection and disposal of recyclates. The steps to ameliorate the situation were outlined and the progress so far was noted. Members also discussed the Household recycling centres which were not fit for purpose and the need to review how we provide these services to improve recycling rates. The Committee agreed-

- 1 That they would wish to be kept informed of the progress of the recycling and kerbside collections with an updated position being reported to the next meeting of the in December.
- 2 That they be kept informed of the progress of the Government’s strategy for waste and the effects that this would have on the Council’s services.
3. That the Council’s monitoring of the amount sent to landfill be submitted to the Committee for information.
4. That the re-introduction of the education and advice role in to improve recycling rates be supported and that the rates of recycling be monitored at future meetings of the Committee.

5. That the discussions that have taken place with recycling operatives asking them to be more helpful and accepting of the difficulties residents face when recycling be supported.

Call-in Committee

The Call-in Committee took place on 28th August 2019 to review the decision relating to the proposed Asset Transfer of Blacksnape Playing Fields. The Committee received information on the proposed transfer from the Executive Member and the background to the decision. The Committee heard responses to the reasons for the call in together with examples of how similar transfer of assets had taken place and the outcomes that this had delivered.

The Committee accepted the decision of the Executive Member to approve the Asset Transfer of Blacksnape Playing Fields via a 25 year lease from the Council.

Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee met on 23rd September and looked at the work of the Executive Member for Finance and Governance. The Committee were reminded that Members have agreed to focus on the Corporate Priorities as the work programme for the year with Members seeking to add value to the work of the Executive and work with them on the delivery of these. The work of the Executive Member for Finance and Governance underpinned the work on all of the Councils Key priorities.

The Budget

The Executive Member outlined the key issues relating to the council's financial position and the budget going forward. The forecast overspend and the level of usable reserves were outlined and the discussions that are ongoing to consider remedial actions. The Committee was reminded that the Council could not present an imbalanced budget and the implications of the use of reserves for this year and on later years was outlined.

The Committee considered the work that was ongoing on the impact of the recent one year Spending Round which may have positive and negative impact on the Council's budget. These included-

- The potential impact of an Adult Social Care Precept of 2%
- Additional monies for Adult and Children Social Care £1bn (nationally)
- A small real terms increase in Public Health Grant
- Additional monies for SEND provision £700m (nationally)
- Uplift in Business Rates multiplier

BUT ALSO

- The ending of the Lancashire 75% business rate retention pool pilot
- Potential end to new 'New Homes Bonus' payments

Directors will continue to work with Executive Members to review all options to reduce costs and close the forecast budget gap.

The Committee discussed the implications of the pilot for retention of Business Rates and if taking this forward would be beneficial for the Council and in response it was informed that if the pilot was implemented in the way that it had run in Lancashire for the past year then it would be positive for Blackburn with Darwen.

The Committee agreed that they be kept informed of the progress on the delivery of the budget throughout the year and the ways that are being examined to seek a reduction in the forecast deficit.

Sickness Absence, Mental Health and Barriers to Employee Health and Wellbeing.

The Committee were updated on the work ongoing on sickness absence, mental health and barriers to employee health and wellbeing. The report addressed the recommendation of the Committee held in March and examined what the Council does to support attendance and address barriers to health and wellbeing. The Committee looked at how the positive benefits of wellbeing initiatives were being delivered in terms of improved attendance and comparisons with other authorities. Information was shared on the support given to staff in terms of training and development to carry out their duties and team working.

The Committee asked for further comparisons with other Unitary Authorities in the area and to receive further information on the introduction of new technology and smarter/agile working. The absence targets and work place initiatives would be kept under review by the Committee.

Removal of Call-in Provisions.

The Committee were informed that the Chair and Vice Chair had been requested and had agreed to the suspension of the call-in provisions in respect of a decision relating to the Kerbside Recycling Contract. The Committee were informed that the issue had been the subject of a review by the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting.

Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

September 2019.

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN
2019**

Date: 3rd October

DIY SOS big build for Nightsafe

I was overwhelmed by the community response to Blackburn DIY SOS Big Build which successfully came to fruition thanks to hundreds of dedicated volunteers, working night and day to make it happen.

I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to every single volunteer, including many of our own staff and members, who volunteered to help get this mammoth project over the line. I went along to the Big Reveal with the Chief Executive and the Mayor to see the grand finale and thank the volunteers.

The community response was unbelievable, over 300 volunteers turned up to help get this build over the line. There were people there that had never volunteered before, volunteering for the first time and saying how proud it had made them feel.

I would like to say on the record thank you to BBC Children in need, all the people who provided materials, the local mosque and church for their support and making a difference.

Community Awards

I was delighted to attend the recent BBC Lancashire Community Heroes Awards at King George's Hall. The radio station honoured unsung heroes from across Lancashire.

It was very uplifting to hear the stories of people who go the extra mile to make their neighbourhoods better places.

We had two winners from our Borough. School boys Tom and Jack Mayoh from Darwen, who have raised thousands of pounds in memory of their mother were awarded the Ben Ashworth Award for Fundraising. I am sure members will all join me in congratulating them.

Our own community awards, jointly hosted with Community Voluntary Services, will be returning again in 2020 with a ceremony planned in June. We will soon be starting the search for sponsors for the event and I hope all members will consider putting forward deserving people in their neighbourhoods.

I have always said that Blackburn with Darwen is one of the friendliest, kindest and caring places you can find and as the awards show that is in large part down to the many volunteers that we're blessed with.

Social Integration update - Our Community, Our Future programme

Various projects funded through the Our Community, Our Future programme have continued to make good progress.

Last month the first Community Ambassador course began, delivered by the Families Heath & Wellbeing Consortium in partnership with Blackburn Rovers Community Trust and Care Network Hub. This 12-week course aims to help local people boost their skills and leadership qualities to work on projects aimed at making BwD a better place to live for everyone. Another wave will start in November.

Another two cohorts of the Youth Ambassador will start this autumn. Two cohorts of 11 to 16 year olds have already completed the programme, which is similar to the adult programme.

The first group of Workforce Integration Ambassadors have completed their training with Blackburn College. 20 Ambassadors from a wide range of local businesses took part in sessions focused on recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.

Blackburn College is also currently delivering a qualitative research project to explore people's attitudes to diversity, social integration and identity in the borough. Around 120 residents will take part in face-to-face interviews in early autumn, with the interviews to be repeated early in 2020.

Work on the ESOL Hub is progressing with partners. A new website that brings together all ESOL provision in the borough, making it easier for learners to find courses that are right for them, is in development.

Finally, a number of local groups will receive funding through Our Community, Our Future grants to help them run projects aimed at bringing people from different backgrounds together.

Leaving the EU – Brexit preparation / update

Following on from our update in March the Council continues to plan in conjunction with its partners for the UK leaving the European Union on 31st October 2019.

The Civil Contingencies Service at the Council are working closely with council departments in preparing for the exit including “no deal” scenarios. We are receiving and acting upon advice received from Central Government and the Local Government Association. Departmental Business Continuity plans are being refreshed to reflect any risks.

The Council is an active member of the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF) and we have been working in partnership with the police, fire and rescue service, NHS, Environment Agency and other key agencies to make preparations around potential consequences to the community if a ‘no deal’ Brexit occurs. The Council has contacted businesses across the Borough to see if any business continuity support and resilience planning is required from the Council. Engagement will continue throughout with LRF partners.

World suicide prevention day

Suicide is the leading cause of death in the UK for people aged under 35 years, and the leading cause of death for men aged under 50 years. In Blackburn with Darwen the latest data shows a reduction in the number of people taking their own lives with 37 doing so in the three-year period 2016-8. This is a drop from a high of 55 in 2010-12 and 46 in the previous reporting period of 2015-17. Local rates are now comparable with the England average.

The Public Health team commissions several providers to deliver suicide prevention training, anti-stigma work and to deliver community based mental wellbeing activity; pays for 200 licenses for the digital mental wellbeing platform ‘Big White Wall’ and for unlimited access to ‘Kooth’, a similar digital platform for young people aged 12yrs and over.

To further amplify a year-long programme of events, activities, training opportunities and suicide awareness raising across the Borough, a World Suicide Prevention Day event took place on 10th September 2019. This year's event started with a service at Blackburn Cathedral, with many school and college students present. The event then moved to outside

the Town Hall where many dozens more people were gathered, alongside volunteers from the Samaritans, those trained in suicide prevention, and the St John's Ambulance. A 40 second silence took place at 11:40 to signify that during their 11th hour, a person takes their own life around the world every 40 seconds. Several speakers then gave speeches outlining commitment to reduce suicide and detail their services. The event was televised and clips were shown on the ITV Granada news that evening.

Sport England: Together an Active Future

I am pleased to report that Pennine Lancashire's £3M Pathfinder document has been submitted to Sport England. The bid includes £600,000 for local delivery across Blackburn with Darwen.

Together an Active Future's approach is to work together with people and partners to create ideas and test different solutions that can be used to understand why not enough people access the wide range of activities, that are already available in Blackburn with Darwen and to change ways of working to better support people who are inactive and affected by poor mental wellbeing. Out of 13 Primary Care Networks (PCN) in Pennine Lancashire Darwen's PCN has been identified for some targeted engagement work with the Together an Active Future core team. Learning from all the test pilots will be shared within Blackburn with Darwen but also wider across Pennine Lancashire.

Members will be encouraged to know that over 1,345 individuals in Blackburn with Darwen have got involved in events, surveys and sessions and had their say about what they think needs to be different in the Borough to be more physically active and to be happier and healthier in the future. People and partners in the Borough told us that there is already lots going on, that we don't necessarily need more activities; what's really needed is a better way of supporting people and linking them to the activities.

From this engagement there are strong themes for our delivery plan which include the need to raise the profile of physical activity, making being active attractive and the 'new normal'; to involve people in decision making; to champion our volunteers and develop assets in communities to support sustainability. Importantly we will also take the opportunity to influence and embed physical activity across all areas and add value and impact to the borough's other externally funded projects including Childhood Obesity Trail-blazer and social inclusion's Our Community: Our Future.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved and helped shape our plans so far and I look forward to seeing the initial test and learn pilots 'go live' in the Autumn.

Health and care integration update

Recently, a review of the four Primary Care Neighbourhoods which have now been operational for 12 months, has taken place to clarify the progress and achievements to date and plan the next steps for development. As part of the review an electronic survey has been completed and a workshop with over 20 health, care and voluntary sector representatives took place. The key priorities for future development include partnership work with the four Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, the production of a collaborative Integrated Care neighbourhood workforce induction and steps to incorporate wider areas such as the 0-19 years Children's Offer.

National Festival of Making 2020

Economic and visitor evaluation is currently being undertaken and meetings with festival organisers are planned later in October to map out plans for 2020.

Dates for 2020 have already been announced, with the Festival of Making taking place on 6th and 7th June 2020.

Council Forum Report of the Executive Member for Growth and Development.

Portfolio Co-ordinating Director – Director of Growth and Development

3 October 2019

This report provides a brief update on progress with key development priorities in this reporting period.

Local Plan Update

The Council are continuing to work on the evidence base for the new Local Plan – aiming for adoption in 2021. Potential future development sites are being assessed, which will lead to a “preferred options” draft plan being published for public consultation in 2020.

Darwen Update

The Square was completed for the Summer and a number of events have now been hosted, including the 1940s Day. The Brass Band competition, Food Festival and Christmas programme are all planned/in development for this quarter. A scheme is being costed to bring into use four units under Railway Road on the edge of the Square. Early interest has already been received with business cases tested in due course to ensure viability.

Although the Council was unsuccessful in securing High Street Fund status for Darwen Town Centre, Darwen has been included in the first phase of the Government’s Town Fund programme. We expect Government guidance shortly on the scope, timescales and requirements regarding the Town Fund programme. The Fund will enable the Council, in conjunction with key partners, to accelerate the delivery of a comprehensive growth plan for Darwen.

Blakey Moor / Northgate / Jubilee Gardens Public Realm Improvements

The planting scheme and benches have now been installed at Blakey Moor and Northgate. The final sections of paving are due to be complete by the end of September with decorative tree grills to follow. The focus of work will now move to the restoration of Blakey Moor Terrace. The contract for a Design Team has been tendered and is expected to be awarded by the end of September.

Our construction contractor, Casey, have completed the first phase of Jubilee Square and will commence further phases aligned to the Cinema Development.

Housing Developments

Two Council-owned housing development sites are currently under construction: Places for People are building 73 new family homes for affordable rent at Alaska Street, and earlier this month Hearle Homes

commenced construction of 17 family houses at the former Tower View site in Darwen.

Persimmon Homes are progressing well with construction at the former Council-owned site at Roe Lee; 155 family homes.

Outline planning applications were approved for Council sites at the August Planning & Highways Committee meeting; for new housing developments at Lomond Gardens and Clarendon Road East; and the detailed planning application for Tower Road (former Fenisccliffe Bank) will be presented to the 19th September Planning Committee meeting. Subject to approval, Applethwaite Homes aim to commence by demolishing the former care home building before Christmas.

Plans to develop the Griffin clearance site to provide 141 new family homes are currently being finalised. A planning application is planned to be submitted late early October/early November.

Wainwright Way

Home Bargains have commenced construction works on the western plot and Autolab are aiming to submit a planning application by the end of 2019 for development of the eastern plot.

Growth Deal Transport Schemes: North Blackburn

The Council's "Pennine Gateways" transport schemes, funded through Local Growth Fund 3, are progressing through the delivery phase. The second package, North Blackburn, is advancing well with resurfacing and lining works at Pleckgate Road and Brownhill Roundabout now complete. Traffic signal and controller commissioning is now at an advanced stage for each junction.

Permanent traffic signal installation is nearing completion at Whalley Old Road, with improved pedestrian crossing facilities introduced on this busy crossing. The upgrade of Emerald Avenue commenced on 16th September, including changes to kerbing and new traffic signal equipment.

The North Blackburn packages will improve traffic conditions on the "Arterial Road" making conditions better for pedestrians and cyclists and to accommodate future housing developments.

Growth Deal Transport Schemes: South East Blackburn

The third and final package of "Pennine Gateway", South East Blackburn, has now been submitted for Planning. The package will see the widening of Haslingden Road, the creation of a new link road at Blackamoor and a new entrance into Royal Blackburn Hospital at Old Bank Lane.

The project will:

- Improve congestion on the Haslingden Road corridor to / from Royal Blackburn Hospital and M65 Junction 5

- Improve air quality and pedestrian facilities at Blackamoor Junction (which is a designated Air Quality Management Area)
- Enable further development of employment opportunities on the Borough's major growth corridor
- Support future housing growth in the Borough, both by way of family housing and housing associated with Royal Blackburn Hospital

Planning applications will be considered by the Council's Planning Committee in December 2019 before the scheme is submitted for Full Approval to Transport for Lancashire and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership in early 2020.

Social Integration – Transport Research

The role of transport is a key element within the Council's Social Integration Programme "Our Community, Our Future", a joint initiative with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The project seeks to better link people and neighbourhoods to zones of employment, physical assets, community and social spaces.

The first phase of the project is underway and the Council is now undertaking research with public transport users, to get a better understanding of where people want to get to, awareness of available transport options, and the difficulties currently faced in getting around. The Council will be liaising with transport users and community groups by way of face-to-face meetings, workshop sessions and questionnaires. Research will inform the next stage of the project which will identify opportunities for innovative transport options and solutions within the Borough.

One Public Estate

We expect the next One Public Estate funding round (OPE 8) will be launched shortly, with bids to be submitted by around mid-November 2019 and funding awards in January/February 2020. There is likely to be a focus on housing delivery, with revenue funding to support the development of project concepts and feasibility studies; and possibly a further round of Housing Land Release Funding providing capital funding for site preparation, remediation and infrastructure works. The OPE Programme Team has started to develop a pipeline of potential projects to submit for funding.

Brexit Co-ordination

Every Council is required to identify a "Brexit Co-ordinator" to support the Government's preparations for the UK's departure from the EU on 31 October. The Director of Growth and Development is currently performing this role and supporting the Chief Executive in managing the Council's preparations, while linking with broader strands of risk management work involving local partners and regional and national bodies.

The Council is working hard to better understand and mitigate any potential local impacts on service delivery, and working with local business bodies to signpost local businesses to available support on trade, contracting and workforce development issues.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE &
EDUCATION
COUNCILLOR MAUREEN BATESON**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTOR: JAYNE IVORY
DATE: 3rd October 2019**

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

The number of cases open to Children's Social Care remains relatively high at 1,776, with the number of children subject to child protection plans at 255. The number of Children in our Care is 404, which is a historically high figure and points to increasing prevalence of unacceptable levels of risk to children and young people within families in local communities. In addition, over 770 children are being supported by Early Help services, which means that 6% of the 0 to 19 year old child population is being supported by the council's Children's Services or partner agencies. 37 children have been adopted since April 2018 and 14 children are currently placed in adoptive placements.

YOUTHFORIA

120 young people from across the 21 North West Youth Councils descended on Blackburn Town Hall for the annual Youthforia event on 9th September. The young people came together to work on improving the lives of their peers and focus on relevant social issues. This included workshops on promoting the national 'Make Your Mark' campaign and the 'Pioneers of Sustainable Hope' (POSH) scheme. POSH has three main outcomes – to develop a sense of citizenship for the natural world, to create programmes of sustainable living education, and to create local campaigns that impact on local policy and practice. During the North West Youth Forum, Amine Gherensi was chosen by her peers to represent the young people of Lancashire as a member of the 13-person Youthforia Steering Group.

YJS RECEIVES INVESTORS IN CHILDREN AWARD FOR NINTH YEAR RUNNING

The Youth Justice Service (YJS) has received its Investors in Children Award for the ninth year in a row, in recognition of the continued involvement and participation of young people in shaping the delivery of the service. The assessor was "pleased to see that the service continues to involve children and young people in dialogue and that their voice has made some significant changes to the way the service runs and works with them... when asked the group if they felt the service listens to their voice and makes changes as a result of them, they all said yes".

DRAGONS' DEN NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP SERVICE PROGRAMME

Young people from across Blackburn and Darwen faced the 'Dragons Den' in August 2019 as part of a month-long National Citizenship Service (NCS) programme. The challenge was to design a social action project to benefit the local community and each team pitched their projects to a panel of 'Dragons' that included members of the executive team at Blackburn Rovers Community Trust, local business people and a community worker from the Council. The NCS participants were commended for their outstanding knowledge and commitment to the local community and they have since brought their ideas to life, helping to raise over £2,400 for good causes such as Lancashire Mind, Derian House, Lancashire Victims Support Services, East Lancashire Hospice and Darwen charity 'Fight Like a Kid'.

TRAILBLAZER PROGRAMME – SUCCESSFUL BID

The Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has successfully bid for funding to create new Mental Health Support Teams in schools as part of NHS England's new Trailblazer programme. This will help pupils and staff create an environment of mental wellbeing in their schools. Pupils struggling with mental health will benefit from more joined up care and support across schools and specialist NHS services, in a national roll out of the £9.3 million training scheme. The Mental Health Support Teams will be working with Pupil Referral Units, Special Schools, Secondary Schools and Year 6 Primary pupils to help support their transition into secondary school. The service is due to commence in January 2020, however the Education Mental Health Practitioners are required to undertake a year's training and so the full service will be rolled out in January 2021. As part of the scheme, a four-week waiting time for access to specialist NHS children and young people's mental health services will also be trialled, building on the expansion of NHS services underway.

SEEDS SERVICE RE-LOCATION

In May 2019, the SEEDS service (Adolescent Support Unit) moved to its new building which has consequently increased its capacity to support young people and their families and/or carers. The name SEEDS was created by the young people themselves, based on what they felt the service offers them (Support, Experience, Enjoy, Develop, Succeed). There are currently 62 young people getting support from SEEDS, with a further 16 benefitting from regular short breaks. Over the next 6 months the number of young people receiving a service from SEEDS is set to rise to 75 with access to regular short breaks increasing in line with need.

The creation of an adolescent hub within the SEEDS is in its infancy but it is already being noted as a strength in supporting young people to ensure pathways to services are easily accessible and timely responses are received. As part of developing the adolescent hub in the coming months, relevant professionals will have the opportunity to hot desk and/or base themselves at the adolescent hub. This will promote relationship-building between young people and the professionals seeing them in an informal setting.

SUMMER LUNCHBOX PARTNERSHIP

The Children Centres network has worked in partnership with the Kingdom Outreach charity for the third year to provide healthy packed lunches for children over the summer holidays. The lunches were available from 29th July to 23rd August and this year's programme received increased support from volunteers who helped prepare the sandwiches and snacks from early in the morning at Wesley Hall. In total, 10,851 packed lunches were distributed through the Children Centres and positive feedback has been received from families, with one parent sharing that "the packed lunches were really good and convenient and the kids enjoyed the picnics everyday". Activities for children aged 0-10 were also delivered at the Children Centres to enable children and their families to collect their lunch and enjoy their time at the centre.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES 2019

During the summer holidays, children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen engaged in events organised by Blackburn Rovers Community Trust as part of the Strategic Youth Alliance offer, with over 3,700 attendances. The programme included youth clubs sessions, indoor and outdoor activities, trips and visits and engagement in the Premier League Kicks.

Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities enjoyed inclusion events delivered by Young People's Services which included a day trip to Blackpool Zoo, mountain biking, swimming and nature walks in Witton Park.

The summer concluded with a party at the Kaleidoscope Youth Club.

SEND INSPECTION OUTCOME

Ofsted and CQC conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Blackburn with Darwen to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The inspection letter outlined the inspectors' findings which included areas of strength and areas for further development. The inspection team recognised that considerable progress has been made in implementing the reforms and that the provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities is a high priority. The close working relationships between professionals across education, care and health was described as a strength. Unlike other inspection reports, a SEND area inspection is not graded, however, local areas where findings present a significant concern receive a Written Statement. The letter cited that the local area demonstrated a clear capacity for improvement and a Written Statement was not given. In comparison, 67% of local areas in the North West have received a Written Statement following an inspection.

ST LUKE AND ST PHILIPS OFSTED OUTCOME

In July, St Luke and St Philips Primary School was judged 'good' by OFSTED in all areas and deemed to be 'thriving' by inspectors. Pupils fed back to inspectors on the improvements made since the previous inspection in 2017; "our school is so much better, we do a lot of interesting and exciting things in lessons". The feedback from inspectors also noted that pupils who are disadvantaged make strong progress, and parents shared with inspectors that their children are safe, happy and flourishing.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

COUNCILLOR JIM SMITH

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN
DATE: 3 OCTOBER 2019**

YOUR CALL

A total of 1150 volunteers have signed up to the Council's community litter picking initiative via the Lancashire Volunteer Portal.

The packs provided to the volunteers includes a litter picker, a quantity of bags, a handy hoop for holding the bags in place, a first aid kit, a sharps box, health and safety instructions, hi-vis vest and gloves. Once out litter picking in the community, the litter pickers are asked to leave their bags adjacent to council litterbins, to enable them to be removed. Some volunteers have also started to separate recyclable items in clear sacks which is really helpful for recycling. Some of the volunteers are preparing to use biodegradable bags for fallen leaves during the autumn.

WASTE ENFORCEMENT

The Council's Enviro-Crime and legal teams have taken a number of cases recently to court, with successful prosecutions being made on 10 households within the last 8 weeks, resulting in total fines and costs of £4699.00. Further cases are scheduled to be taken to Court from September onwards.

WASTE AND RECYCLING

The Council will soon be awarding the contract for the treatment and disposal of general household waste that will secure the Council with an outlet for up to the next 6 years. During this time, discussions with Lancashire County Council will continue over a potential joint procurement arrangement for the longer term, as Lancashire County Council's contract concludes in 2025.

The portfolio has established an Environmental Education Officer role, funded from within existing resources, to lead on waste and recycling education and engagement across the borough. The post holder commenced employment in early September and will be working with schools and community groups and volunteers to raise awareness of recycling and food waste.

GREEN LANE MULTI USE GAMES AREA

Section 106 green spaces funding is being used to redevelop the Multi Use Games Area located at Green Lane Blackburn. The existing derelict site will be replaced with a new durable metal fence with inset goals for football and rebound boards for basketball and a new hard surface with appropriate line marking for a variety of sports.

PARKING SERVICES

Town Centre Pay and Display

In the first 4 months of the financial year we have seen an increase from last year in the income and usage of our town centre car parks. Income has risen 20% from April to Sept, with overall usage also up by 2%.

Old Bank Lane car park

The Council owned parking facility adjacent to Royal Blackburn hospital has seen a huge increase in usage over the last 6 months. From 1st April to the end of September we have experienced a 100% increase in income from this facility and have helped to improve traffic flow around the hospital site.

The parking facility was visited by the British Parking Association (BPA) and Old Bank lane was successful in achieving Park Mark Status for the second year running.

WITTON PARK LICENCE

The application to vary the premises licence for Witton Park to increase the number of event days per year has resulted in a negotiation to balance the desire to provide more entertainment in the park against the need to control the impact upon the people who live in surrounding area.

A new operating schedule has been agreed which will enable 6 events a year with one of these events being able to operate over 2 consecutive days (7 days in total). The licence contains a robust set of conditions to manage and control noise, traffic, parking and the timing of the events.

JOINT TAXI SAFETY OPERATION WITH HYNDBURN BOROUGH COUNCIL

An increasing number of drivers who are licensed in Blackburn are working in Hyndburn, so on 14th August a joint taxi safety operation was undertaken in Hyndburn with officers from Hyndburn Borough Council, the Police and VOSA.

A total of six BwD taxi drivers and vehicles were stopped and checked, but apart from minor issues no problems were found. Due to increasing cross-boundary licencing, this type of operation will become a regular occurrence.

INFIRMARY TASK FORCE

A task force has been set up to improve conditions within the Infirmary Selective Licensing area. Officers from Housing Standards, Envirocrime, Planning Enforcement and Empty Properties teams are coordinating their approach to deal with unsightly waste issues and anti-social behaviour in specific streets in the area. The task force will operate for 6 months, with results being reviewed at that point.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & WELLBEING COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTORS: DOMINIC HARRISON &
MARTIN EDEN
DATE: 3RD October 2019

CLEAN AIR DAY

Public Health England (PHE) estimates that around 4% of all deaths across Lancashire and Cumbria are attributable to poor air quality, from conditions such as heart and chest disease, stroke and cancer. Air pollution disproportionately impacts those who live in less affluent areas, affecting the young, older people and those with underlying heart and chest conditions, leading to increased health inequalities. On 20th June 2019 Public Health collaborated with colleagues from across the organisation to celebrate **National Clean Air Day**. The purpose of the day is to raise awareness of air quality and the risks air pollution poses for health. Our focus this year was on idling (switching off your engine whilst stationary) and people across the Borough took part in a range of activities to coincide with the day.

The Council collaborated with Lammack School and a local residents group to highlight the issue of idling including. This included information for families in the run up to Clean Air Day, Elected Member air quality champions leading a whole school assembly on the topic, special lessons throughout the week, an anti-idling event (speaking with parents about the effects of air pollution and the benefits of switching off their engine while stationary) and attendance the school fete to promote road safety and active travel. A short video of the day can be viewed here <https://vimeo.com/351157107/b5c4843044>. In addition, people from across the Borough pledged to take action on Clean Air Day to improve air quality and shared their pledge via social media.

NEW PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT FOCUSES ON CHILD POVERTY

Blackburn with Darwen's 2018/19 Public Health Annual Report focuses on Child Poverty as one of the most potent drivers of lifelong ill-health and health inequalities. It explains how poverty is defined and measured, and highlights the rising UK trend in child poverty, which has been described as a 'disgrace' by the United Nations' leading expert. The report goes on to explore the causes and effects of child poverty, and the mechanisms by which it exerts its impact on health and wellbeing.

Even as the report was being written, new estimates were published by the Child Poverty Action Group which indicated that 46.9% of Blackburn with Darwen children were living in relative poverty - the fifth highest rate out of all the boroughs in the UK. Most shocking of all was the estimate that the former Bastwell ward had *the* highest rate (69.6%) out of all wards in the UK, closely followed by Audley on 68.8%. These are only modelled estimates, but they illustrate the extent of the problem to which some areas of Blackburn with Darwen are pre-disposed.

The Public Health Annual Report summarises the work already being undertaken to combat child poverty in the borough, and the further steps that could be taken. For greatest effect, these should be framed within an 'inclusive growth' approach to promoting the economic prosperity of the borough as a whole. At its September meeting, the Health and Wellbeing Board pledged to champion partnership efforts to tackle child poverty, with the aim of reducing the local rate to the national average by 2030. The report can be found at <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/health/public-health-report>

BLACKBURN LIBRARY DIGITAL HEALTH HUB

The ground floor space is shaping up as the town centre's community focussed digital health asset; a place providing access to a range of technologies and support to enable the self-management of health and wellbeing using digital. The programme includes sessions focussing on Mental Health Support, Cancer Awareness, Dementia and Reminiscence, Diabetes, Diet, Mindfulness, Sugar Content and Weight Management. This community health pathfinder project is ideally placed to encourage take up of digital health initiatives, including weekly myGP support drop-ins designed to help people to register and use the app which is now available across Blackburn with Darwen. This online tool allows patients to book and cancel appointments, set medication reminders, monitor their health and make use of a secure instant messaging service. Following interest from residents in the Darwen area we will now offer myGP sessions at Darwen Library from the newly refurbished Community Room.

BUREAU CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

It is six months since the terrible fire at the St Johns Church building and the Bureau have been rehomed by Thwaites in the old visitor centre. In the time they have been there they have been rebuilding the programme and activities as well as raising funds for new projects. They have opened a mending café, hosted the summer parade and workshops, and are home to a dance school, a gallery, 3 community bands and a refurbished community darkroom. They have been successful in gaining funding from Arts Council England and Awards for all which will help replace some lost items from the fire and developing the programme going forward. For more information on their busy programme www.bureaublackburn.co.uk

BRITISH TEXTILE BIENNIAL (BTB)

The BTB opens on the 3rd October and runs across Pennine Lancashire for a full month with a wide range of exhibitions and programmes of work. The heart of it is based around Blackburn Town centre with the Adidas spezils exhibition at the Exchange; Cult, Culture and Subversion an exhibition of slogan T-shirts from the 1980s to current day at the Cathedral, Gujarati Quilt exhibition, community clothing with a film in the Museum as well as a photography exhibition which will feature in the Observer as well as the town centre. There is also work being shown across the Pennine Lancashire venues. The programme ends on the 3rd November for more information www.britishtextilesbiennial.co.uk

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY and RE:FRESH

This year the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) has published a landmark review of the evidence base for improving rates of physical activity in the UK population and Blackburn with Darwen's re:refresh programme is highlighted as a case study in this review – a fantastic endorsement of the great work that takes place in the borough to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. Academic research on the effectiveness and efficiency in both improving physical activity rates in the general population and improving health inequalities by generating “significantly greater impacts for more disadvantaged socioeconomic group” was central to re:refresh being included within the guidance. The Leisure, Health and Wellbeing annual report for 2018/19 is now available on www.refreshbwd.com. The report encapsulates physical activity, behaviour changes and health improvement services from a universal and targeted perspective and includes a mixture of outcomes and outputs along with real life case studies and testimonials which help to highlight the impact teams and services have for local people. The NIHR Guidance says: “Being active matters because it is an important way of staying healthy. We know that people can reduce their risk of many serious diseases by staying physically active and it is also important for mental wellbeing and keeping socially connected. Finding enjoyable ways to be active can benefit people in so many ways, but it is often hard for people to start and keep the habit of regular activity.

Together an Active Future, Sport England's innovative funding programme will work with individuals and partners over the next 5 years to try different way of helping people be more active Moving from nothing to something and something to more.

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH (RSPH) ACCREDITATION

The Health and Wellbeing team has successfully completed accreditation and are an approved RSPH Training Centre. This recognised status enables us to provide our own staff/volunteers/other council teams/voluntary sector colleagues and wider partners with access to accredited courses and training to increase knowledge and awareness about health and wellbeing so that we all share a consistent approach/message to support local people.

The following training qualifications will initially be offered:

- ♦ Level 1 Award in Health Awareness, ♦ Level 2 Encouraging Physical Activity,
- ♦ Level 2 Understanding Health Improvement, ♦ Level 3 Certificate in Health and Wellbeing Improvement.

WITTON PARK 3G Pitches

The two state-of-the-art 3G football pitches are now open and in use at Witton Park following a £1.2m transformation. The Council worked with the FA to secure the externally funded scheme which also includes new floodlighting and fencing plus and bespoke spectator areas. The former changing rooms have also undergone a total refurbishment bringing them up to 2019 FA standards. Blackburn with Darwen now has one of the best football facilities in the whole of Lancashire.

VENUES

King Georges Hall already has 7 sold out Concert Hall stand-up comedy shows this financial year with performers including James Acaster, Romesh Ranganathan and Rhod Gilbert. As part of the British Textiles Biennial Launch KGH will host a concert by Primal Scream in October. The closure of Preston Guild Halls has boosted enquiries from promoters and bookings including the British Darts Organisation World Trophy competition which was broadcast live on Eurosport for three days over the August bank holiday. The organisers were so impressed they have confirmed dates for the next two years.

Darwen Library Theatre continues to attract strong audiences for shows such as Steve Harley and China Crisis as well as regular events like the Comedy Club and Afternoon Variety Shows. The community cinema programme is growing. The Billy Connolly event sold out 6 weeks in advance and with encouraging sales for Placido Domingo and Northern Ballet there is a positive, diverse cultural offering across the borough.

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

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING DIRECTORS:
SAYYED OSMAN (ADULT SOCIAL CARE & PREVENTION)**

DATE: 3rd October 2019

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN ADULT LEARNING – RECOVERY COLLEGE

Blackburn with Darwen Adult Learning developed the Positive Minds programme to help people improve their emotional wellbeing whilst learning something new and mixing with others. The courses are delivered by tutors experienced in mental health and take place in community venues providing learners the opportunity to practice ways to cope and feel better. A number of self-sustaining groups have evolved following attendance at one of these courses.

A Lancashire wide initiative to establish a Recovery College was piloted in Chorley and Preston in 2018 and this has now been established in Blackburn with Darwen as part of the roll out across East Lancashire. The overall aim is to build resilient communities with informed and proactive citizens who are better able to manage and control their own health and wellbeing, particularly in relation to mental wellbeing.

The programme develops skills and tools to empower people to take control of their own wellbeing and eventually use their own experiences and skills to help others on their recovery journey. This results in a service which is co-produced and co-delivered by people with lived experience of particular health challenges in collaboration with professionals.

OUR COMMUNITY OUR FUTURE GRANTS

Over the summer, the social integration programme team were busy promoting Our Community, Our Future grants. Funded through Ministry of Housing, Community & Local Government monies as part of the borough's social integration work, these small grants of up to £2,000 aim to support local groups and organisations which have ideas for neighbourhood projects to bring together people from different backgrounds.

A communications campaign ran during August and early September to share news of the funding – including local press and radio, regular social media updates, adverts on digital screens, and posters in community venues. A briefing for all elected members helped to kick-start the campaign. The Engagement & Integration Officers, part of the social integration programme team, provided support to those groups that needed it, to pull together their applications for funding.

In total, 120 separate enquiries were received, resulting in 79 applications across all wards of the borough. A grants panel evaluated the applications and the successful groups are being advised of the positive outcome. Those groups who have not been successful are being offered advice on why they weren't granted funding and how they may strengthen their funding bids in the future, or an alternative source of funding for which they may be eligible to apply.

The social integration programme team feel confident that the projects to be funded through Our Community, Our Future grants will support the aims of the programme – to break down barriers between people from different backgrounds and get them working together for the

good of the borough. Each project will be paired with another in a different ward to support one another and share learning throughout the lifetime of their projects.

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND INTEGRATION

Integration of our Adult Social care teams continues apace, with our Darwen neighbourhood team successfully co-located and collaborating daily with our health colleagues at Darwen Health Centre. Similarly, the West neighbourhood team is now co-located and integrated with the District nursing team at Barbara Castle Way. Work continues to co-locate our North/East neighbourhood team where it is envisioned co-location will be achieved by the end of October. Briefings have been arranged to further the documentation and reporting of the excellent work the neighbourhood teams undertake each day. The neighbourhood teams have hosted a number of meet and greets, including Board members and Directors of the 'LIFT Board' (who are responsible for Barbara Castle Way Health Centre and Darwen Health Centre) and our elected members. The neighbourhood teams are excited and proud to demonstrate the great collaborative work they are undertaking each day.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE – PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER

HR Workforce Development, Legal and Adult Social Care have worked closely together through a robust planned programme of development activities to upskill Social Workers and provide opportunities for progression and development for wider Social Care workers. A suite of legal training courses have been commissioned and delivered to Adult Social Care employees this year as part of a planned intervention to both upskill and support our workforce. Programmes include Court of Protection and Ordinary Residence S117. Blackburn with Darwen have also helped shape a new three-year programme that has enabled a number of our committed and experienced social care staff to take up the opportunity to undertake a social work degree. This is a work based programme, with a robust selection process which has enabled support for 3 members of our Adults social care staff onto the course in 2019, with a further 2 members of staff commencing in January 2020. We have also collaborated with Lancashire County Council, UCLan and Lancaster University to develop the Teaching Partnership and implement a plan of support/retention for social workers throughout all stages of their careers. The increase in the number of social work students and practice educators within Adult Services has been positive.

HATE CRIME AWARENESS WEEK (OCTOBER 12th– 19th)

Hate Crime Awareness Week is a national campaign that encourages local authorities, key partners and communities to tackle hate crime in their areas. The week, which will run from the 12th of October until the 19th, is organised by nationalhcaw.uk and will involve a week of activities and events as a means of raising awareness of hate crime and promoting avenues through which hate crime can be reported – as the underreporting of hate crime has been a national area of concern. Any criminal offence can be classified as a hate crime if hostility and prejudice based on disability, race, religion, transgender identity, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics are a factor. During Hate Crime Awareness Week, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will be supporting the NationalHCAW by providing two in-house awareness-raising sessions for staff alongside a series of public-facing events delivered with partners, including the Constabulary. The sessions will explore the current context of hate crime in a safe and structured way, whilst also providing attendees with information regarding support and reporting strategies for those who may have been affected.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DIGITAL AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

3rd October 2019

COUNCILLOR QUESIR MAHMOOD

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING

Digital & Business Change

The new council website that has been developed in-house went live as planned on the 15th July. The website traffic has increased by 10% in comparison to the same period last year. In addition to this we are seeing online Chat service volumes gradually rise each week since the launch.

Work continues to improve technology across the council including replacing older computers and laptops with new Windows 10 mobile devices and also replacement of critical, core IT infrastructure. There are now over 1400 staff who have received new devices as part of the project since 2018, enabling more efficient and flexible working with the remainder of staff due to complete by the end of the year.

The council has recently undertaken soft market testing for the previously issued notice to market for a replacement digital customer portal solution. The current customer portal supports many of our online transactions for the public and is being replaced due to our supplier removing support for the product from 2020. The procurement process is now being prepared ready to commence at the end of September 2019 and formal award is planned by the end of 2019.

Work has now started to integrate electronic health and adult social care records between the Council and local NHS. This will enable safer and more efficient care across the borough. The work is being funded by NHS England, after a successful bid. Record sharing will be enabled locally by March 2020. The Council is also engaged in work to improve electronic information sharing and alerting for patients being discharged from East Lancashire Hospital's Trust into Social Care. Working alongside colleagues at Lancashire County Council we have been selected for national pathfinder funding through NHS Digital to conduct discovery work.

Organisational Development

Following the recommendations from the peer review an organisational development plan has been developed that places the emphasis on the modern council element of the digital strategy and leadership and management development as two key main themes.

Modern Working

Following the introduction of the Modern Council priority to support the digital strategy, Digital & Business Change are working closely with HR to accelerate our approach to modern working and ensuring our employees are equipped with the right tools and skills to work in a more modern and agile way.

A Modern Working Board will be established to align the activity supporting structure, systems, processes and people to ensure we are meeting the required outcomes and continually modernising our services.

Registrars

The Registrars service has received a glowing report from the GRO Compliance and Performance Unit following the submission of its 2018/19 data. In particular, the timeliness of registering births and still births which exceed the national target of 98% by achieving 99% and 100% respectively was mentioned.

In addition, the registration of deaths within the required time period was also commended following the performance of 96%. This is substantially higher than the target of 90%.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

3rd October 2019

COUNCILLOR ANDY KAY

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING

Benefits

The annual performance figures for assessments of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support during 2018/19 have been released by the Department of Work and Pensions. The performance of our service has continued to improve significantly since its return from Capita, with last years figures being the best to date. In addition to having the best performance across Lancashire and Greater Manchester, Blackburn with Darwen is now in the top 10 performing authorities in the country.

Council Tax and Business Rates

Over the next few months the Council Tax and Business Rates teams will be undertaking some promotional and marketing of the online forms available to customers. A large part of this will be focused at landlords and managing agents who have been reluctant to use these forms.

Finance

Closure of Accounts 2018/19

External audit have finalised their work on the statement of accounts and this now requires final formal sign off which should take place prior to Council Forum on 3rd October.

Council Budget 2020/21

Work has begun with Members and Management Board to formulate the 2020/21 Council budget. This work is at an early stage and we are waiting confirmation from Government with regard to possible additional funding for Social Care as announced in the recent Spending Review on 4th September 2019.

Audit & Assurance

The Audit & Assurance Progress Report will be presented at the Audit & Governance Committee meeting on 15 October. This will provide Members an update on the delivery of the 2019/20 Annual Audit plan, including details of the outcomes from internal audit reviews completed to the end of September, and a commentary on the counter fraud work undertaken in the period.

The Committee will also receive the Quarter 1 Risk Management Report setting out the risk management activity undertaken in the period, along with a summary of the corporate risks as at the end of June.

During the summer the Insurance team has worked with ITM&G colleagues and the software supplier to implement an upgrade of the software package used to manage and monitor insurance claims received by the Council. The upgraded version went live on 1 October. It enables the software to continue to be used following the transfer to the Windows 10 operating system.

Governance Services

Complaints – The team has successfully updated the process known as the *Caution List* which provides for a risk assessment of people where previous contact with the Council indicates the individual may present a risk to officers of the Council or others when presenting for or, receiving service. This is an important aspect of health, safety and wellbeing. Attention is also brought to the introduction of ADR (alternative dispute resolution), which sees an increase in

informal complaints however a significant reduction in formal complaints, for corporate, adults and children's. We are successfully resolving complaints at the earliest stage.

Democratic Services

Planning is underway for Remembrance Weekend, with liaison with partners including the Armed Forces, Police, Cathedral, British Legion, Volunteers and the Traffic Management company amongst others to ensure that this most important Civic Event is successfully delivered and a suitable tribute of remembrance for those who gave their lives. The second round of Scrutiny Committees have been held, as reported elsewhere on the agenda, and the team are supporting Joint Scrutiny work with Unitary Partners in Lancashire. The team also support the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel and the Council continues to be the Host Authority. The Panel scrutinises the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner in delivering the key outcomes identified in the Police and Crime Plan for Lancashire 2016-21.

Legal Services

The litigation section of the department continues to undertake prosecutions reflecting the Council's drive to assure compliance across a range of areas, including public protection. Over approximately the last 5 years the litigation section of the team has undertaken approximately 75 full prosecutions a year. Last year in addition 1,500 new SJP (Single Justice procedure) prosecutions [mainly for littering offences] were also undertaken.

Since April this year:

- 516 littering prosecutions have been issued. Average fine for the majority proven in absence is 220 plus victim surcharge of 30 with costs awarded to the Council
- Also undertaken were 5 other regulatory prosecutions under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Trade Marks Act 1994, tobacco labelling and packaging Regulations and food safety legislation. The fines for these offences totalled £5148, the victim surcharges totalled £403 and costs awarded to the Council totalled £4497.20.

HR Services

The trade unions have submitted a national pay claim for 2020/21 for Green Book employees for a *`real living wage of £10 per hour`* and an increase of 10% on all other points. This is in addition to claims for additional leave, a reduction in the working week and a joint review of workplace stress and mental health. Over the summer the HR team managed and delivered the recent apprentice recruitment resulting in the Council recruiting 31 new apprentices for 2019/2020 and all have now commenced employment in their respective departments. In October the HR Service will be promoting and managing health and wellbeing month for all employees across the Council.