

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN

Date: 16th July 2020

People: A good quality of life for all of our residents

Sport England Update

There has been a loud, positive and consistent message throughout the last 12 weeks: that being physically active is really important for individuals and can help in the fight against coronavirus. With gyms, swimming pools and all other leisure facilities closed, our beautiful parks and surrounding countryside saw more people walking and cycling. I hope that Blackburn with Darwen's £385,000 Emergency Active Travel fund allocation will create a lasting legacy to continue to encourage walking and cycling for our residents.

With many local sports clubs and organisations, having to close completely during the coronavirus pandemic Sport England recognised the very real and immediate challenge they faced launching the £35m Community Emergency Fund. I am very pleased to report that clubs across our borough secured £144,128 to help ensure they are there when restrictions ease and people return to structured sport and physical activity. An additional £13,000 has been allocated for organisations and voluntary groups who support those who struggle to be active. Working through the Local Delivery Pilot's ActiveBwD network immediate resource can be used to reduce physical activity inequalities.

Health and Wellbeing Update

On the 9th June, the Health and Wellbeing Board held its first meeting since the introduction of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was conducted remotely using Microsoft Teams and enabled supportive and constructive dialogue with community partners.

The agenda was dominated by discussion of the Borough's response to the COVID-19 pandemic locally and plans for managing the next phase of the pandemic. Other items included an update on plans for a Pan-Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board, approval of the 2020 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and notification of deferment of the requirement to publish a new Pharmacy Needs Assessment by 12 months, from March 2021 to March 2022.

Health and Care Integration Update

These unprecedented times have forced us all to work in very different ways to ensure essential health, care and community services are available to all residents, especially those that are shielding within Blackburn with Darwen. Due to the brilliant Integrated Care partnerships that exist between Primary Care, Adult Social Care, Community Health and Voluntary Sector Services, we have been able to continue to make great progress whilst dealing with significant challenges.

By having access to virtual platforms such as Microsoft Teams we are proud to have been able to recruit new staff in Adult Social Care, continue the weekly Integrated Neighbourhood Team Meetings (INTs), implement a successful project supporting homeless people and support the invaluable Care Home programme to ensure vulnerable people receive the best health, care and community support available.

Place: Community pride in a vibrant place to live and visit

Our Community, Our Future social integration programme

As we felt the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic locally ahead of the national lockdown, the Our Community, Our Future team cancelled many events and activities, and became a key part of the Council's crisis response. The team worked on the BwD Help Hub across a variety of vital roles: co-ordination and set-up, partner liaison, triage of requests, supporting vulnerable residents, and communications.

At the time of writing this report, we were awaiting confirmation of funding from MHCLG for Year 3 of our social integration programme. Prior to March, the programme manager had already begun to make plans for Year 3

projects that would build on the success of Year 2.

These plans were shared with the Our Community, Our Future Board, and as soon as funding is received, work will get underway.

Community Volunteers Awards

During the pandemic, we have seen an overwhelming response from local people and groups. It is incredibly comforting to know that we have the support of a wealth of wonderful volunteers who give their time and efforts freely to help others in need.

Blackburn with Darwen is blessed with many community groups and voluntary organisations that have helped vulnerable people by providing hot meals and food supplies, arranging shopping deliveries, offering transport to medical appointments, delivering medicines and making wellbeing calls.

The dedication of our borough's volunteers has not gone unnoticed and, on behalf of the Council, I thank them all.

The Community Volunteer Awards that we organise jointly with Blackburn with Darwen CVS unfortunately had to be postponed from June. This annual event to celebrate our amazing volunteers will go ahead, although a date and format has yet to be arranged.

Council: Delivered by a strong and resilient Council

Message of thanks to all Council staff, volunteers, residents and businesses

The coronavirus pandemic has changed all of our lives in a way that was unimaginable just a few months ago. It has also had a massive impact on all staff across the Council who have risen to the challenge and who continue to amaze me by their hard work and dedication. I want to thank every employee on behalf of residents and members for stepping up and responding to this crisis.

During these past weeks, we have shared on teamtalk numerous messages of gratitude received from residents that have helped lift our spirits in these difficult times. They show how much people appreciate what Council staff are doing across the borough to help them through the coronavirus pandemic.

We have had a tremendous response from our residents and volunteers, and have seen our communities come together. Our businesses have provided crucial support and resources contributing to our efforts to keep residents safe.