

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

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

DATE: 27th January 2022

Work with Hoarding UK

Earlier this year (August 21) the Neighbourhoods, Wellbeing and Prevention Service became aware of the opportunity to work with Hoarding UK, who were funding the development of Peer Support Groups for residents who are on a pathway to hoarding in Blackburn with Darwen.

The format of this work is determined by Hoarding UK and is as follows;

- Hoarding UK provide training for professionals working with residents who are on a pathway to, or who are identified as, hoarding
- This leads to a regular support session, supported by professionals, attended by hoarding clients
- There are 15 places available for the training
- This training is provided free of charge – the conditions of the training are that 1) those professionals attending are currently working with a client who is “hoarding” who would be willing to attend a support group and 2) the Fire and Rescue Service provide a venue for the training and for the support group to continue

The training in Blackburn with Darwen is planned to start in January 2021 and will be attended by 15 colleagues from across our Neighbourhoods Teams, Adult Social Care, Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service alongside Housing and Voluntary Sector providers.

Household Support Scheme

Neighbourhoods Teams are supporting the new Household Support Scheme by triaging referrals to the scheme and ensuring robust packages of both short and long term support are available to vulnerable children and families in the borough.

The Household Support Scheme can help residents with food, energy and water bills. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items such as boiler servicing and repairs and with wider essential costs.

The programme will run until 31st March and is for families with children and other vulnerable people who may or may not meet the threshold for benefits but may be affected by increased fuel prices, job losses, self-isolation etc. Blackburn with Darwen children, families and vulnerable adults who have an annual household income below £21,152 for single claimants and below £31,731 for couples.

These applicants must also meet at least one of the following additional criteria:

- Recipient of income related benefits, such as Universal Credit claimants.
- Facing financial hardship due to winter pressures
- Diagnosed with a severe mental health disorder (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder and schizoaffective disorder)

- Diagnosed with a long term medical condition related to respiratory or cardiovascular disease or diabetes
- Diagnosed with long COVID

The Neighbourhoods Team are able to make onward referrals to a number of local organisations including Blackburn Foodbank, Darwen Food Larder, Care Network, BwD Healthy Living, BwD Age UK, BwD Carers, Rummage Rescuers, Jubilee Tower Credit Union, United Utilities, Community Business Partners, Community Centres in BwD, and THOMAS.

Self referrals are encouraged, as are referrals from friends, family and professionals who identify those who need support <https://blackburn.gov.uk/benefits/winter-household-support-scheme>

The Help Hub continue to support any other residents in the borough who are in need – with the usual referral methods still in place [Support for residents | Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council](#)

Emergency Winter Provision for Rough Sleepers

We will be providing emergency accommodation this winter, as in previous years, in order to meet our duty to support people who are homeless and sleeping on our streets. Government guidance states that emergency accommodation should be provided when temperatures are forecast for minus zero degrees for three or more consecutive nights, however as an authority we always ensure that it is available throughout the months of November to April.

The winter provision is in line with Public Health guidance and is on a non-communal basis to minimise the risk of an outbreak of Covid 19. We have secured bedrooms at the Salvation Army and Bonum Court along with the 'homeless pods' adjacent to Shadsworth leisure centre that we utilised last year. These pods are self-contained and therefore Covid-secure. They have a bed, an ensuite which includes a shower, storage space, a TV and are fully insulated and heated. Two diner pods are also on site and contain cooking facilities, kettles etc. A daily hot meal is provided along with weekly food parcels supplied by the food bank. The additional accommodation that we have commissioned will ensure that there is a warm Covid secure bed available for all the rough sleepers and anyone else who finds themselves without accommodation between 31st November 2021 and to 31st March 2022.

Adult Social Care

Although our Adult Social Care Teams continue to operate under very difficult circumstances they work relentlessly to ensure that the statutory duties of the Local Authority are met and go above and beyond ensure the delivery of high quality and personalised services. This has made a real difference to the circumstances, health and wellbeing of some of our most vulnerable residents. Reablement and Home First teams have been at the forefront of the response to the Covid 19 Pandemic. These services have collectively worked across seven days, providing the consistent levels of care that local people have required to help them to remain living at home. Our Provider services have also supported the wider care sector at times of need and crisis. The last 12 months has seen a significant focus on further developing the four Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) to ensure local people are being offered the best possible health, care and community support available to help them be healthy, well and independent in their homes

and communities. We have recently seen a significant rise in the number of referrals into the INTs, on average this equates to 220 referrals each month.

Day services remain up and running and looking forward into the next financial year will continue to increase capacity across all sites, in line with national guidelines, as a means to increase the numbers of residents using services in a safe and planned way. Short breaks services continue to develop with a view to supporting residents with more complex needs and our Shared Lives service currently supports 36 residents within permanent placements. Staff wellbeing, recruitment and retention remains a priority area across all of our Adult Social Care teams going forward into next year.