

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PREVENTION AND WELLBEING

COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
CHIEF OFFICERS:
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Thursday, 26 January 2023

PEOPLE: A good quality of life for all our residents;

Men in Sheds - Blackburn Rover's Community Trust: This winter, Men in Sheds were shortlisted as a finalist for the Community Volunteer Awards 2022. The programme won the Health and Wellbeing Group Award in acknowledgement of the input and direction the 'men' have taken the project in and the support they provide each other. Men in Sheds meets every Thursday morning and is very welcoming to new members.

Changing Futures making a real difference: Changing Futures, the Lancashire wide programme supporting some of our most vulnerable and complex adults led by Blackburn with Darwen continues to make a significant progress as it reaches the mid-point of its funding period. In Blackburn with Darwen over 100 individuals have or are being worked with to address a range of disadvantage, including; homelessness, substance misuse, mental health issues, domestic abuse, and contact with the criminal justice system.

We have significant numbers of people entering recovery, remaining abstinent from drugs/alcohol, engaging with the help they need for poor mental health as well as the by-product of reduced offending and reducing entrenched homelessness, often for the first time in many years for a sustained period. We are now looking at how we sustain our delivery model when the Changing Futures programme ends in March 2024 and have co-produced a comprehensive sustainability and legacy plan with people with lived experience that highlights the work we need to do to ensure public services continue working collaboratively in a trauma informed and holistic way.

Emergency Winter Provision for Rough Sleepers (SWEP): The SWEP provision commenced on 14 November 2022 this winter making an instant impact on the borough's rough sleeper numbers which for the first time this year reached two or less consistently for the remainder of November and into December. Our offer includes emergency accommodation at our PODS site in Shadsworth, which comes with a package of support through the housing needs team supported by Changing Futures, maximising our opportunity to sustainably improve people's circumstance by getting to the core of what has resulted in them having to rough sleep.

The pods are self-contained and therefore Covid-secure, they have en-suite facilities, which includes a power shower, storage space, a TV and are fully insulated and heated. Two diner pods are also on site and contain cooking facilities, kettles etc. Tea and coffee are being provided along with weekly food parcels supplied through the food bank. Combined with our housing first model and wider prevention work, over winter there is always an alternative to homelessness for any resident of Blackburn with Darwen no matter their circumstances.

Covid-19 Response Update

The Covid-19 case rate has continued to decline in recent months, however, we continue to support high risk settings and communities through the winter period. The Stay Well Pledge was launched in November 2022, which businesses and organisations can sign

up to promote that work they are doing to keep their customers, staff and volunteers safe. The pledge forms part of the Council's wider 'Stay Well' winter campaign, and 36 organisations have signed up to date. The pledge promotes best practice while providing reassurance to staff and customers. By signing up to the Pledge, businesses and venues will demonstrate a continued commitment to follow public health guidance and promote;

- staff to access vaccinations
- adequate ventilation
- support for customers and staff who wish to wear face coverings
- hygiene facilities for staff and customers
- encourage staff and volunteers to try and stay at home if they feel unwell
- support for staff with health and wellbeing needs
- safe working practices according to HSE guidance

Through autumn, we have been supporting our NHS colleagues with the roll out of the autumn booster vaccine campaign. We have worked collaboratively with the NHS to set-up a comprehensive outreach programme including a pop-up vaccine clinic in the Bus Station, which, due to its success ran from Monday 12 September until 5 November 2022 and delivered over 3000 vaccines. Since the pop-up clinic closed, we have visited numerous sites within Blackburn with Darwen including HMOs, children's centres and community centres, taking the vaccine to the heart of our communities.

The Covid-19 de-brief reports have been finalised and shared with relevant departments. This exercise assisted us in collectively reviewing our local response, to highlight what worked well and identify learning for the future. The Covid-19 Public Inquiry team have been holding their preliminary hearings in advance of the public hearings due to begin in spring 2023. As a Core Participant of the Inquiry, the Local Government Association (LGA) have formally requested Councils to support them. We have and will continue to work with the LGA and the Inquiry team and respond accordingly.

Affordable Warmth Forum: as the residents of Blackburn with Darwen prepare themselves for further energy industry price increases the support mechanism put in place by third and statutory sector partners as well as Central Government needs to be coordinated for the residents to benefit its full potential. In response to this, on 5 December 2022 the Blackburn with Darwen Affordable Warmth Forum was launched. The Forum is being led by Blackburn with Darwen Healthy Living, who has been successful in securing three years of funding from the National Lottery, working in partnership with the Council. The main aim of the Affordable Warmth Forum is to raise awareness of fuel poverty and fuel debt in the borough whilst working collaboratively to make best use of resources across all partners. The Forum will meet regularly and will have input from residents with lived experience of fuel poverty and fuel debt to guide and inform the work.

Health and Wellbeing Board: The Health and Wellbeing Board met on 6 December 2022 and received items relating to the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Better Care Fund, as well as a summary of the latest national guidance for Health and Wellbeing Boards. The Board reviewed and commented on a revised terms of reference and received an annual update from the Age Well Partnership, which is a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Road Safety: The Public Health team commissioned Social Sense to consult with schools in the borough and aid them in designing a road safety campaign. In the first phase of the consultation, Social Sense visited three schools consulting with 670 year 9

students in assemblies. The three schools were St Wilfrid's, Darwen Aldridge Community Academy and Pleckgate. This generated a report detailing the barriers pupils have to active travel, what would encourage them to consider active travel and if they feel safe on the roads.

In the second phase of the consultation, schools and youth groups were invited to design a road safety campaign. The West End Girls group participated in the consultation and won the design competition with 'Be Aware, Stay Aware'. A representative from this group had a photoshoot with members from the road safety group, Social Sense and councilors outside the Town Hall for a Shuttle article to promote the campaign. The campaign ran through November on bus stops, digital screens and physical posters to include coverage of Road Safety Awareness Week.

Healthy Hearts Campaign: The Blackburn with Darwen Healthy Hearts campaign launched in October and ran until December 2022. The campaign intends to raise awareness of heart health and self-care, particularly amongst men. Working with the Wellbeing Service, re:refresh, the HARRI Bus and our Communications team we used national campaigns to magnify the messages locally including the 'Know Your Numbers' blood pressure campaign, National Fitness Day and Stoptober. We also promoted the NHS Health Checks during this time and have partnered with Blackburn Hawks to deliver NHS Health Checks through the Wellbeing Service at two ice hockey games in November and used this event to target men aged 40-50 in particular as this group does not tend to visit their GP for their NHS Health Check. Thousands of napkins with an NHS Health Check information QR code and Healthy Heart logo embossed on have also been distributed to a wide variety of food venues across the borough, including the Blackburn Ice Arena, mobile food vans and cafés.

The Recipe 4 Health (R4H) award: The Recipe 4 Health (R4H) award promotes businesses, including schools, which focus on healthy eating, environmental issues, and social responsibility. R4H is awarded by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and is a Lancashire Trading Standards scheme for caterers. We recently held a celebration event at King George's Hall to recognise the efforts and commitments of primary schools in the borough, with 99% of primary schools now signed up to the award.

CCTV Hub receives ISO9001 and British Standard accreditation: Between 23 and 25 November the council's CCTV hub was audited by the Security Systems and Alarm Inspections Board (SSAIB). The control room and CCTV operation as a whole passed both the British Standard (BS 7958) and ISO9001 accreditation with flying colours. In the feedback, it was noted that "Blackburn with Darwen has one of the most technologically advanced local authority owned CCTV control rooms in the UK" and provides a "...professional and highly valued services to its partners". Over the last 12 months through the integrated police systems and police staff now within the control room the use of CCTV in supporting crime detections and prosecutions has increased 40% with a doubling of incidents recording and forwarded for investigations.