

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN

Date: 24th January 2019

New Year's honours acknowledgements

The latest New Year's Honours included recognition for several people from the borough, Ian Woolley and Susan Scurlock received an MBE, while June Steele and PC Mark Renshaw were awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM).

Mr Woolley is a former chairman of an NHS trust and current chair of Age UK Blackburn with Darwen, as well as serving on other several boards. Ms. Scurlock is chief executive and founder of education provider Primary Engineer.

June Steele was a founder member of Blackburn with Darwen Sports Council and its current treasurer. PC Mark Renshaw, an officer is British Transport Police, was one of the first officers on the scene of the Manchester Arena bombing.

I want to congratulate all the people from our area who received awards. I am pleased to see they have been recognised for their long and dedicated service to the community or in PC Renshaw's case showing immense courage and selflessness in the face of such carnage and horror. Blackburn with Darwen has some amazing people who serve their community with distinction so it's great to hear that four people have been recognised. Well done to them all.

Your Call

The Good Neighbours Awards has been hugely successful over the last few years celebrating dozens of people who make their communities better. This year, we are looking at doing something different. We are joining forces with Community CVS and combining our event with their volunteers week awards with a good neighbours category.

The event will take place just after volunteers' week in June. At the moment, we are looking for corporate sponsors to help fund the event.

You will have also seen a series of videos celebrating the Keep Blackburn and Darwen Tidy groups. Already the videos we have produced in-house have inspired people to join in and do their bit. Both groups are doing sterling work and helping spread the Your Call ethos. It is important we promote their work. I remain committed to support our superb groups and individuals who make Blackburn with Darwen a better place.

Health and Care Integration update

As part of our shadow Local Integrated Care Partnership (LICP) governance arrangements, the North, East, West and Darwen Primary Care Neighbourhood Groups continue to meet on a monthly basis and in December 2018 they all held their fifth round of meetings. To help design and transform community health and well-being services and increase the range of high quality services to local people who live and work within the four neighbourhoods, the Primary Care Neighbourhood Groups have started to identify a set of emerging priorities which include cervical screening, addressing loneliness and social isolation and diabetes prevention.

To support the Primary Care Neighbourhood Groups to develop the projects an opportunity has arisen through NHS England for group members to participate in a three-day Time for Care programme which is currently underway.

The LICP Board continues to meet on a regular basis with positive attendance and contributions by all members. A new highlight report has been produced which will be shared over the coming months as part of the Integrated Care Communications plan.

Social integration

Lord Bourne, the Government's Minister for Faith, made a special visit to BwD in December to help launch our Social Integration Strategy. Our Community, Our Future sets out how our funding through the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Integrated Communities programme will be spent in Blackburn with Darwen.

A Local Integration Partnership (LIP) Board will steer the programme of work. I am pleased to have been appointed as Chair, supported by my Vice Chair Chris Seddon, who has a broad range of experience in the voluntary sector locally. At the meeting in December, the LIP board agreed plans for how we will move forward with project commissioning, we are looking for submissions which demonstrate creativity and innovation in better overcoming barriers to integration, to make the most of this fantastic opportunity which MHCLG are supporting us with. Following the member workshop on integration in June last year, we intend to hold a second Member Workshop in the near future, which I hope you will all be able to attend.

Holocaust Memorial Day

On Tuesday 29 January BwD Borough Council and the BwD Interfaith Forum will jointly host the annual ceremony to mark Holocaust Memorial Day which brings the community together to remember and pay respects to victims of genocide, oppression and torture. It will be held in the Council Chamber at Blackburn Town Hall.

The theme of this year's Holocaust Memorial Day is 'Torn From Home'. It encourages us to consider the impact of people suddenly being driven out or wrenched from their homes because of persecution or the threat of genocide. Groups of pupils from eight local schools are preparing short presentations on the stories of individuals who found themselves torn from their own homes during the Second World War. Representatives of the local refugee community will also speak about their own experiences, giving a current and personal account of fleeing persecution.

A short film from the Holocaust Memorial Trust will also be shown and Rabbi Arnold Saunders will give the keynote address. The end of the ceremony will be marked with the lighting of candles as a sign of peace, unity and hope for the future.

Anyone who would like to attend should contact the Council's Governance and Democratic Manager, Phil Llewellyn on (01254) 585369 or phil.llewellyn@blackburn.gov.uk.

LGA corporate peer challenge

Members will know that the LGA Peer Team spent four days with us at the beginning of December challenging the Council on five core areas that the LGA believe are critical to council performance and improvement. The Peer Team met with a wide range of staff, councillors, partners and volunteers. Thank you to everybody who took part and helped to make this review so meaningful.

Initial feedback has been positive, with the Peer Team recognising the fantastic work we are doing at the Council already in terms of growth and community engagement. They also made reference to our strong leadership of place, the enthusiasm and commitment of our staff, and the professional and mature relationships we have developed across our political groups. They acknowledged the financial pressures we continue to face with growing demand for services and said that we have a good understanding of our financial challenges. The Team also made particular reference that our partners have real confidence in the Council.

We expect to receive their final report shortly which will outline recommendations for Council to consider. We will publish the full report along with our response to their recommendations.

Corporate Plan refresh 2019-2023

Following discussion at our last Council Forum meeting and also Policy Council, members will be aware that work is starting to refresh our Corporate Plan and performance framework. The new Corporate Plan will reflect recommendations from the Peer Review, feedback through the

residents' survey, research analysis and partner events which have taken place over recent months.

Members, staff and our partners will have opportunity to contribute their views and comments on the Council's vision and priorities over the coming weeks before final agreement at our next Council Forum in March 2019.

National Festival of Making 2019

The National Festival of Making will return to Blackburn for a third year on 15th and 16th June 2019. Residents and visitors alike can look forward to another year of free hands-on workshops, street performance within Blackburn town centre, Cathedral Quarter and venues in the town centre.

Planning has now begun and I encourage you all to volunteer and support this fantastic event. I would recommend that you all share the details of this wonderful event and the volunteering opportunities available to all. I will share more details at future meetings.

We are working with many partners to ensure that this continues to be a huge success and I invite all members to attend the festival and promote our borough as a great place to live, work and visit.

Preparations for leaving the EU

As members will be aware and watching intensely the updates in Parliament. The House of Commons on Tuesday 15th January voted against the Brexit deal. We are currently scheduled to leave the EU on 29^h March 2019 and the Council's Civil Contingencies Service are working with council departments and services in preparing for a "worst case scenario Brexit no deal".

As a Council, we are using the LGA's template to identify specific risks and threats of a 'no deal' scenario and responses are being co-ordinated via the Civil Contingencies Service. In addition the Governments' Technical Notices published last year are being considered by all services areas for any consequences to their service area and business. Departmental Business Continuity plans are also 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, NHS, Environment Agency and other key agencies to make preparations around potential consequences to the community if a 'no deal' Brexit occurs. Individual agencies will also be expected to provide situational reports on a frequent basis to the Government. The Council have contacted businesses across the Borough to see if any business continuity support and resilience planning is needed from the Council. We will continue to engage with the LRF.