

## CABINET SECRETARY (RESILIENT COMMUNITIES) – COUNCILLOR GRAHAM CAIN

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The Resilient Communities area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Kathryn Benson (Schools and Learning)
- Councillor Amy Cross (Adult Services and Health), and
- Councillor Maria Kirkland (Third Sector Engagement and Leisure Services).

The full details of the portfolio areas can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Your-councillors/Executive-members.aspx>

### Corporate Issues

#### School Improvement

I am delighted to confirm that school Ofsted inspections this term have been very positive, following on from the 'Good' judgements received by schools in the Summer Term of the 2016/2017 Academic Year. All schools that have been inspected this term have been rated as 'Good', with the exception of Devonshire Primary Academy that maintained its 'Requires Improvement' judgement, but with 'Good' ratings for "Effectiveness of Leadership and Management" and "Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare". The trajectory of travel for Devonshire Primary Academy is positive and the school is expected to be judged 'Good' on next inspection. Devonshire Primary Academy is therefore the only Primary School in our area that is not rated at least as 'Good' by Ofsted. Given the number of primary schools in our area and the challenges we face, this is a strong position, with the quality of primary provision a clear point of strength for our town. Whilst we should not be complacent, I would like to congratulate everyone who contributes to our clear success in this area.

I am particularly pleased with the evidence that secondary performance is improving. Unity Academy has been rated as 'Good' in all areas. St George's Church of England Academy expects to be 'Good' on next inspection, raising the number of 'Good' or better Secondary Schools to three from seven, in addition to a 'Good' Pupil Referral Unit. There is much work still to do, but the direction of travel is very encouraging.

I can confirm that two successful bids were recently submitted to the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) bringing nearly £1.5m of new resource into Blackpool to support a maths and a leadership development project. The maths project is led by Fylde Coast Academy Trust and the leadership project by Tauheedul Education Trust. The national Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund has also been accessed to benefit Blackpool's Opportunity Area, bringing phonics programmes to three primary schools and an Institute of Physics development programme to Blackpool and the Fylde College.

## **Public Health Annual Report 2016**

The Council's Director of Public Health has a statutory duty to write an independent annual report on the health of the local population. This year's report has as its theme the topic of community resilience. A selection of work and initiatives relevant to the topic are presented under the three domains of public health practice protecting the public's health, promoting health and wellbeing and healthcare. On the subject of health protection, the report describes vaccine coverage within the population, emergency preparedness arrangements and NHS Screening Programmes. The health promotion section looks at developments in the areas of reducing smoking and promoting healthier weight, the promotion of good mental health, the development of a self-care strategy, the HeadStart programme for teens and the Better Start programme for young children. The healthcare section discusses the opportunities for improving public health offered by the NHS-led Fylde Coast New Models of Care programme, transforming mental health services, strengthening public health services for 0-5 year olds and the NHS Health Check Programme.

The report describes how the wider system for building resilience is multifaceted and dispersed. A key task for the Council and partners across the town going forward will be to bring together and coordinate activities across the local system. The report is available for public viewing in the Libraries and published electronically on the Blackpool Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) website at [www.blackpooljsna.org.uk](http://www.blackpooljsna.org.uk).

## **Strategic Issues**

### **Blackpool Opportunity Area, 2017/ 2020**

As Members are aware, Blackpool was selected as a pilot 'Opportunities Area' and awarded £6m of funding over three years to improve social mobility, focusing on activity anchored around our educational institutions. Since the award, we have set up the Blackpool Opportunity Area Partnership Board, which is chaired by Graham Cowley, Vice Chairman of Lancashire Enterprise Partnership. We have been working hard on a plan to guide our activity, and I am pleased to confirm that Blackpool's three year plan has been launched by the Secretary of State for Education, Rt. Hon. Justine Greening MP and can be viewed here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-and-opportunity-areas>

Our three-year plan focuses on improving social mobility, raising sights and broadening horizons for Blackpool's children and young people. By working together with schools, colleges, the community and local and national stakeholders, we aim to make sure that no child is left behind.

### **Demand Management**

Members will recognise that demand pressures in Children's Services represents one of the biggest strategic challenges facing the Council. Since April 2017, a demand management plan has been evolving and I am pleased to confirm that it is already delivering a **safe reduction** of children in our care. At its highest this financial year the number of children in our care peaked at 555, the total as of October 2017 was 527. This approach to demand management is set in

the context of a wide and emphatic body of evidence that demonstrates that children and young people typically progress better when cared for by families and their community. Key to success in this respect is multi agency early intervention as early as is possible in the emergence of concern or identified support needs.

## **Policy Issues**

### **Independent Safeguarding Review**

Members will recall reference to a well-reported Coroner's case in questions at the last full Council meeting. I can confirm that following this and further to conversations with the son of the deceased man, I have instructed an independent review to be organised via the Safeguarding Adults Board. A suitably qualified and experienced person, unconnected to the Council, will carry out this review. The purpose of this approach is to conduct an impartial learning review with a view to providing assurance as to the robustness of our processes and/or identifying recommended changes, with the ultimate aim of minimising the risk of an avoidable repeat of a similar situation in the future.

I can also confirm that we have reviewed and reconsidered our monitoring approach and are in the process of planning and delivering changes that are intended to address issues and concerns closer to when they occur. We have already addressed the issues at the Care at Home Provider Forum and asked for co-operation from providers in delivering a greater extent of live monitoring of calls and improved oversight of day to day work and resolution of problems. We have invested further in the rate we pay to help providers recruit and retain good staff and provide sufficient management and supervision. We are also working with providers to establish the best systems for live monitoring and how they and we can shift the balance from monitoring of past issues to preventing or responding to current issues effectively. We are also seeking to invest in additional staff to seek routinely the views of service users and their families in relation to the quality of service being provided, and to deal with any issues raised.

Following the Coroner's hearing, we have met formally with the provider concerned. We identified the actions they have taken to date, what actions are still proposed and what action we are taking in relation to the matters identified at the inquest. I can confirm that the provider advised that they have both texted and written formally to all their staff regarding their duty of care, social interaction, allocated times and recording into record books. They have also reviewed their processes and oversight and made changes. Changes include designating a person in each office to monitor planned versus actual times, a review of record keeping and training provided to staff and a full branch audit. The provider is required to respond formally to the Coroner following a Section 28 notification and the detail of their actions to reduce the likelihood of future harm will be published as part of the outcome of the hearing. In relation to this specific provider, we have also arranged for every service user to be visited/ spoken with by a member of our Quality Monitoring Team and continue to work with them in the delivery of their action plan following the outcome of the case.

### **Annual release of data from the National Child Measurement Programme (2016/ 2017)**

The latest release of data from the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) for England was published on the 19 October 2017. The NCMP programme sees the height and weight all of children in Reception (aged 4-5 years) and Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) in state schools. The latest results show that nationally almost a quarter of reception children are overweight or obese and this figure rises to a third amongst Year 6 children, with the national situation worsening.

I am pleased that locally, this year's figures for Blackpool present a potentially more optimistic picture, with trends improving. Amongst Blackpool residents the results show a reduction in the proportion of overweight of around 6% and a modest reduction in obesity for 10-11 year olds and a slight although not statistically significant reductions for 4-5 year olds. The figures for Blackpool remain slightly higher than the national average for 4-5 year olds, but the figure for 10-11 year olds figure is in line with the national average. We need to be cautious as this is just one-year's figure and the general trend for Blackpool has been an increasing trend in obesity in line with the national experience. Nevertheless, I am hopeful that the signs of improvement in Blackpool attest to our continued efforts in this area.

As Members are aware, over the past few years the Public Health Directorate has led a variety of work in the form of Blackpool's Healthier Weight Strategy and the Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight. In addition, our universal Free School Breakfast Programme is playing a critical role, with an evaluation that concludes the scheme is contributing to healthy preference learning (see below) and international evidence that regular, healthy breakfast habits are associated with reduced likelihood of obesity.

### **Evaluation of Blackpool's Free School Breakfast Programme**

Blackpool Council's free school breakfast programme offers a free breakfast to all primary school pupils attending state primary schools. The programme rolled out from January 2013 and sees around 11,000 breakfasts served each school day in 33 primary schools across the town. The offer is a universal and for all primary school pupils from Reception to Year 6 inclusive and Blackpool Council's catering team delivers the programme.

An initial evaluation of the programme was undertaken in 2013 by Professor Margaret Defeyter, an academic with an international reputation in evaluating school breakfast schemes, and Dr Pamela Graham from Northumbria University. Following this, Northumbria University established a three-year, full-time PhD project under the academic supervision of Prof Defeyter to consider the impact of universal free school breakfast on social, behavioural and educational outcomes in primary school children in Blackpool.

The research produced through this doctoral study has confirmed that the school breakfast's programme has a range of benefits for children and families across the town, including:

- Support for the development of healthier breakfasting habits and developing preferences for healthier foods;

- Children consuming more fruits due to the increased availability and convenience of the breakfast offer in schools and breakfast skipping was low;
- Contribution to alleviating food insecurity and help to alleviate pressure in households during morning routines, particularly for large families;
- The universal nature of the programme was considered significant feature in reducing stigma and particularly for those parents experiencing working poverty; and
- The scheme provides a calm and positive start to the day, with children ready to learn.

The research did show that a small number of children consume two or more breakfasts. However, importantly, the research demonstrated that these children are not consuming more than the average daily calorie intake allocated for breakfast. All of the research findings in relation to this Blackpool study are consistent with the growing body of academic research on the benefits of free school breakfasts. From this wider literature, there is an emerging consensus that consuming a regular, healthy breakfast at school is associated with a reduced likelihood of developing obesity.

## **Transforming Services and Working with Partners**

### **Integration 2020: Building a New Village – Business Planning Event, October 2017**

In October, Public Health organised a large, well-attended (over 140 people) event at the Winter Gardens to take forward action on how the NHS Vanguard New Models of Care Neighbourhood Teams can be taken to the next stage of development in terms of integration and partnership working. Our aim is to achieve multi-agency neighbourhood teams that promote community health improvement and ill-health prevention through integrated public, private and voluntary sector provision. At the event, each Neighbourhood group started to work on developing the practical actions needed to take things forward, which included identifying whom they would need involved and where leadership was coming from. A follow-up workshop is planned for Wednesday 17 January 2018. In the meantime, neighbourhoods are encouraged to meet again, maintain the momentum and take forward their individual actions so that they can report on progress at the January event.