

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING, PUBLIC SAFETY AND ENFORCEMENT – COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL

Private Sector Housing

The Foxhall Village development is progressing well with the first residents due to move in before Christmas. The developers, Hollinwood Homes, are on target for 70 homes to be complete by the end of March next year, these properties will be for affordable rent and will be let to working families. The response for private sales to home owners has been strong and the show homes are now starting to be built on the eastern part of the site off Rigby Road. As part of the development, the high retaining wall to Seaside Way on the western site is being replaced by new fencing and repairs are also underway to Princess Street Bridge. This work will be completed before Christmas and will add to the sense of improvement that is taking place in this area.

Building Homes

Phase 1 construction at Queens Park is progressing well with all 92 homes at various stages of construction from foundations to final finishes, snagging and external works installations. Infrastructure construction is also advanced with deep sewer connections completed and highway and site boundary construction continuing. At the end of September there were 10 apprentices on site, including bricklayers, joiners, plasterers, painter and decorators and ground work apprentices. Local labour accounted for 34% of the total workforce.

Preparations for the delivery of Phase 2 are underway with site assembly progressing in line with programme and further design and investigative works planned in the coming weeks.

Trading Standards, Food Hygiene and All Enforcement activities

Enforcement Statistics

The national statistics regarding enforcement have recently been circulated in draft form. The Council's Public Protection Division has again emerged as the top performing service nationally in all meaningful categories. Each team has finished either top or second in every category relating to each of their activities.

Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act

The new Act is now enforced and officers are currently processing cases to obtain Community Protection Notices regarding the six most problematic traders in the town. Closure Powers are also in the process of being utilised where appropriate. Each of these issues is obviously subject to hearing by the Courts.

Claremont Selective Licensing

The inspection programme of the scheme is now underway. A total of 659 properties have been inspected. There are 1410 private rented properties in the area, 559 are now licensed or are in the process of being licensed, with 851 still to licence.

Takeaway Enforcement

There is a programme of repeat inspections to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour occurring around takeaway food premises, including those after the licence hour of 05.00. Officers target along with Police colleagues, on a risk and intelligence basis at the relevant premises and looking at issues around food hygiene, health and safety and commercial waste. Multiple offences have been uncovered, including drugs related issues.

Proceeds of Crime Recovery

This initiative is starting to bear fruit in recovering assets from criminal lifestyles. There are 13 separate cases ongoing. Payment has been received recently in one case of £142,000, of which £54,000 comes to the Authority, with another case in Crown Court on 28 November, with a forfeiture order agreed for £100, of which £38,000 will come to the Authority.

Problematic Beggars

Mr David Massey has been convicted of multiple offences and the Court agreed to impose a CRASBO effectively banning him from begging in Blackpool. Three other repeat offenders were in Court on 12 November 2014 to be prosecuted, with CRASBO applications.

Vulnerable Persons on Court Representation Service

A total of 20 cases have been taken on board in the last month, in an area where Legal Aid is not available. Recent experience shows that traders who are dealt with through this service generally capitulate before the Court hearing. Two notable recoveries within the last month were for two amounts in excess of £5000 each.

Tattooing/ Body Piercing

Proactive enforcement against malpractice in this area is ongoing with a conviction being secured at Preston Crown Court against James Woods. A prosecution is now underway against a person for tattooing a 15 year old girl.

Sex Industry

Ongoing weekend night time operations along with Police colleagues are occurring regarding health and safety, appearance and condition of premises and to ensure that no exploitation is occurring in massage parlours etc.

Licensing Services

The Night Time Economy Working Group created following the EMRO hearing has been meeting over the last few months to hear from a wide variety of businesses and organisations involved in that area of the economy. Further evidence is being gathered by a survey which can be completed by members of the public who want to express their views. The Working Group will be taking an interim report to the Licensing Committee in December 2014 with its final report to be published in the New Year.

“BSafe” – Blackpool Community Safety Partnership

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Performance

All crime in Blackpool showed a 4% decrease in July to September 2014 when compared to the same period the previous year. This equates to 152 fewer crimes.

Individual breakdown of other crime categories include:

- Anti-social behaviour has decreased by 6% (231 fewer crimes)
- Vehicle crime has decreased by 11% (34 fewer crimes)
- Domestic Burglary has decreased by 3% (5 fewer crimes)
- Domestic Abuse has remained at the same level
- Sexual Offences (not including rape) have decreased by 7% (5 fewer crimes)
- Assaults have increased by 3% (24 additional crimes)

Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC)

Between June 2010 and September 2014 a total of 53 Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conferences (ASBRAC) have been held.

A total of 320 high risk cases to date have been referred to ASBRAC since June 2010 and have had comprehensive action plans put in place to address the risk caused to victims by anti-social behaviour. A total of 296 high risk cases (93%) have either been completely resolved or resolved to such a level where there is no longer risk of harm to the victim.

A total of 211 low/ medium risk cases to date have been referred to ASBRAC since June 2010 and medium risk cases are now also being heard at the ASBRAC meeting. A total of 202 low/ medium risk cases (96%) have either been completely resolved or resolved to such a level where there is no longer risk of harm to the victim.

Crime reduction and substance misuse initiatives

Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

On October 20, the new Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act came into effect, bringing with it a series of new tools and powers to be used by local authorities, Police and other delegated bodies.

The Community Safety Team has been working alongside partners to successfully implement the new legislation and training sessions for internal staff and partner agencies have been carried out in order to ensure that the transition to the new legislation will be as seamless as possible. Arrangements to facilitate the Community Trigger have been put in place between the Council, Police, Clinical Commissioning Group and Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited (the four organisations identified by the Act as required to facilitate the Trigger).

This provision will give victims and communities the right to require agencies to deal with persistent anti-social behaviour and to have a say in the way their complaints are dealt with. Work is also ongoing with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in relation to the Community Remedy provision, which will require the PCC to consult victims and the public on the menu of sanctions available for those committing low-level crime and anti-social behaviour.

The injunction part of the new tools and powers has now been postponed until January 2015 due to issues around the provision of Legal Aid. The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, requires amendment in order to ensure that applications for legal aid can be accessed by those involved in civil hearings. Until the injunction tool is implemented in 2015, the Anti-social Behaviour Order (ASBO) will remain in use.

Transforming Rehabilitation

The Secretary of State for Justice announced the list of preferred bidders on 29 October 2014, for each of the Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) in England and Wales. The preferred bidder for Cumbria and Lancashire is Sodexo Justice Services, a private organisation, in partnership with NACRO, a charity.

The Ministry of Justice will now be holding a series of meetings in the next few months with the Preferred Bidders in preparation for awarding of contracts and remain on track to sign contracts with the new providers in the next few months. The transition from the current CRC, in public ownership, to the new providers should take place in early 2015

Psychological abuse: new criminal offence

A new criminal offence of domestic abuse may be introduced to include emotional and psychological harm inflicted by a partner within a relationship. The Government has launched a consultation to look at strengthening the law by explicitly stating that domestic abuse cover coercive and controlling behaviour, as well as physical harm.

The move comes after the way that Police respond to domestic abuse in England and Wales was described as 'alarming and unacceptable' in a report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) in March 2014.

Measures to improve standards of police integrity

On July 22, it was announced that ongoing work to ensure the highest standards of integrity in the police will include:

- a fundamental review of Police leadership
- a review of the Police complaints system
- an external review of the Police disciplinary system
- the introduction of a national policy for police forces on whistleblowing

The Government will consult on the outcomes of the review later this year.

New psychoactive substances campaign

A national advertising campaign to raise awareness among teenagers and young adults of the dangers of new psychoactive substances (also called 'legal' highs) was launched by the Home Office on the 16 August. The radio, digital and mobile phone adverts are aimed at people aged 15 to 21 and warn them about the risks of taking these drugs. The campaign also directs young people to the "talk to Frank" confidential website for help, information or advice about drugs.

A second phase of the campaign later this year will target social workers and other professionals to challenge drug-taking behaviour amongst young people.

Domestic abuse

Early intervention

There continues to be a Domestic Abuse (DA) specialist post in the early assessment team at the front door and there are ongoing developments regarding the interaction with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to provide de-escalation for families to reduce the referrals to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

The four year research study and pilot of Standard Risk Domestic incidents began on the 1 October 2014 with the collation of data and identification process being developed with key stakeholders and UCLAN. A new Team Manager for the Interpersonal Violence and Domestic Abuse team has commenced in post on the 15 September 2014 and will lead the delivery of the operational element of the Pilot in addition to driving the team and the Domestic Abuse agenda locally. A commissioning review is currently taking place of all Domestic Abuse services delivering in Blackpool and a local strategic commissioning group is in operation to provide a report for consideration and agreement at the Blackpool BSafe Strategic Board in October for BSafe to be the governance structure for DA commission

Work with Perpetrators

As Part of the commissioning group we have considered the gaps around effective Perpetrator Programmes and as part of the HMIC National Action Plan we are working with the Constabulary and partners Pan Lancashire to provide solutions collaboratively.