

Report to:	TOURISM, RESOURCES AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officers:	Andy Foot, Head of Housing Jo Parker, Transience Manager
Date of Meeting:	21 July 2016

TRANSIENCE PROGRAMME

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider an update on the progress of the Transience Programme.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To scrutinise the update report and to determine the next steps in terms of the involvement of the Committee.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To keep the Committee updated and ensure that progress has been achieved.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered: None

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priorities are "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool" and "Communities: Creating Stronger Communities and Increasing Resilience"

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Overview of the Transience Programme

5.2 Blackpool has a significant transient population, with approximately 8,000 people moving into and out of the area annually, and residents moving frequently between tenancies.

5.3 The dominance of poor quality privately rented housing, often converted from former guest houses, has led to intense concentrations of deprivation, and an environment that fosters poor health, crime, welfare dependence and lack of opportunity. This in turn leads to local partners having to commit significant resources in responding to acute health, social care, educational and employment needs as well as dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour.

5.4 The Transience Programme aligns and coordinates the implementation of Selective Licensing inspections of private rented properties with a person-centered programme that supports and refers vulnerable tenants into healthy, sustainable lifestyles, alongside developing resilient neighbourhoods that foster personal responsibility and reduce dependence on public sector services. The programme introduces a pro-active preventative doorstep and drop in approach to public service delivery, linked to wider initiatives to improve housing, supporting and expanding community groups and provision and improving the attractiveness of deprived communities.

5.5 The Programme builds on a pilot carried out in the South Beach area of inner Blackpool and funding has been received from a Transformation Challenge Award bid for three years from April 2015 to further develop the work and show:

- Significant improvements in health and well-being of the population including a reduction in substance misuse and Accident and Emergency presentations.
- Decrease in incidents of anti-social behaviour and crime.
- Decrease in the number of household fires.
- Improved school attendance.
- Improved learning and skills with residents moving closer to the employment market.
- Fewer crisis presentations to Council services.

6.0 Developing the Programme

6.1 At the Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 15 October 2015, an outline of the development of the Transience Programme was presented. A number of priorities for future work were set out, including:

- To further develop the strategic partnership.
- To further develop the Evaluation Plan.
- To further develop regular monthly reporting from the involved parties.
- To further develop an operational Transience Group.
- To develop a wider community group in Claremont, in partnership with Great Places Housing Association, working with interested parties and existing community groups.
- To continue to support and develop the community groups in South Beach.
- To re-visit and review South Beach.
- To establish a “drop in” base for the Transience Team within the community of South Beach.
- To analyse the results of the consultation in Central and plan the way forward.
- To develop links with the existing community groups in Central.
- To carry out a partnership consultation workshop to discuss progress, issues and future plans.

6.2 This report sets out progress in taking this work forward, by in turn considering the development of the governance around the Programme, and then progress in each of the three areas of South Beach, Claremont, and Central.

7.0 Governance

7.1 Since the last report, engagement by public sector stakeholders has been strengthened, with involvement at an appropriate level by representatives from the Police and Fire services, Clinical Commissioning Group, and housing association partners, as well as services within the Council.

7.2 An operational group was formed to help with the direction of activities on the ground, but this has been superseded by the coordination on an area basis of transience work alongside licensing and housing enforcement activity and Police and fire initiatives. This is because each geographical area has its own challenges and it is important to bring together all of the services working in each area rather than focusing on the transience work in isolation. The main focus is to plan for the roll out of transience and licensing activity into the central area neighbourhoods.

7.3 There will still be oversight of the Transience Programme itself through a smaller project board, considering the impact achieved, reviewing the budget, and refining how the programme is delivered.

7.4 A critical element of the Transience Programme is effective evaluation to understand whether a pro-active area based approach reduces the demand for crisis services and establishes more stable and prosperous communities. The first challenge has been to ensure that workers on the ground are accurately recording the support given and

the second challenge is to get information on the improvements made by individuals who have accessed support as a result of the Programme. A wealth of information has now been collected and there is now more systematic recording by workers on the ground. The outputs from this evaluation will be a revised cost-benefit analysis, updating the projections made as part of the Transformation Challenge Award funding bid with actual outcomes, and regular reports on progress to help refine the delivery of the programme. A comprehensive formal evaluation report will be produced early in the third year of the programme in summer 2017, to inform future approaches after the Transformation Challenge Award funding has come to an end.

8.0 South Beach

- 8.1 As a result of the programme over 1,690 people have been seen and over 950 were provided with support. The initiative has received a positive response from the community and feedback from individuals who have been supported, suggesting that the proactive approach to offer help and support before crisis point has made a difference.
- 8.2 Work to engage the local community in shaping their own neighbourhood is still on going and a weekly drop in centre in South Beach is well established and is regularly attended by upwards of 40 individuals. Facilities offered are the use of phones, computers as well as Housing Benefit advice, support referrals, employment support and help with substance misuse issues, plus the chance to address loneliness and mental health issues via socialisation over tea and coffee.
- 8.3 There is still no base for the Transience Team within the South Beach area that can be accessed by the public.
- 8.4 The Transience Coordinator is working closely with the local community and businesses and recent successes include the setting up of a Book Club following on from world book day, and a photography club has been established following photography workshops on the visualisation of South beach with a competition to be launched in the coming months to capture what people like about the area and what they do not like.
- 8.5 An evaluation report is being prepared to understand the impact of all of the work in South Beach since selective licensing and the first transience work began there in 2012. This will help determine what happens next when the selective licensing scheme ends in March 2017. But regardless of the licensing situation, there will be a continued presence of the Transience team in South Beach. The focus is on supporting the existing local community, individuals and families as well as those new to the area.

9.0 Claremont

- 9.1 Property visits linked to selective and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) additional licensing started in Claremont in July 2014. Work is continuing to support the local community and to develop the local drop in. Following consultation, the drop in has been moved to a more central location and is now benefiting from an increase in engagement. Support is available for substance misuse/ welfare benefits advice/ employment support as well as adult learning ICT courses and there are plans to carry out further adult learning courses around budgeting and life skills.
- 9.2 There are a number of community events planned (including the Gala on the 9 July 2016) and sub-groups chaired by community volunteers meeting to discuss specific issues, supported by the Transience Programme.
- 9.3 Great Places Housing Association who own over 200 properties in the area have agreed to place dedicated staff within Claremont to help develop the community.

10.0 Central

- 10.1 An Houses in Multiple Occupation Additional Licensing scheme was approved by the Executive on 4 April 2016 for the Central area, and the new licensing scheme began on the 4 July 2016. The Central area includes the town centre, Talbot / Brunswick, Raikes, Revoe, and St Heliers. This paves the way for the roll out of the Transience Programme to this much larger area, as originally planned.
- 10.2 An execution plan has been drafted and several cross partnership workshops and meetings have been planned to determine how transience work will be coordinated with the licensing inspection programme. It is envisaged that inspections will begin in September 2016.
- 10.3 In the meantime, links have started to be made with the community groups in the Central area to help support them in working with people identified by the Transience Team.

11.0 Conclusion

- 11.1 Most of the planned development of the Programme since the last Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny report has been delivered. In particular, plans are being developed to expand the door to door work into the Central area from September, supported by community development activity.
- 11.2 A lot of effort has been put into ensuring that there is robust evaluation of the Programme but the revised cost-benefit analysis will not be completed until September 2016 when there is sufficient data on outcomes that are being achieved.

11.3 Expenditure of the Transformation Challenge Award funding is under budget due to delays in recruitment of additional staff and the roll out of activity into the Central area taking place later in 2016 than anticipated when the bid was made. This means that the work is likely to continue slightly beyond March 2018.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

List of Appendices:

None

12.0 Legal considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Human Resources considerations:

13.1 One Transience Team post currently vacant
One new post – Employment advisor for the Central area - is to be recruited

14.0 Equalities considerations:

14.1 None applicable

15.0 Financial considerations:

15.1 The budget is managed and monitored by the Transience Manger and is reported to the project board every quarter. There is currently a small underspend compared with the original expenditure profile.

16.0 Risk management considerations:

16.1 Risks are discussed and managed by the project board. Coordination of all activity in each area has been strengthened to help plan the move into the Central area. There is also a nominated coordinator for South Beach and Claremont respectively.

17.0 Ethical considerations:

17.1 None

18.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

18.1 None

19.0 Background papers:

19.1 None