

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

Private Sector Housing Licensing

The new selective and additional licensing schemes in Claremont went live in April, with all privately rented properties now required to get a licence and comply with management conditions. A comprehensive inspection programme is starting in June, covering approximately 1,600 privately rented homes in the Claremont ward. The inspections will build on the experience of South Beach, combining inspections of property with visits by a dedicated team to link vulnerable residents to support. A new officer has been recruited to help landlords in the Claremont area deal effectively with tenants' anti-social behaviour, providing a similar service to the valuable work in South Beach.

Building Homes

Queens Park

Demolition work in the first phase of the re-development of Queens Park has now been completed, including the demolition of two of the five tower blocks on the estate. This marks an important milestone in the re-development, with construction of new homes on the site now underway and the first new homes due to be completed by November. The Council has recently bid for grant funding to the Homes and Communities Agency to help deliver the second and final phase of the re-development of Queens Park, with the outcome from the bid likely to be received in July. If successful, the demolition of the rest of the estate is likely to start in summer 2015.

Foxhall Village

The remediation contract is virtually completed, having been extended by the need to deal with unexpected utility services, and only validation reporting remains to be finished.

Visible progress is being made on the Rigby Road housing development despite a delayed start on site. Hollinwood Homes expect to be on target to deliver the first phase of 70 homes for Great Places by the end of March 2015. An additional 56 homes for private sale are being constructed concurrently and 19 of these have already been reserved off-plan. The 126 houses with full planning permission are being built on both the west and east parts of the site. Hollinwood Homes have decided to market the development as Foxhall Village.

There is still much to be put in place before the comprehensive development can be completed. Acquisition of property to complete phase three of the development on the Tyldesley Road / Blundell Street block continues at a slow but steady pace and the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) authorised by the Executive at the end of March 2014 is in the process of being served to the remaining owners and occupiers. Some relocations, of for example Blackpool Build Up, will need to be put in place to ensure business continuity. The extent of the objection to the CPO and a decision on whether an Inquiry will be required will be determined by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), probably by the end of July.

Contracts are in the process of being let to provide the required surface water drainage system (directly out to sea via the existing Promenade system and not to the combined sewer system) and to improve the appearance of the retaining wall to Seaside Way and Princess Street bridge, which are required as a part of the Development Agreement with Hollinwood Homes. Hollinwood are also preparing public realm proposals for the surrounding area to ensure that the development has the best setting possible and to help spread the full benefits of the development are trickled out to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Trading Standards, Food Hygiene and all Enforcement activities

Following repeated complaints from the public about on street car sales, a new high-profile, and ultra robust campaign has begun to tackle the issue. Within the first two weeks, all 38 vehicles detected were issued notices and all 38 removed.

Following a recent conviction for counterfeiting at Preston Crown Court and the Authority successfully winning an appeal hearing over a planning enforcement issue before the Royal Court the offenders have been ordered to repay over £300,000, with over £100,000 being recovered by the Authority. These Proceeds of Crime monies will be fed back into protecting the vulnerable and elderly from crime.

Officers have finished trialling the first batch of call blocking systems with extremely positive results. These systems are designed to prevent the elderly and vulnerable being targeted in their own homes via nuisance telephone calls. More units have now been ordered to widen the scheme to more previous victims of scams, using monies recovered from Proceeds of Crime

A new working methodology between officers and the Police utilising high-visibility interventions has begun with the intention of taking control of the Bank Hey Street and Promenade areas. Among issues dealt with have been drunkenness, begging, street trading, lewd behaviour, waste from takeaways, and illegal charity collectors.

Commercial waste enforcement has recently transferred within the Public Protection Division to sit alongside other enforcement functions. In the last month, there have been four Enforcement Notices with Schedules issued, and six Fixed Penalty Notices relating to littering, obstruction, misuse of waste receptacles and waste transfer notice issues.

Undercover investigations with the Police regarding bogus armed forces charity collectors have led to the seizure of hundreds of their items and four separate collectors being reported for prosecution for alleged fraud offences. Investigations are continuing.

An individual has been reported for prosecution for Fraud offences regarding preying on elderly victims in their own homes over building works. A joint Criminal Anti-Social Behaviour Order (CRASBO) application has been submitted, supported by the Police.

Operations continue to tackle the problem of illegal tattooists. Three warrants have all been successfully executed in the last few weeks with seizures made in each case. The most notable relates to an individual who had tattooed a 12-year-old child.

A joint operation is underway in Blackpool with the Police to tackle the problem of "Legal Highs". Agreement has been reached with the Drugs Unit at Hutton Police HQ that our officers will submit samples of every Legal High found on sale within Blackpool. The Police have agreed to analyse these free of charge. If they are found to contain prohibited items then the Police will take action, if they do not then the Authority will take prosecutions under General Product Safety Requirements.

"BSafe" – Blackpool Community Safety Partnership

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Performance

All crime in Blackpool showed a 5.1% increase in 2013/ 2014 (year to date) when compared to the same period the previous year. This equates to 786 more crimes.

High impact acquisitive crime (incorporating domestic burglary and all robbery offences) showed an increase of 21.1% (n=159).

Individual breakdown of other crime categories include:

- Anti-social behaviour has increased by 1.7% (n=211)
- Vehicle crime has increased by 6.1% (n=60)
- Burglary dwelling has increased by 22.8% (n=141)
- Violence against the person has increased by 2.7% (n=103)
- Criminal Damage and arson has increased by 4.5% (n=111)

Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC)

Between June 2010 and May 2014 a total of 48 Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conferences (ASBRAC) have been held.

A total of 293 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 280 high-risk cases (96%) have been either 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

Showing Domestic Violence the Red Card

A county wide campaign has been launched by the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner in a bid to tackle domestic violence throughout the World Cup. During major sporting events, levels of domestic violence can increase by up to 30% particularly as a consequence of increased alcohol consumption. A series of posters and advertising materials has been created, all of which are based around football terminology. It is hoped that the campaign will encourage people to think twice about their behaviour, raise awareness about where abuse victims can get help and subsequently minimise harm. Blackpool has fully participated in this campaign and the associated materials can be seen at a number of locations across the town. The campaign also raise awareness on the dangers of drink driving and the risks associated with domestic fires whilst intoxicated with alcohol.

Clare's Law comes into effect

On 8th March 2014, the domestic violence disclosure scheme and domestic violence protection orders were rolled out across all police forces in England and Wales.

The domestic violence disclosure scheme, also known as "Clare's Law", allows the police to disclose to individuals details of their partners' abusive pasts where this may protect someone from further violence.

Alongside this scheme, police and magistrates in England and Wales can now issue domestic violence protection orders (DVPOs). These can be issued where there is insufficient evidence to charge a perpetrator, and can prevent the perpetrator from returning to a residence and having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing the victim some time to consider their options, with the help of a support agency.

Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill receives Royal Assent

The Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 received Royal Assent on 13th March and the provisions of the bill came into force on 20th March. The Act introduces more effective powers to tackle antisocial behaviour, streamlining the old powers into six new powers. It is hoped that these new tools and powers will provide better protection for victims and communities.

The Act also includes a Community Trigger, which will allow individuals and communities to execute a review of how a specific antisocial behaviour issue has been tackled by the relevant agencies where

they feel no sufficient action has been taken. This will ensure that the public feel that their voices are heard and they have an active role in taking action if agencies are not effectively tackling antisocial behaviour. The Community Trigger is due to be introduced in autumn 2014.

This is Abuse Campaign

The latest phase of the 'This is Abuse' campaign, which aims to engage teenage boys and young men on what constitutes abuse and violence in their relationships, was launched in March. YouTube stars have created video blogs in which they talk about issues affecting teenage relationships. The video blogs point out that abuse isn't always physical and involves wider issues of consent. All the videos end with a yes or no question. The aim is to start an interactive conversation with viewers, challenging harmful attitudes and clearly highlighting what constitutes abuse.

The campaign aims to prevent teenagers from becoming perpetrators and victims of abusive relationships by encouraging them to re-think their views of violence, abuse, and controlling behaviour. Teenagers are also encouraged to consider what consent means within their relationships and the campaign also signposts them to help and advice.

CCTV/ Security Service

The Council's Security Manager has recently completed Police training to be accredited under the Community Safety Scheme – Traffic Control. This new accreditation means that he and colleagues in Blackpool Council are able to conduct road closures in place of the Police. Blackpool is the only authority in the North West that has the accreditation. This opportunity materialised due to the high costs and savings required to implement road closures by the Police for large events in the town, many private operators are now helping the Police with road closures to relieve Traffic Police from this duty.

The potential was seen to undertake this within the Council as a financial saving exercise. The training has already paid dividend as the service has been asked to carry out a road closure and traffic census in Preston on behalf of Lancashire Police.

Licensing Service

I am also pleased to inform the Council that a Bill has just been laid before Parliament to amend Section 4 of the Licensing Act 2003 (general duties of licensing authorities), to add a fifth licensing objective regarding public health (protecting and improving public health). This is an issue the Council has been supporting for a number of years.