

DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR URBAN REGENERATION – COUNCILLOR JACKSON

Sea Water Quality

Work is continuing within the Fylde Peninsula Water management Partnership and Turning Tides to improve bathing water standards.

United Utilities has now switched on the Preston tunnel and because of the expected reduction in United Utility Spills, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has agreed to implement a Step Change at the Blackpool South bathing Water. This means that time for aggregating the results and consequential decision around the quality and signage on that bathing water will not be made until 2017.

Defra had asked Local Authorities to trial electronic signage, this signage has now been manufactured and has recently been dispatched. Blackpool will host three signs at Bispham, Blackpool North and Blackpool South. The signs have been provided free of charge from Defra.

United Utilities have started their site inspections works off shore in respect of their proposed investment in bathing waters at Anchorsholme and South Shore. Work is expected to start at Anchorsholme in January 2015.

Flood and Water Management Statutory Services

Following publication of the joint Flood Risk Management Strategy Blackpool Council and Lancashire County Council are working together through the Lancashire strategic partnership to deliver a plan in respect of the actions outline in the strategy.

The Lancashire Strategic Partnership is also working collectively to prepare and deliver reports to the Regional Flood and Coast Committee on its performance in delivering the statutory duties under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

Flood Risk Management Scrutiny

Following the recommendations in the report of the Flood Risk Management Scrutiny, the following actions have been taken:

Recommendation 1 – an annual report will be submitted to Flood Risk management Scrutiny board in October 2014.

Recommendation 2 - Members will recall that the strategy was out for consultation and the strategy has been approved by the Executive.

Recommendation 3 - procedure to determine local discretion on investigations, it was noted that whilst a date for completion had been April 2014, Scrutiny Committee had been advised via the Final report that this time scale may need to be extended and therefore this procedure will now be completed by the end of Dec 2014.

Recommendation 4 - establishment of a working group to ensure mapping is kept up to date. A Corporate Water Management Group has been established to ensure that all aspects of the Flood and water management act are delivered and in particular, that all assets are recorded on the Councils' mapping system. In addition, officers have engaged with the environment Agency and United Utilities

to ensure any information in relations to assets is transferred onto the council's system.

Recommendation 5 - establishment of risk and costs of maintaining sustainable drainage systems – the final report to Scrutiny recognised that the timescale for this work was tight and given the decision of Central Government not to implement this part of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to date it expected that a full report in respect of this recommendation will be prepared by December 2014.

Coastal Defence Schemes

Progress continues with the coast defence works at Anchorsholme and negotiations with Untied Utilities are continuing to co-ordinate the works with United Utilities investment in bathing waters and in respect of the reinstatement to Anchorsholme Park.

The traffic management has been working very well in the vicinity of the works and residents have access to staff via the visitor centre should they have any cause for concern or for information.

The Minister Esther McVey, who is a Special Flood Envoy, recently visited the scheme and presented me with the prestigious national award from the Environment Agency; 'National Project Excellence Award 2014'.

Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership

Funding has been granted from the Environment Agency for the replacement of pumps at the Marton Mere pumping stations and for the renewal of the spillway. Site investigations are currently being undertaken and is expected that the works will be under taken in house by Community and Environmental Services.

Getting People into Work

Blackpool has been invited to pilot a new programme of integrated support for up to 1,000 unemployed residents with low to moderate mental health conditions. Blackpool has been chosen as one of four areas in the country along with Manchester, Newcastle and West London as part of the local Growth Deal. The Government recognises that certain benefit groups (such as Employment Support Allowance) perform poorly in terms of accessing the labour market. Employment programmes are not always designed to deal with mental health conditions. Blackpool Council is working closely with the Cabinet Office, Lancashire County Council, Jobcentre Plus and other third sector partners to design an appropriate two-year pilot worth up to £1.5m with delivery commencing from April 2015.

Economic Development

The Council has worked closely with Tangerine Confectionery since its announcement that its Clifton Road plant is earmarked for closure in 2015. Through the Blackpool Investment Fund, the Council has been able to award a £125,000 grant to help relocate 35 jobs associated with a confectionery production line. The capital grant will contribute to some £375,000 total investment in the Vicarage Lane plant necessary to accommodate the move. The company will continue to explore other employment opportunities in the interim and collaborate with the Council and other local partners to offer a full package of advice and support to workers facing redundancy.

The Get Started service continues to provide effective support to Blackpool residents wishing to start a business. In the period from January to August 268 people have attended the initial 'Road to Enterprise' workshop and since April 39 have gone on to start a business. The team is on target to assist 90 businesses to start in 2014/ 2015. The Get Started team has been especially effective in helping start-ups take advantage of the various Government Start Up loan schemes with 91 clients assisted to obtain over £575,000 of unsecured loans since 2012. European funding from Start Up Lancashire has allowed the recruitment of a second Small Business Advisor and a greater focus on 'post-start' support to help improve the survival rate of young businesses in Blackpool. The

expectation is that some 50 new businesses will receive additional specialist support in 2014/ 2015 to help them survive and thrive.

Youth Employment

At the end of June 2014, 7.5% of 16-18 year olds were not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared with 9.6% the previous year. This is still higher than the regional average of 5.8%, although the gap is being closed (regional reduction – 12%). Blackpool's performance is in line with our statistical neighbour where the average NEET rate was 7.6%.

Action is being taken and includes summer ventures courses for unemployed school leavers, an apprenticeship event held, which advertised 195 vacancies and developing a procurement framework within the Council where the added social value includes the recruitment of apprentices.

Phones and IT

Windows 7 Upgrades and device Deployment

The IT Service is continuing with the refresh of Windows software and hardware devices. This is necessary due the withdrawal of Windows XP and the age of many hardware devices significantly exceeding their serviceable lifespan.

The following services will receive new devices between August and October:

- 203 devices rolled out in August to Children Services, Adult Services, Credit Union and BCH
- 57 devices scheduled for rollout in September to Public Protection
- 94 devices to the Community and Environmental Services Directorate

By the end of September, the total number of devices upgraded to Windows7 as part of this programme will be 1413. The new devices will enable faster access times, improved productivity and flexible working.

Information Sharing with Health

Both Social Care colleagues and Public Health colleagues now have direct access to the NHS spine network (N3). In order to access this secure network a number of security and compliance requirements have been met by passing the NHS compliance framework Information Governance toolkit.

Access to the NHS secure network is a key enabler for the Better Care programme, which will enable Social Care and NHS colleagues to more easily share data and work jointly to support vulnerable members of the community.

The IT Service is also working closely with NHS colleagues supporting the submission of Better Care Fund bid to ensure robust plans are in place to develop and enable the secure sharing of data via IT systems to frontline workers in both organisations.

Schools ICT

The ICT Service has been supporting schools with e-safety developments, looking at whole school e-safety development and also policy support and development. More of this work is expected in the next few terms.

Over the summer break, a significant amount of development has taken place with a number of schools who have been upgrading their IT infrastructure, hardware and software estates.