

DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR URBAN REGENERATION – COUNCILLOR JACKSON

Beach Patrol

The Beach Patrol team supported all the major events during the summer including the Air Show, Ride the Lights, 'Switch On' Festival Weekend and World Fireworks, as well as the filming of an episode of Coronation Street.

Working in partnership with Lancashire Constabulary, the team provided the lost children centres on the promenade, which has been a tremendous help during the summer. So far this year, Beach Patrol has successfully re-united over 112 lost children/ vulnerable adults safely back with their parents or carers after being found in distress on the beach or on the promenade. The Beach Patrol team has also provided over 800 safety interventions. The team has also visited local schools, delivering key safety messages aimed at pre-arrival beach safety awareness.

Sea Water Quality

The 2014 bathing water results have now been published and all four bathing waters in Blackpool have passed the current bathing waters standards. This is excellent news and a reflection of the hard work of everyone involved in the partnership approach that has been adopted, which is being promoted as best practice by the Environment Agency. Applications for the Seaside Awards will be made in March 2015 for each bathing water.

Flood and Water Management Statutory Services

Following the introduction of the Flood and Water Management Act, Blackpool Council has fulfilled its duty in the delivery of the Flood Risk Management Strategy. An action plan has now been prepared and Blackpool Council, in conjunction with its Partners, has put together a dashboard for recording the actions. The dashboard also records and provides evidence that Blackpool Council is complying with all the other statutory duties as required by the Act.

Coastal Defence Schemes

Progress continues on the Anchorsholme sea defence project. All the sheet piles and toe beams are constructed (with the exception of the area around the United Utilities facilities) and the concrete revetment units are being installed so the wall is beginning to take shape.

As part of their commitment to improve bathing waters, United Utilities are looking to start their works in Anchorsholme Park and a Board has been established so that the two projects can run smoothly and more importantly the reinstatement of the park is considered in consultation with all parties.

United Utilities hosted a fun day event in Anchorsholme on 27 October so the community are involved and kept updated on the works in the park and can take an active part and consult in the future of the park.

Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership

The Fylde Peninsula Partnership's main focus in the last few months has been the introduction of the Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB). Blackpool and its partners have been focusing on the training and delivery of this role. However, Defra held a consultation on the SAB role suggesting it

could now be integrated with the planning role. The Partnership is awaiting the results and proposals from Defra on the Consultation.

The ten point action plan delivered in 2012 in respect of bathing is currently being updated as many of the early actions have now been completed or superseded.

Work continues with Fylde Beach Care to work with volunteers and the community in respect of beach cleans and the Love My Beach campaign.

To date, Blackpool has had 200 children visiting our new seawall, Blackpool Tower and the surrounding coast as part of their curriculum studies on "Coast" delivered by the Fylde Peninsula Partnership.

Work continues with the Turning Tides and Fylde Peninsula Partnerships to ensure that all organisations are working collectively to reduce any impact of the introduction of the revised Bathing Waters Directive in 2015.

In particular, Blackpool Council and United Utilities are working together to establish innovative solutions for the separation of surface water and consequential reduction of water in the sewer network (that could attribute to spills). United Utilities are awaiting the decision by its regulator Ofwat regarding the investment projects to help bathing water quality, a decision is expected in December 2014.

Getting People into Work

Blackpool Council has achieved a national award for the quality of work placements it has provided over the last year, many leading to paid employment. The success of the programme has been recognised following an in-depth assessment by national charity Fair Train, which has awarded the Council its 'gold standard'.

The Chance2Shine work placement scheme, set up in November 2013, aims to help adult unemployed residents, including young NEET's, on their journey into paid work, by organising bespoke placements in a variety of Council departments. If successful participants gain a useful reference to add to their CV and continue to receive support in searching and preparing for job opportunities. Some 111 placements have been organised in the last 12 months, with 43 people going onto achieve paid employment with various public, private and third sector employers. The Council has had support from some private and third sector employers in the form of additional placements to extend the range of opportunities available.

Across all employment programmes delivered by Positive Steps into Work, the Council's lead employment services team, some 235 people have secured employment in the six months to September 2014. The team continues to offer a range of support outside its standard Work Programme contract, including health-related projects, and coordinated redundancy response packages to Council staff and local employers.

Energy and the Environment

United Utilities Automatic Meter Reading project update

In connection with the automatic meter readings installation (AMR), 100% of the meter replacement works are completed and 82% of the meters, 11 in total, have been handed over following final validations.

Of the 111 AMR units installed and analysed, problems have been identified at over half, 55%, with water running to waste at times of non-operation.

The total annualised cost of these problems is approximately £140,000 and works have been carried out and investigations to find and resolve.

Blackpool Council consumes approximately 240,000 cubic metres of water per annum, across corporate buildings, schools, Leisure Assets and the Sandcastle, costing £678,000 in 2014/ 2015. The portfolio comprises 240 meter positions. It has been previously identified from an analysis of the Blackpool portfolio that monitoring of 99% of the annual volume could be achieved through the monitoring of 136 meter positions.

Carbon Reduction Commitment Phase 1 update

The Council's annual reporting and allowance purchasing for the Carbon Reduction Commitment scheme Phase One 2013/ 2014 submission is now complete, with reported emissions of 20,910 tonnes of carbon dioxide, a 2% reduction on 2012/ 2013, costing £250,920. Please see table below for year-on-year reported emissions:

Year	Reported emissions, Tonnes of CO2	Diff	% Change	Allowances Cost
2010/11	23,864	-	-	£286,368
2011/12	18,968	-4,896	-21%	£227,616
2012/13	21,297	+2,329	+12%	£255,564
2013/14	20,910	-387	-2%	£250,920

Phase One compliance is now complete and Phase Two came into effect from 1 April 2014 and runs to the financial year 2018/ 2019. There is a fundamental change in scheme compliance, in Phase 2, placing emphasis on organisations' ability to forecast and manage their energy use in year to encourage energy reduction with two allowance purchasing rounds, the initial forecasting round and then a "buy to comply" round at the end of year which is at a 5% higher rate.

Miscellaneous Savings

An appraisal has been undertaken of the Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited water costs and consumption to identify cost saving opportunities.

Following the review, a challenge was submitted to United Utilities for unmetered water charges being applied to the garage portfolio element, which has led to the recovery of £14,150. This has also removed £2,750 of charges going forward as these accounts have now been closed.

As a result of the water automatic meter reading rollout across all Blackpool and Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited (BCH) to identify waste, inefficiencies and potential leakage, a £4,300 water baseline has been identified at the main Sheltered Housing site, Dunsop Court. This is currently being investigated by the BCH Limited maintenance team who have now located the problems and in a position to repair.

Electricity Cost Saving Opportunity: Tower Festival Headland

Following a review of the electricity use and costs on the Tower Festival Headland, a cost saving opportunity has been identified to reduce the annual running costs by 40% from £38,000 to £22,500 by reducing the reserved electricity requirement for the area.

Car Park LED Lighting Scheme update

The lighting efficiency project undertaken at West Street Car Park to replace the existing lighting with energy efficient LED lighting is complete and a 40% reduction has been achieved in the energy consumption since handover in July 2014. The project has also significantly improved the lighting levels and internal colour rendering. There will also be a reduction in the maintenance costs.

Following the success of the West Street Car Park project, programming is now underway to undertake a similar project at Chapel Street Car Park.

Planning and Land Use

The Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy

The latest consultation on the Core Strategy Proposed Submission document took place over an eight-week period from 4 July to 29 August 2014. Around 1340 bodies, groups and individuals were consulted. A total of 28 representations have been received raising 139 issues on different aspects of the Core Strategy and supporting documents. A summary document of the representations made and the Council's response to the issues is being produced. Following my approval of this document, it will accompany the submission of the Core Strategy with all the necessary supporting documents and evidence base to the Secretary of State. The provisional date for submission is 19 December 2014. Following submission, the Core Strategy will be independently examined by a Planning Inspector. The Examination is expected to take place in spring of 2015, but this is dependent on the Planning Inspectorate's timetable.

Fylde Coast Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Show People Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)

This assessment was undertaken by Opinion Research Services (ORS) consultants on behalf of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Councils. It was completed in October 2013 and identifies a need for additional sites across the Fylde Coast for the period up to 2031 as follows:

- Blackpool 38 pitches for Gypsy and Travellers
- Fylde 26
- Wyre 17

With two additional yards in Blackpool for Travelling Show People (none in Fylde and 12 in Wyre). Blackpool Council will need to work with Fylde and Wyre Councils in meeting these requirements.

Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Blackpool as a minerals and waste authority works jointly with Lancashire County Council (LCC) and Blackburn-with-Darwen Council on the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The joint authorities have agreed to review the Minerals and Waste Local Plan to extend the plan period to 2032 (15 years from the anticipated date of adoption). The current plan only covers the period to 2021. The first stage in the review is the scoping consultation, which commenced on 7 November and runs to 19 December 2014, inviting comments on what the review of the local plan should contain. Following this, a second consultation will take place in the summer of 2015 on the draft Local Plan.

Onshore Oil and Gas Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Lancashire County Council is working jointly with Blackpool Council and Blackburn-with-Darwen Council in preparing a Supplementary Planning Document on Onshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production and Distribution, and will be consulting on the draft shortly. The SPD will provide clarity as to the information required accompanying planning applications, how to present the application so that those consulted can have confidence in the process and the main issues and considerations necessary to satisfy the policy tests contained in the local plan.

Economic Development

The Get Started service continues to provide effective support to Blackpool residents wishing to start a business. In the six month period from April to September 2014, some 177 residents sought advice from the team, with 42 new businesses commencing trading, remaining on target to assist 90 new business starts in 2014/ 2015. The team is adept at unlocking start-up loan finance for its clients, with approvals totalling £219,000 in the same period. Since 2012/ 2013 the team has unlocked £617,000 in approved funds for Blackpool's new-start businesses. The universal service that Blackpool provides is envied by many local authorities in the region, with numerous case studies of successful businesses. We are now investigating ways in which the Get Started alumni can give something back to other new starts in the form of bespoke mentoring, and plan to engage their support in a new young enterprise initiative to be launched in early 2015.

Blackpool Council is working closely with the newly-formed private skills partnership, Blackpool Tourism Academy, in its mission to uplift the skills of tourism workers in the resort. It has recently launched a new skills initiative called WorldHost, aiming to transform the quality of customer service training. Worldhost is an internationally acclaimed programme that was used to good effect in training 10,000 London Olympic volunteers and has since been adopted by a wide range of hospitality and leisure companies. If Blackpool businesses achieve a target of 2,500 front-line staff trained then the resort will become the first seaside town in the UK to gain WorldHost destination status. Some 30 trainers have already met the standard to train fellow staff and are rolling out training within the founding BTA employers, as well as assisting in a broader campaign for other businesses in the visitor economy to adopt the same approach. The Sandcastle Waterpark is the first employer to achieve WorldHost business recognition status in Blackpool.

Youth Employment

The proportion of 16 – 18yr olds NEET at the end of September 2014 was 5.7%, compared with 7.4% in September 2013. This represents 282 young people who were NEET, the lowest it has been at this time of year. The independent evaluation of the Connexions Youthability Hub (a one stop shop for 16 – 24yr olds unemployed) has just been completed by REASON. There will be a full dissemination of the report but headlines include:

- 94% of young people rated the service as good or very good
- 72% of young people rated the support better than other employment support they had received elsewhere
- 91% of young people said they would recommend the service to friends

Overall comments “The evidence collected for this evaluation suggests that the Youthability Hub is meeting its original aims. The holistic model involving a range of agencies enables young people to receive support to address the barriers to employment, education and training as well as practical advice and support to secure opportunities. Strong commitment from partners and good collaborative working practices between agencies underpin the effective functioning of the Youthability Hub”

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 to the withdrawal of Windows XP and the age of many hardware devices significantly exceeding their serviceable lifespan.

The following services have received new devices since September:

- Waste Management
- Bispham Road Children's Home

- Revenues and Benefits – replacement of Thin Client Devices
- Planning and Building Control

The following services are due to receive new devices in the next quarter:

- Highways at Layton Depot to support the Accommodation Strategy and realisation of Council efficiency savings
- Democratic Services and Registrars

At the end of October the total number of devices upgraded to Windows 7 as part of this programme was 1630 devices. The new devices will enable faster access times, improved productivity and more efficient working practices.

Telephone Upgrades

Approximately 1,000 employees have now migrated to extension mobility. This means that employees can now login into a landline phone at any desk at Bickerstaffe House. This has been a key enabler to support flexible desk space.

Printing Upgrades

Approximately 1,000 employees have now migrated to new secure 'follow me' printing facilities. This enables employees to pick up their prints securely from any printer by using their door entry proximity cards

School ICT SLA

The ICT service has been successfully developing a Google portal system to support learning and teaching inside schools. This environment has been developed across Education Diversity to support learning opportunities and access to resources across multiple sites. Teachers are able to work more flexibly and collaborate effectively from any location. We will now be looking to providing this service across the other schools we support.

The service has also been supporting schools with the development of the 'new' ICT curriculum, which was launched in September 2014. It provides support with the understanding and development of the new curriculum, tailoring it to particular school needs and providing INSET and training for school staff on the new Programme of Study and the software and hardware to support and deliver the learning outcomes, particularly the new programming elements.

The ICT service has been providing continued support with E-safety development in schools and will be providing E-safety workshops to staff, pupils and also parents in the run up to Christmas and immediately after, with the advent of new devices being bought and used over Christmas. This is part of an ongoing programme of support and advice given to schools throughout the year, including support and development of school e-safety policies.