

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

New Homes

The first residents have moved into to Foxhall Village and Queens Park. The first 56 homes on the Queens Park development will be completed by the end of March and it is now possible to see the quality of the homes and the neighbourhood that is being created. Plans to complete the redevelopment of the rest of the estate have also been approved and demolition of the remaining tower blocks will start in the spring. This will create a total of 190 new Council houses when the development is finished.

The Foxhall Village development is also visibly progressing very well. The first 70 homes will be completed by the end of March and the next 50 are already starting to be built.

The developers, Hollinwood Homes are reporting a strong demand for sales from potential owner-occupiers. This development will create 410 new homes once it is fully developed.

“BSafe Blackpool” – Blackpool Community Safety Partnership

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Performance

All crime in Blackpool showed a 12.8% decrease in the period December 2014 to January 2015, when compared to the same period the previous year. This equates to 305 fewer crimes. Individual breakdown of other crime categories include:

- Anti-social behaviour has decreased by 4.9% (equivalent to 78 fewer crimes)
- Vehicle crime has increased by 6.5% (Seven additional crimes)
- Burglary (other than a dwelling) has decreased by 38.3% (75 fewer crimes)
- Burglary (dwelling) has decreased by 24.4% (30 fewer crimes)
- Domestic Abuse has decreased by 25.2% (78 fewer crimes)
- Sexual Offences (not including rape) have decreased by 3.5% (Two fewer crimes)
- Assaults have increased by 6.6% (39 additional crimes)

Crime reduction and substance misuse initiatives

Operation Impression

The Community Safety Team and PCSOs held the first of a series of bike coding events from the Neighbourhood Policing Team in December. The initiative, named Operation Impression, came after Police highlighted the need to tackle a recent increase in cycle thefts.

A trailer was set up in St John’s Square where members of the public could come to speak to the Community Safety Team or the Police about cycle theft, obtain information leaflets about cycle security and the Bike Register and also get their bicycle coded free of charge. Nineteen bikes were successfully coded during this event and a further 30 have been coded at a subsequent site in Bispham. Further Operation Impression action days are planned for spring and summer, which will help to raise the public’s awareness of cycle safety and security.

Advocates for child trafficking victims

A 12-month trial of specialist independent advocates for victims of child trafficking has recently begun, with the aim of providing support, advice and guidance to vulnerable children. A dedicated person will support each child with the capacity and expertise to promote their safety and wellbeing and guide them through the social care, immigration and criminal justice systems. This will help reduce the risk of these vulnerable children going missing and being re-trafficked. Once the findings from this trial are gathered, a decision will be made as to whether this scheme could operate nationally.

Coercive control now a criminal offence

It was announced in December that coercive and controlling behaviour would now be considered a domestic abuse offence after 85% of consultation respondents agreed that the previous law did not provide sufficient protection to victims.

The new offence is designed to help protect victims of domestic abuse by outlawing sustained patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour. Victims of coercive control can have every aspect of life controlled by their partner, often being subjected to daily intimidation and humiliation. Perpetrators will now face a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment, or a fine, or both.

Change in rape recording

From 1 April 2015, all reports of rape will now be recorded and categorised as rape until proven otherwise. This removes the current period of 72 hours in which officers are able to establish the validity of rape claims. The move comes after criticism that Police forces nationwide have not been reporting rape correctly and it is hoped that these new measures will allow for more accurate and reliable recording.

Blackpool has actively encouraged the reporting of rape and sexual assault for a number of years through work done by the Aquamarine Team. It is therefore expected that crime figures in this category will rise across the country because of these changes, but this will not be the case in Blackpool.

Trading Standards, Food Hygiene and all Enforcement activities

Out of Hours Noise/ Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)

This service was launched by the Public Protection Division on the weekend of 6 and 7 February. The intention is to provide the service every weekend between the hours of 21.00 and 03.00 hours and it will tackle matters of previously held intel, along with responding to calls to a dedicated, published mobile phone number. Statutory Notices were issued over both the first two weekends and the first prosecution has already been submitted. The service has been delivered from within existing resources and part of the review process of Environmental Protection.

Legal Highs

Officers from Public Protection, working with colleagues from BSafe, Public Health and the Police have become the first in the country to use Community Protection Notices to tackle the sale of 'legal highs'. The five major dealers in these products were all issued with formal Warning Letters under the ASB, Crime and Policing Act instructing them to remove these products from sale and two were subsequently issued formal Community Protection Notices. All five premises are currently in a state of compliance, but observations are ongoing and any non-compliance will lead straight to seizures and prosecution.

National Performance Statistics

The Public Protection Division has again ensured that Blackpool Council has finished as overall the top performing Unitary Authority in the country regarding enforcement. These figures are from the

nationally ratified CIPFA statistics, with the Authority finishing top of virtually every meaningful category and no lower than second in any single category.

Protecting the Vulnerable

Officers of the Advice and Education team have extended their activities regarding utilising the intel provided by the National Scams Hub, regarding repeat victims of scams. Personal interventions to disrupt these activities has now identified and protected 52 separate individuals and further activities are ongoing. Funding has been accessed from Proceeds of Crime to fit "Truecall" call blocking systems to 24 further victims of crime/ scams over the telephone. Further funding opportunities are being pursued.

ASB, Crime and Policing Act

Officers are robustly utilising the new tools designed to reduce crime and ASB. Notices have already been issued to tackle a variety of problems from begging, drinking in the street, aggressive dogs, rowdy hotels, takeaways to legal highs. Prosecutions for non-compliance have already been submitted. A consultation exercise is already planned with regard to imposing a Public Space Protection Order in the Town Centre and Promenade to further control behaviour.

Super No Cold Calling Zone

The first pilot of an intended town-wide Super No Cold Calling Zone has been launched at Low Moor Sheltered Accommodation. It is thereafter intended to extend the scheme across other sheltered accommodation before extending across the rest of the town. It is intended to increase effectively the controls that the Authority has over the activities of doorstep sellers who ignore displayed stickers.

Domestic abuse

Early intervention

The Stakeholder Group is continuing to develop the UCLAN pilot 'Step Up – Building the Evidence Base for Early Intervention Responses for Children Living with Domestic Abuse'. The researchers are in post and working with the group to establish methods of collecting data, establishing the service and the contribution of focus groups.

The external advisory group has been selected, made up of a range of experts and will be meeting at the Early Intervention Foundation offices in Westminster in March. The research team will be using range of research methods including interviews with children and families who have accessed the service.

Domestic Abuse Commissioning Review

The Domestic Abuse Mapping Workshop was held on 6 February, the event was well attended with 40 stakeholders from across sectors including specialist domestic abuse services and partners who work with children, families and adults who experience domestic abuse.

The North West Public Service Transformation Network supported the facilitation of the event, where a mapping exercise was undertaken to establish the services that are currently in place. Case studies were used to identify where partners can intervene earlier to support the identification of Domestic Abuse and the groups created ideal pathways of provision for children, adults, victims and perpetrator's incorporating preventative work through the continuum of need to high risk cases. The findings from the event will inform the commissioning of services. Service user participation will also be utilised to gain the experiences and views of people who have accessed services.

The next stage will be to establish the work streams required across the partnership to ensure effective provision of services. With the following stage of the review being to hold a stakeholder event utilising, 'Positive Transitions' to facilitate a customer journey through Domestic Abuse pathways. This will determine the work that is currently undertaken and establish what the identified need is moving forward. Service User participation will be included to capture real experiences.

Sanctuary Service

The Sanctuary Service continues to assess and maintain the security of properties where Domestic Abuse has been identified. A total of 114 referrals have been submitted since April 2014, the securing of the property can alleviate some of the fears that victim experience.

Training

The Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Team is currently reviewing and updating all the training. Dates have been set for the MARAC representatives training and we are looking to set dates for Domestic Abuse training, MARAC training and Honour Based Abuse training.

Inner Strength Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme

The Police and Crime Commissioner's office and the Council's Public Health directorate have provided funding to purchase a Domestic abuse Perpetrator programme using the 'train the trainer' model of delivery. This has previously been flagged as a gap in provision by the BSafe Partnership. There will be 12 professionals from across the partnership trained to deliver a 13-week programme, four per year with an evidence based therapeutic approach currently delivered in Prison settings. This initially will be a pilot to test the effectiveness of the programme in the community in Blackpool.