

## CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY, STREET SCENE AND NEIGHBOURHOODS – COUNCILLOR PAULA BURDESS

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Portfolio areas of responsibility:

- Public protection including environmental protection, Trading Standards, licensing, food control, health and safety, housing and planning enforcement
- Community safety, CCTV, security and civil enforcement
- Highways and traffic management
- Street lighting
- Integrated Transport Services including adults, children and Rideability Community Transport Services and school crossing patrol
- Parking services
- Private Sector Housing Licensing/ Selective Licensing
- Street cleansing including trade waste, Household Waste Recycling Centre, Local Environmental Action Team and building cleaning

### Introduction

The cabinet member will present the report to Council and report on any key issues.

### Theme 1: Public Space Protection Order for Parks, Green Spaces and Cemeteries

Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) are intended to deal with a particular issue that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life, by imposing conditions on the use of specific areas which apply to everyone. They are intended to help ensure that people can use and enjoy public spaces safe from anti-social behaviour.

Across Blackpool, a number of different PSPOs are in operation to tackle anti-social behaviour locally. Public consultation regarding the proposed PSPO for parks and cemeteries was undertaken by Infusion Research for 10 weeks from mid-June, offering visitors to Blackpool's parks, green spaces and cemeteries an opportunity to tell the Council about their experiences and concerns to determine whether or not a PSPO should be introduced.

A total of 1,483 responses were received to this consultation. 1,440 responses were collected through an open access online survey, 41 responses collated from face-to-face engagement work in Stanley Park and 2 email responses were sent into Blackpool Council. Initial engagement has also taken place with the Police, via the Chief Inspector for the Blackpool area. Formal consultation with Lancashire Constabulary and other statutory consultees, including the National Probation Service (NPS), Lancashire Fire and Rescue, Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner will take place prior to implementation.

The consultation found that 95.8% to 97.8% of the respondents were in agreement to giving Police and Council officers greater powers to deal with anti-social behaviour and substance misuse in our parks and cemeteries. Almost 1,000 people who responded to the consultation stated that they had personal experience of the issues they had highlighted, whilst another 300 said they had heard about the issues that they were highlighting from neighbours, friends, family and the media.

The problem of most concern which was reported by respondents was 'dogs off-lead focusing on the impact to wildlife'. Comments from a significant proportion of respondents have asked for better enforcement including CCTV, more park wardens and a better police presence.

Following the views expressed in the public consultation, the Council's proposals include additional powers to deal with:

- Dogs off leads near Council owned water bodies of Blackpool
- Illegal or unauthorised camping including the use of tents/caravans and other vehicles
- People causing harassment, alarm, distress or vandalism
- People causing anti-social behaviour
- Substance and alcohol misuse
- Unauthorised vehicles driving within the area.

The proposals will not include regulation or enforcement regarding the use of remote controlled vehicles or commercial activities due to the lack of support for this in the public consultation. Signs will be erected in parks, green spaces and cemeteries to inform the public of the PSPO relevant to that area.

## **Theme 2 - Highways**

Blackpool Council's Road Asset Management Strategy is a series of documents that set out how the Highways and Traffic Management division maintains roads and footways in Blackpool in the short, medium and long term. It includes details of the principles on which the document is based, its objectives and overall strategy for the development of roads and their management and maintenance.

The Council consistently receives top-tier funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) due to the careful and consistent management of its network and the accurate reporting of network data via the self-assessment process. This is made possible by the extent and quality of information that the Council holds on the network in a Geographical Information System called Asset Stream, which allows all elements of the highway to be easily located and conditions assessed. This is then used to prioritise works needed to improve the condition of the highway and is supported by a regular and routine inspection regime, including both walked and driven inspections carried out by a team of inspectors.

The investment strategy and program ensures that the network works and is safe and this approach is reflected in a huge reduction in the number of tripping claims being made, with payouts reducing from around £1.6m in 2008/09 to just £719 in 2022/23. As a result of the robustness of the system, 95% of claims are successfully defended.

In addition to their long-standing focus on effectiveness and efficiency, maintenance and investment works to the highway now also have an emphasis on being carbon-aware and sustainable, reducing our environmental impact. The previous approach of removing all material for disposal and fully replacing them with new materials is now much less common, with recycling and innovative surface treatments now much more common. Earlier intervention to extend the life of a road with smaller treatments reduces carbon emissions and working collaboratively with suppliers and contractors to determine the best treatments adds to the success of this approach.

Project Amber was established in 2019 to involve small and medium sized businesses in the maintenance process, aiming to provide the right treatment at the right time, in the right place. The framework set up by our highways team has since been adopted by other authorities, demonstrating how we are providing leadership across the highways sector and allows us to achieve the best value in all aspects, including time, carbon savings, disruption and cost.

Following data analysis which showed it to be one of the country's 27 most statistically dangerous roads, the government has awarded the Council £1.1 million to improve the Talbot Square to St Walburgas roundabout route, including Talbot Road, Westcliffe Drive and Poulton Road. The design options for the route are still in the early stages, with the highways team currently providing direction to some specialist scheme design experts. Although the funding comes with tight restrictions around the type of changes which are needed and the location they are delivered at, this welcome financial boost is likely to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured in road traffic accidents.

The quality of the highways supports good road safety, which has been included as a priority in the Community Safety Plan for the first time. After a series of incidents regarding the shocking behaviour of parents dropping off children outside our primary schools, we have prioritised the review of the highways around all 33 primary schools in the borough, engaging a consultancy firm to conduct a targeted Highway review of our 33 Primary Schools in collaboration with the schools and their staff. Our aim is to ensure the safety of children during their arrival and departure times at the school, morning and afternoon. To do this required observation of the access points, road layout, driving and parking behaviour during peak times, allowing tailored changes to be proposed based on each individual school's needs.

Following a successful trial at Armfield Academy, we plan to introduce "red restrictions" at some schools, which are typically seen in London on key strategic routes. On a red route, stopping is strictly prohibited and anyone contravening this will receive an immediate Penalty Charge Notice. In addition to this, measures such as refreshing the current restrictions,

implementing new restrictions, increasing enforcement of existing restrictions, or making physical changes to the layout are being considered.

**General questions / comments**

Councillors will have the opportunity to raise questions / comments on any matter in the Cabinet Member's portfolio.