

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

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 Transports 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 – Serious Violence Duty

The Serious Violence Duty which came into effect on 31 January 2023, is a key part of the Government's programme of work to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, taking a multi-agency approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focusing on prevention and early intervention, and informed by evidence.

The Serious Violence Duty requires specified authorities for a local government area to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing, and reducing serious violence in the area. The authorities involved are, Police, Justice (Probation Service and Youth Offending Teams), Fire and Rescue, Health, and Local Authority. The Duty requires each authority area to have a published Serious Violence Duty Strategy and Strategic Needs Assessment by 31 January 2024.

The nine crime categories that are included under serious violence are as follows:

1. Homicide
2. Assault resulting in injury

3. Aggravated burglary
4. Knife crime
5. Rape
6. Domestic abuse and violence
7. Gun crime
8. Robbery
9. Child exploitation (sexual and criminal)

The Duty outlines three key performance areas that the government will monitor the effectiveness of the Serious Violence Duty on:

1. A reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object and especially among those victims aged 25 and under.
2. A reduction in knife-enabled serious violence and especially among those victims ages 25 and under.
3. A reduction in all homicides and especially those that are non-domestic and among those victims aged under 25 involving knives.

The statutory partners already meet regularly through the Community Safety Partnership and the Serious Violence Duty strategy and accompanying action plan will be monitored through the existing partnership. There are a number of other strategies that link in and contribute to the Serious Violence Duty including, the Domestic Abuse Strategy, the Blackpool Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan, and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Prevention Strategy. A collaborative approach to develop the Serious Violence Duty strategy is being taken to ensure contribution and ownership from all partners given the broad nature of the performance measures outlined by Central Government. Through the Blackpool Community Safety Partnership, work is underway to develop a multi-agency Serious Violence Duty Strategy for the town. The Lancashire Violence Reduction Network is supporting this work with a workshop involving key stakeholders planned for November to finalise the draft strategy ahead of the January 2024 deadline.

Theme 2 - CCTV/Pubwatch and next phase of work around civil contingencies

On 13 September 2021, the Executive agreed the investment of £2m into the replacement of the core CCTV system and the relocation of the control room to Municipal Buildings. After further consideration of the facilities at Municipal Buildings, a new option was developed to provide and accommodate a state-of-the-art facility in a different location which future proofs the services. The new facility in the South Shore area is in the final stages of development as Blackpool's new CCTV Security Control Room and Incident Coordination Centre for major events and dealing with emergency situations.

As the UK's number one seaside resort, it is important that Blackpool has a comprehensive and robust CCTV system, playing an important role in public safety and confidence particularly in accessing the Town Centre during the night-time economy.

The new CCTV Security Control Room is now complete, and provides a facility second to none and appropriate in terms of improving public safety. The move/switch from the current CCTV room at the old police station on New Bonny Street to the new facility at South Shore will be mid-October. This can happen even though all the new cameras are not all in place yet. All camera poles on the new system have the movable camera on the top of the pole. In total, the system is being expanded from 92 cameras to 346. Each pole will have a moveable camera and four statics; 360 vision. Over 100 speakers are being fitted to columns which add to the effectiveness of the system by giving operators the potential to 'warn and inform' the public of an emergency.

The new Incident Coordination Centre, which is adjacent to the CCTV Security Control Room and will work in tandem with it, is in the final stages of completion. The Council is engaging with partners including the emergency services and counter-terrorism policing to provide a facility that will support a Council or multi-agency response to an emergency/major incident, and also provide a facility for managing major events. This venue will be a place where multi-agency partners will be able to co-locate to gain shared situational awareness, building a joint understanding of risk and communicate together in order to coordinate resources, to protect the public, and save lives. The Incident Coordination Centre will provide a more modern facility for training in relation to emergencies and support the coordination and management of key events for the town.

Work will be undertaken to enhance CCTV staff and volunteer training, so that they have increased skills to further their support to the emergency services and others, such as the pub-watch and shop-watch networks in responding to emergencies. The council are supportive of the National Protective Security Authority and will aim to ensure that preparedness and training are aligned to meet what is published in their guidance in order to provide a proportionate and effective responses to security incidents including terrorism. This will be achieved with the ongoing proactive and collaborative approach by the council working with others such as Lancashire Constabulary, Counter Terrorism Policing, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, the Northwest Ambulance Service, and others. The approach will support the Council and other category 1 responders meet their statutory obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act and others in meeting potential legislative requirements in the forthcoming Protect Duty which will be known as Martyn's Law.

Following completion of the project, other cameras and areas will be risk assessed in order to establish whether further cameras are required in Blackpool, which will be discussed and shared with Scrutiny before this phase commences.

General questions / comments

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