

Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder	Council	20 April 2023

Executive Report: Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To inform council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio as set out below.

2. Community Safety

- 2.1** During the pandemic we experienced an increase in neighbour disputes which, whilst having an impact on residents' well-being, also had a significant impact on services. Last year we procured the services of ADR mediation utilising external funding to assist in the most difficult neighbourhood disputes facing both our neighbourhood policing team and the Council.
- 2.2** I can advise members that further funding to maintain provision of this service in 2023/24 has been secured and I am pleased to report that the demand for other services relating to this type of dispute has declined which demonstrates the value this work has in helping to defuse tensions.

3. Housing

3.1 Additional Affordable Warmth Funding

Lancashire County Council invited the authority to bid for additional affordable warmth funding and I am pleased to advise members that we have been awarded £43,950 on top of the £87,901 already awarded in 2022/23.

- 3.2** The additional funding can be spent up to 31 March 2024 and will be used by Wyre Care and Repair to support the delivery of additional affordable warmth interventions in the homes of vulnerable residents.

3.3 Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) Funding Success

Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL), an initiative which represents 14 of the county's Local Authorities, has secured a £41m funding pot to help residents make their homes more energy efficient. The two-year

scheme, entitled Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2), commences 1 April 2023 and is to benefit low-income household residents in properties without gas central heating with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D to G.

- 3.4** The HUG grants are available to help support the installation of insulation and renewable heating technologies, such as air source heat pumps or solar thermal. Grants are based on averages but the average grant is expected to be around £18,800. The grants will help eligible Wyre residents to improve the warmth and comfort of their homes whilst also reducing energy bills and carbon emissions. Further information and details of how residents can apply are available at <https://www.chil.uk.com/>

- 3.5 Funding to support victims of Domestic Abuse**
The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has awarded the authority £33,004 of funding to provide accommodation-based support for victims of domestic abuse and their children in 2023/24.

- 3.6** The funding can be used to support interventions such as counselling, financial advice, help rehousing and access to a range of specialist support services including therapy for children. We will be working with local domestic abuse charities and service providers to see how best the funding can be spent in the Borough. It will undoubtedly make a big difference to victim's lives in helping them to get the help and support they need.

4. Wyre Beach Management Scheme

- 4.1** Work had commenced on Phase 1 of the scheme in February with completion due at the beginning of 1 August 2023.
- 4.2** Phase 2 is due to commence in August with completion in September 2026. This work is dependent on the approval of the planning application and granting of the Marine Licence.
- 4.3** An application to the Environment Agency Large Project Review Group assurance has been made requesting additional inflationary driven costs above the approved Outline Business Case produced in December 2019 (approved in Feb 2020).

5 Climate Change Initiatives

- 5.1 Wyre Natural Flood Management Scheme**
The scheme aims to deliver interventions including leaky dams, earth bunds peat restoration banked hedges and flood plain reconnection to reduce the risk to downstream Wyre households including Garstang, Churchtown and St Michaels. Despite inclement weather in the run up to Christmas above target delivery for the quarter has been achieved. Key outcomes include; securing permits for the majority of leaky barriers and engagement with prospective landowners/land managers. The works are due to be completed by March 2025.

5.2 Electric Vehicle Chargers

Electric vehicle chargers have been installed in council owned car parks at Fleetwood, Cleveleys, Thornton, Poulton, Knott End and Garstang providing additional coverage throughout the borough. The final electrical connections are due to be completed imminently.

5.3 Our Future Coast

A climate change on the north west coast conference took place on 29-30 March at which the Our Future Coast (OFC) project was highlighted and a soft launch took place. The conference included site visits to several of the OFC sites and included key topics including: Climate Challenges on the Coast, Working with Data, Inspiration and the Future, Communities and changing mind-sets and Resourcing the Future. Experts from around the country provided examples of how positive action has been taken to address the climate change challenge.

6. Comments and questions

- 6.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with procedure rule 11.5.