

Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder	Council	17 January 2019

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. Licensing

- 2.1** The Licensing Team and the Licensing Committee play an important role in ensuring that individuals licensed to drive a taxi are fit and proper for the role. In order to assist them in making this decision, the Committee refers to the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy, which was formally adopted by the Committee in March 2018.
- 2.2** Where an individual does not meet the minimum standards identified in the policy, their application is referred to the Licensing Committee who will consider if they should depart from the policy and grant a licence. Licensing officers will also refer existing licence holders to the Committee if they have concerns about any conduct that may impact on the licence holders fitness or propriety. Since August the Committee has refused to grant or revoked existing licences on three occasions, two of which were challenged by the driver on appeal to the Magistrates (the third is still within the appeal period).
- 2.3** Licensing officers have attended Blackpool Magistrates Court to defend the first of these appeals and I am pleased to report that the Magistrates Court agreed with the decision made by the licencing committee and dismissed the appeal. When making decisions of this nature it is important that at the heart of the decision public safety is paramount and that the decision is both reasonable and proportionate, which the licensing committee always endeavours to achieve.
- 2.4** The second appeal is expected to be heard later this month.

3. Community Safety

CCTV

- 3.1** Our CCTV volunteers play an important role in monitoring our cameras and helping to keep the public safe in our busy town centres. During the course of 2018 the volunteers were involved in a number of initiatives and investigations including searching for missing people, targeting anti-social behaviour, the re-launch of shop-watch in the Fleetwood area and even dog-knapping. So far this year they have contributed over 3,100 hours to the service with many of these hours being undertaken during unsocial hours. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the volunteers and our Partnerships Officer for all their hard work over the course of the last year.

Rural Crime Initiative

- 3.2** Wyre Community Safety Partnership has applied for and been awarded grant funding from the Police and Crime Commissioners Office to undertake a rural crime prevention initiative.
- 3.3** The Community Safety Partnership will be purchasing 100 SelectaDNA bundles from Selectamark Security Systems plc, which will enable isolated rural properties to forensically mark property such as quad bikes and agricultural vehicles, with SelectaDNA. Such initiatives have been found to act as a strong deterrent to thieves and so are a useful tool in helping to fight rural crime. The first 50 packs will initially be held by the police and will be made available to victims of rural crime free of charge to try and prevent repeat targeting. In order to make the offer self-sustaining a further 50 packs will be sold at cost price £24 per pack enabling the partnership to purchase more packs going forward. The packs will be promoted at rural community events such as Myerscough Open Day.

White Ribbon Campaign – targeting male violence against women

- 3.4** The Council have been part of a Pan-Lancashire campaign to raise awareness across the County of the white ribbon campaign. Members will remember that the campaign is about making a pledge to never commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women. We have a number of ambassadors for the campaign, including both Officers and Members. A number of our ambassadors, including myself, attended a recent conference at Ribby Hall where ideas were shared on how to increase awareness over the next twelve months. We will be continuing to support this important campaign and will be seeking to implement new initiatives identified during the conference.

4. Additional Disabled Facilities Grant Funding

- 4.1** On 5 December 2018 local authority Chief Executives received a letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government, regarding the award of an additional £55 million nationally into Disabled Facilities Grants. We were asked if we could spend an additional allocation of up to £201,195 before the end of March 2019. We

confirmed that given high local demand we were confident of delivering against additional funding and we await confirmation of the award.

5. New Care and Repair Frailty Project with rural GP Practices

- 5.1** Care and Repair is working in partnership with the Wyre Rural Enhanced Neighbourhood Integrated Care Team (WREN ICT) on a new initiative supporting frail patients. The WREN GP practices (Garstang, Great Eccleston and Over Wyre) will identify frail patients who are most at risk of hospitalisation, refer them to an Enhanced Primary Care Care Co-ordinator for assessment and, where appropriate, onward referral to the Care and Repair service for preventative measures and support.

6. Flood forum

- 6.1** A well-attended flood forum meeting took place on 13 December. Of particular note was an update by Churchtown FLAG on the Kirkland Embankment scheme which is the first scheme in the country where a community group has procured and constructed a Main River flood defence. With the assistance of the council the group has reduced the risk of flooding to 26 properties and better protected the A6 and A586 road networks.

7. Comments and questions

- 7.1** 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.