



<b>Report of:</b>	<b>To:</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Cllr Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder	Council	7 December 2017	11(e)

**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. Care and Repair Affordable Warmth Initiative**

- 2.1** Funded by Lancashire County Council Public Health, our Affordable Warmth initiative is underway again this Winter, providing support with heating for households which are most vulnerable to harm from cold homes. Support is also available to access loft and cavity wall insulation. Referrals can be made to Care & Repair on 01253 887569 or to [careandrepair@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:careandrepair@wyre.gov.uk). All referrals will receive an assessment to determine what level of support can be provided.

**3. My Home Choice Fylde Coast Consultation**

- 3.1** My Home Choice Fylde Coast is the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme operating across the Fylde Coast that sets out how social housing is allocated. A Consistent Assessment Policy underpins the CBL scheme and forms the principal element of the allocation scheme for each Fylde Coast Local Authority (Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre) and for the Registered Housing Providers operating in the area.
- 3.2** The Consistent Assessment Policy is formulated and regularly reviewed in consultation with Local Authority members, housing providers and the public. It takes into account the level and patterns of the demand for social housing, stock profile, vacancies which are likely to become available and also reflects agreed strategic priorities. Blackpool, Fylde, and Wyre Councils, together with local registered providers, are proposing to make some changes to how people find and are offered social housing in the area.

- 3.3** Some of the main changes include:
- Enabling residents who have moved between the three Fylde Coast boroughs to access the system (however, priority will still be given to Wyre residents for Wyre properties).
  - Letting properties in two different ways – the majority of homes including those in shortest supply will still go to those with a housing need, but some will be advertised on a first come first served basis (subject to local connection).
  - Simplifying the number of priority bands to A – C to represent those with a housing need. Those persons with no housing need will not be banded and will only be able to access those properties advertised on a first come first served basis.
  - Preventing existing social housing tenants from moving between properties unless they have a housing need.
  - Encouraging people in work to access social housing. It is proposed that 20% of the homes made available on a first come first served basis will be offered in priority to people in paid or voluntary work.
  - Enabling tenants to access properties with additional bedrooms as long as it is affordable for them.

**3.4**

It is anticipated that the changes will allow more people to access the housing allocation system and make it quicker and easier for them to find the home they are looking for. The proposed changes to the Consistent Assessment Policy are now in public consultation, closing on Monday 18th December. The online consultation can be found at <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CBRYN/>. Hard copies of the consultation document are also available in the Civic Centre reception and the draft Consistent Assessment Policy is available to view on the Council's website.

**4. Community Safety**

**Community Protection Warning Notices Served**

- 4.1** Following youth related anti-social behaviour experienced over the summer months, in partnership with Lancashire Constabulary, we have identified several youngsters who it is believed acted as ring leaders within a larger group. Community Protection Warning Notices have been served.
- 4.2** Where the youngsters were younger than 16 their parents have been served with a Community Protection Warning Notice. Where the youngsters were older than 16 it is considered they are old enough to be responsible for their own actions and therefore they were served with a Community Protection Warning Notice directly.
- 4.3** The use of Community Protection Warning Notices is a graduated approach as no one wants to label a child with a criminal record which could harm their later life chances. However, if anyone receives a Community Protection Warning Notice they should be in no doubt that if behaviours do not improve, Wyre Council together with our partners at

Lancashire Constabulary will have no option but to pursue all legal options to protect the community.

### **Mediation**

- 4.4** Our Environmental Health and Community Safety Teams, together with partners, are responsible for investigating alleged incidents of anti-social behaviour and excessive noise complaints. In many alleged incidents the perpetrator and the victim live next door to each other and no one else is involved. In such cases it is not always easy to gather sufficient evidence to determine exactly where the fault lies and without sufficient evidence a legal remedy is not possible.
- 4.5** This means that, despite best endeavours, whatever caused the problem between the two neighbours may remain unresolved and there always remains the chance that the situation could escalate further. It is increasingly recognised that the best opportunity to resolve such issues on a more permanent basis is for the two neighbours to come to an agreement on what is acceptable to each other. In order to try and assist in this process we have invested in training a number of council officers in mediation. In future, where possible, we will be integrating the offer of mediation into our investigative processes – explaining that often this produces the best outcome for all concerned. However, it should be noted that for mediation to work both parties need to agree to take part in the process.

### **Lancashire Victim Services**

- 4.6** In April last year Lancashire Victim Services was established by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire to provide support to victims and witnesses of crime across the county. Part of this remit is to provide support to victims of domestic abuse. As part of a regional agreement the Council provides an annual £10,000 contribution to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office in support of the domestic abuse element of the service. As part of the service we receive a quarterly update on the work undertaken by Lancashire Victim Services in respect of services delivered here in Wyre.
- 4.7** Between the beginning of July and the end of September the service received 165 domestic abuse referrals from the Wyre area; almost all these referrals came from the Police; 28 of the referrals did not proceed as the alleged victim refused contact. The update provides details of a number of interventions which can be split into two categories: immediate support and intervention and; ongoing support to cope and recover. The cases are further split into three different risk categories dependent on the severity of the domestic abuse being faced by the victim: High, Medium and Standard. Immediate support and intervention was provided to ten high risk, five medium risk and eight standard risk victims. Ongoing support to cope and recover was provided to sixteen high risk, six medium risk and eight standard risk victims. There is a 24 hour telephone service available. A pan-Lancashire survey has shown that in high risk cases physical abuse reduces from 69% of cases prior to support, down to 7%

on exit, sexual abuse down from 28% to 1% and harassing and jealous behaviour from around 80% to around 20%.

### **White Ribbon Campaign**

- 4.8** As part of the White Ribbon Campaign, which commences on 27 November, the Council champions – Councillor Christine Smith and Councillor Barry Birch and Mark Broadhurst, Neil Greenwood and Ian Williamson will be attending a training course. Wyre Council will be undertaking visits to large employers in the area to raise awareness of their responsibilities with regard to this issue.

## **5. Flooding**

- 5.1** On the evening of the 22 November large areas of Wyre suffered from flooding as a result of exceedingly high rainfall. I would like to thank the officers and volunteers who worked through the evening and into the night to support communities affected by the flooding and we delivered approximately 5,000 sandbags to a variety of locations across the borough. The council along with its partners have been working very hard to raise awareness of the flood risk faced by much of the borough, and we will continue to support communities and encourage the setting up of flood action groups and for residents to take measures to protect their homes from future events. Simple measures such as signing up for flood warnings and keeping your own stock of sandbags at home can make all the difference.

## **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.