

PORTFOLIO:

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Report of
Portfolio Holder:

COUNCILLOR R BLOXHAM

HOUSING & HEALTH ITEMS

1. DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE PORTFOLIO-HOLDER

I can report that in the period in question I have not taken any delegated decisions in respect of the Council's housing & care services, or any other area of my portfolio responsibility.

2. ISSUES ARISING FROM HOUSING CONSULTATION GROUPS IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2002

Following the very extensive consultations with tenants during May and early June 2002 as part of the so-called 'Stage 1' consultation process on the Offer document, there were a series of meetings on Monday 17th June to agree the way forward.

I am pleased to report that the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Housing Consultative Group and the Executive were able to

reach common decisions on the very comprehensive review of the consultation presented to us.

Since then all tenants will have received a further newsletter which seeks to answer the most common queries we picked up in the consultation, plus a letter from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive indicating the Council's intentions to proceed to a secret ballot of all tenants.

This ballot opened on 28 June 2002 and I look forward with great anticipation to the result, which we expect on 26 July 2002.

As always my message to tenants is simple – 'the decision is yours, please exercise your vote.'

3. RAFFLES REDEVELOPMENT

The formal consultations on the outline redevelopment proposals for the area got off to a strong start on 20th May with two days of very well-attended public meetings which also attracted plenty of positive media interest.

The proposals are now in the process of refinement and further detailed consultation and I look forward greatly to the recommended proposals coming back to the Council for consideration in the early autumn.

If, as I hope, it is possible to produce a viable and broadly-supported scheme then we could see the first new building commencing as early as the spring of 2003, which would be great news for the area and the people that live there.

4. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

As I have previously reported the City Council is a key player at sub-regional and regional level in the housing decision-making and influencing processes affecting the North West.

For some months now the Cumbria Group has been engaged in intensive lobbying of the Government and Housing Corporation on the issue of provision of affordable housing in rural areas and I believe we are starting to see some signs that our message is being received.

The latest indication of this was the submission of evidence on 4 July 2002 by Cumbria housing group representatives, on behalf of the North West, to the House of Commons' Selective Committee Enquiry on Affordable Housing.

5. HOMELESSNESS

Members may have seen recent press reports on the Government's praise for the authority in having a 100% record in avoiding the use of bed & breakfast accommodation to house homeless families.

We believe this will be one of the key measures of Council's competency under the new 'Comprehensive Performance Assessment' regime and we will be striving hard to maintain this record.

It is also gratifying to see that the work done by the Cumbria Homelessness Forum and led by this Council is also receiving well-deserved national recognition.

The Countryside Agency's recent report *"Preventing Homelessness in the Countryside... What Works?"* draws extensively on the work done under the auspices of the forum as examples of national best practice.

In addition work is currently in hand to review the delivery of Homelessness services. This will include the consideration of an alternative pro-active approach, aimed at supporting those presenting as homeless with a robust resettlement and outreach service to support and sustain independent living.

A report will be considered in the next cycle of meetings.

Unfortunately we still have pockets of difficult Tenants who insist in making life unbearable for their neighbours. I have to tell this council that this cannot go on, we must challenge anti social behaviour when ever and where ever we find it. It cannot be right that good Tenants should be at the mercy of bad Tenants

6. CARELINE COMMUNITY ALARM SERVICES

Vision 21 - the latest technological advancements in the world of community alarm services was installed at the Careline Control Room on 1 July.

This exciting development in partnership with Tunstall Telecom establishes our alarm service as one of the very best in the country, enabling the provision of a wide range of services including:-

- SMART Home Technology
- Telemedicine
- Lone Worker Monitoring

To demonstrate the capabilities of our alarm services, I have instructed officers to plan an Open Day for Council Members and our partners in

Social Services, the Primary Care Trusts and other colleagues in the Public, Private and Voluntary sectors.

7. CARLISLE LOCAL HEALTH GROUP

Members may be aware that a positive partnership has developed to improve the Health & Well Being of our citizens through the endeavours of this multi-agency group. Current activities include:

- Development of a Physical Activities and Sports Strategy, including Clinical Exercise Interventions Pilot, for those individuals whom have recently endured a crisis situation, ie Stroke or Heart Attack (Cardiac Rehabilitation Group – in it's 10th Year).
- A health profile of all 21 wards in the district is currently being compiled to identify health inequalities and assist in the effective targeting of resources to meet the health needs of our communities.
- Work is also underway with the Cumbria Teenage Pregnancy Unit to provide effective support networks for expectant young women or young mothers.
- A partnership with the Cumbria Domestic Abuse Forum and the National Domestic Violence Co-ordinator is considering appropriate housing and support options for those individuals fleeing violence.

Work has already commenced on a draft Health & Well Being Strategy which will inform the City Vision and the Local Strategic Partnership.

- Sport Development.
- Youth Games 15 June 2002 - Carlisle came 2nd overall from the 11 tournaments that took place throughout the day and won two individual events, those being: Girls Netball Year 9 & below and Girls Football Year 7 & 8.
- How Healthy are You? Course is up and running at Currock Community Centre. We have 8 people attending and it is going well. This will hopefully then lead people onto an Aerobics instruction course so that Carlisle will have more instructors to take classes in the local community and encourage the communities to become more active
- Get Kid's Active has been written and will be piloted in September in local primary schools. This is a 6-week programme talking about physical activity and healthy eating to show the children how easy it is to be healthy and incorporate physical activity into their daily life.

- The second midnight basketball scheme has started at Petteril Bank, and will run for six weeks.
- Community TOPS training course, which is an introduction sports coaching award, will be delivered at Belah Community Centre starting in July.
- A new football in the community scheme is being developed in partnership with the FA, very early stages of development
- Work is still being undertaken on preparing the application to Sport England for a multi-sport area in Petteril Bank.
- Physical Activity & Sport Strategy is currently being produced. Draft objectives are due to be released for consultation mid June.
- City Tennis Club was launched on 6 June with free coaching and strawberry ice cream. Four families also won tickets to Wimbledon. The city tennis club was accredited by the Lawn Tennis Association, which provides £5,000 per year for three years to fund activities aimed at making tennis more accessible to all. The club is based at the newly refurbished Bitts Park tennis courts and will help maximise the facilities potential

Councillor R D Bloxham