

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL
REPORT
of the
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
to
THE CHERRY TREE AREA PANEL

THE CHERRY TREE AREA FORUM MEETING HELD ON 28TH JANUARY 2009

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chairman, Councillor Evans of the Area Forum welcomed residents to the Cherry Tree Area Forum meeting.

He announced that 2 nominations for 3 of the vacant Community Member positions Had been received from Mr John Garnham and Mrs Barbara Charlton and sought the Forums approval of the appointments and welcomed them to the Cherry Tree Area Panel. It was announced that there was 1 remaining Community Member position on the Panel and nomination forms were available for those who wished to be considered. The deadline for receipt of nomination forms was Friday 12th June 2009.

2. CONTEXT

The Cherry Tree Area Panel at its meeting held on 17th September 2008 agreed that the theme for the January 2009 Forum should be focussed on the BIG CAT campaign, fire safety and the Budget 2009/10 Consultation. The Panel had reconfirmed this at their meeting on 10th December 2008.

3. BIG CAT PRESENTATION

Miss Paula Ramsey, Waste Liaison Officer, Street Scene and Property Division, Blackpool Council informed the Forum that BIG CAT was launched in April 2008.

The main objectives of BIG CAT were outlined as:

- To make Blackpool a cleaner and greener place for everyone.
- To raise the profile of work to improve Blackpool's environment.
 - So the people know what is happening.
 - To encourage the public to play a part.

Since the launch, the BIG CAT had attended and promoted many events this included:

- The opening of the Waste Transfer Station at Layton Depot.
- The rolling out on the wheelie bins to residents in central Blackpool.
- Revoe Park dog fouling awareness campaign.
- Blackpool Coastal Housing Tenant Conference.
- Marton Cemetery clean up.
- Illuminations open day 2008.
- Squire's Gate Lane planters.
- Kinncraig fun day.
- Highfield Park fun day.
- Walking children to school.

- Various litter picking events.

The streets in and around Blackpool town centre had recently undergone a £100,000 jet wash to clean away filth and chewing gum. Once the pavement area had been jet washed a clear sealant solution had been applied. The sealant would then help in the removal of further chewing gum stuck on the pavement by making it easier to be removed.

In addition, BIG CAT was currently promoting a waste amnesty until the end of February 2009. All Blackpool residents were eligible for free collection of white goods. This included:

- Fridges.
- Freezers.
- Washing machines.
- Tumble dryers.

To date over 1110 requests had been received from residents and over 1380 appliances had been removed. Any residents who wished to arrange a removal of an appliance should call 07827 255161 or email big.cat@blackpool.gov.uk and arrangements would be made.

4. FIRE SAFETY PRESENTATION

Mr Mark Alderson, Station Manager, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service gave a presentation regarding fire safety.

He outlined the various roles that Lancashire Fire and Rescue had within the community these were:

- Fire fighting.
- Fire safety.
- Attending road traffic accidents.
- Emergency activities.

The Fire Authority was responsible for providing the service under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. In Lancashire there were 1150 operational staff spread over 39 stations that had access to 60 fire appliances.

The target aim was to attend a critical incident within 6 minutes with a second vehicle to be present within 8 minutes. Where other emergency services such as ambulances were required the aim was to attend the incident within 14 minutes.

The service provided advice on technical and community fire safety issues. This included working closely with hoteliers and landlords of homes in multiple occupancy and working closely with residents to prevent fire. Within the Cherry Tree Area Forum boundaries over 400 Home Fire Safety Checks had been conducted by 8 Community Safety Practitioners. Home Fire Safety Checks included the fixture of smoke alarms and providing advice on fire escape routes. To date over 6000 smoke alarms had been installed across the whole of Blackpool, with the main emphasis of targeting elderly and vulnerable people. Mr Alderson highlighted that since the introduction of the preventative approach, massive reductions in fire related call outs had been noticed. There had been 53% reduction in fire fatalities, 13% reduction in accidental dwelling fires, 57% reduction in deliberate building fires and 45% reduction in overall injury.

If any attendee wished to receive a free Home Fire Safety Check then they should contact their local fire station for further information.

5. BUDGET 2009/10 CONSULTATION

Budget 2009/2010 Consultation

Mr Steve Thompson, Chief Financial Officer, Blackpool Council gave a brief overview with regards to the Budget 2009/10 and gave attendees the opportunity to take part in the consultation process.

In previous years Mr Thompson had received a very limited response to any Budget Consultation and therefore was very keen to engage the community in the 2009/10 Consultation.

He outlined the key components of the budget which included:

- The budget approval process.
- The impact of the current economic climate.
- The medium term financial plan.
- Figures for the 2008/09 net budget, gross budget and capital programme.
- Government grant funding and distribution of business rates.

In addition he outlined the Council's main budgetary priorities for the next 5 years as:

- New tramway development.
- The take up of concessionary bus fares.
- Street light and traffic light replacement project.
- The relocation of the Blackpool and the Fylde College site.
- The Building Schools for the Future project and the Talbot Gateway refurbishment.

He provided an overview of the distribution of the Council's revenue budget and explained the requirement for efficiency savings across all aspects of local government.

Mr Thompson confirmed that monies had been set aside within the 2009/2010 for the Compulsory Local Government Pay Review.

He reiterated the need to receive feedback and comments from the Blackpool residents with regards to the consultation and requested that responses be emailed to customer.first@blackpool.gov.uk or via the www.blackpool.gov.uk

Conclusion

The Chairman welcomed all presentations.