



Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr. Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder	Council	8 September 2011	9 (e)

EXECUTIVE REPORT: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES 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 Portfolio.

2. Current and Future Issues

- 2.1 Summary information is included in Appendix 1 on the following issues:

- Rossall Coastal Defence Scheme
- Reducing Carbon Emissions and Climate Change
- Disabled Facility Grants
- Care and Repair (Wyre and Fylde)
- Environmental Health & Community Safety
- Commercial Safety & Community Safety.

3. 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.

arm/ex/cou/cr/11/0809rb (e) neigh servs

**NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE – SEPTEMBER
2011**

1. Rossall Coastal Defence Scheme

- 1.1** An economic business case has been prepared for the Rossall scheme and presented to the Environment Agency (EA) regional Project Appraisal Board (PAB). The report was well received and supported by PAB. This recommendation will help support the application of the scheme for inclusion on the National Medium Term Plan, which was submitted in July.
- 1.2** Officers are continuing to work on the business case for Rossall, which is programmed to be presented to the EA Large Project Review Group (LRPG) in March 2012. A recommendation is required from this group to proceed with the scheme.
- 1.3** A recent portfolio holder report, I am pleased to say, detailed a number of schemes for which Environment Agency funding has been received with capital works to the value of £272,000 being delivered within the borough. In addition to this, the Engineering team have also secured a contribution to their costs of £67,000 in 2011/12. An excellent demonstration of how this Council continues to deliver value for money services to its residents.

2. Reducing Carbon Emissions and Climate Change

- 2.1** On 4 August the Department for Energy and Climate Change released a new press release 'Who's Lagging Behind?' – their very latest council by council area breakdown of how many British homes have been insulated by the Government's Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) energy saving scheme.
- 2.2** The figures, published by the Energy Saving Trust (EST), are released on a regional, council and constituency basis. They show how much loft and cavity wall insulation was professionally installed under the Government's Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) up until 31 March 2011. The CERT places requirements on energy companies to help consumers cut their emissions through energy efficiency.
- 2.3** The top five performing local authorities nationally under the CERT scheme over the past three years, in terms of percentage of housing stock insulated, are Kirklees (24.8%); Isle of Anglesey (22.5%); Carmarthenshire (19.2%); South Ribble (19%) and **Wyre** (18.2%).
- 2.4** Our numerous coordinated loft and cavity wall insulation initiatives over the last three years have helped us to achieve such high rates. Wyre homes are warmer, residents fuel bills lower and our households healthier as a result.

2.5 Energy companies have been told by the Coalition Government to increase the help they make available to people to insulate their homes and save money. Nationally a total of 3.5 million homes are set to benefit by December 2012 as a result of a tougher CERT. Wyre Council Housing Services will continue to develop new and innovative ways to maximise the installation of CERT funded insulation into our residents homes.

3. **Disabled Facilities Grants**

3.1 24 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) have been completed to a value of £322,000 - our DFG capital programme delivery is ahead of schedule.

4. **Care and Repair (Wyre and Fylde)**

4.1 Good news has been received in that Supporting People have confirmed both core service and small repairs handyperson funding through to March 2013 (with the option of an extension for a further period of up to two years at the commissioners discretion).

4.2 On 28 July 2011 a report on the progress of the Care and Repair Service was presented to Fylde Borough Council Scrutiny Committee (we run the service on behalf of both Wyre and Fylde Councils, with a funding contribution from Fylde). The report was received very favourably with the recommendation from the Committee to extend Fylde funding to March 2013, in line with the Supporting People funding mentioned above.

4.3 In terms of service delivery, during the first quarter of this year Care and Repair (Wyre and Fylde) has dealt with 1327 enquiries for advice and support. The Handyperson service has carried out 904 jobs for 696 clients and the agency has also dealt with 414 enquiries for reputable trades-people to carry out small works which fall outside the remit of the Handyperson Service.

4.4 Caseworkers have supported 44 clients to make claims for Attendance Allowance and 14 claims for disability benefits by completing and submitting applications on their behalf. Since April 20 Attendance Allowance claims have been successful and 1 Disability Living Allowance claim, generating an additional annual income of over £74,000 for vulnerable residents. Only 3 claims have been refused, others are pending.

4.5 Last year 104 successful claims were made by Care and Repair generating an incredible additional £352,802 per annum for clients.

5. **Environmental Health & Community Safety**

5.1 A key area of work for the entire Environmental Health & Community Safety Team this year is the introduction of the new IDOX database system. The database will be used to record all actions undertaken by the team and will replace various IT systems used by the sections at present including the in house Oracle system which was no longer fit for purpose.

The implementation of the new database may impact on performance this year due to a lack of familiarity, staff training and time spent setting up the system. I am however pleased to report that training on the use of the new database commenced on the 11 August and that the database will be an asset to the Council.

6. Commercial Safety & Community Safety

- 6.1** An interesting infectious disease case occurred during July when the Commercial Safety team were approached by the Health Protection Agency regarding a patient located in the Wyre Borough Council area who had TB. The patient in question had what is described as a chaotic lifestyle who was not co-operating with treatment. The Authority was asked to use their legal powers to prevent the patient representing a risk to the public. The Community Safety team used their contacts within the police to locate the patient and the legal team prepared an appropriate case for the magistrates court. The patient is now being treated at Blackpool Victoria hospital. The case represents a really good example of one team one council working in practice.

arm/ex/cou/cr/11/0809rb (e) neigh servs