

Report of:	To:	Date	Item no.
Cllr. Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder	Council	20 July 2017	8(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. Community Safety**

**Lancashire Victim Services**

- 2.1** In April of this year Lancashire Victim Services were re-commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire to provide support to victims and witnesses of crime across the County. The service provides support for victims or witnesses of crime even if the incident was not reported to the police. The service is there to provide emotional support, information and practical help to anyone who needs it and can be accessed via the telephone on 0300 323 0085, by email [info@lancashirevictimservices.org](mailto:info@lancashirevictimservices.org) or through the website <http://lancashirevictimservices.org/>
- 2.2** The services will talk through any concerns that an individual may have about their specific case, provide practical help to address problems they may face as a result of the crime, and explain what to expect if their case goes to court.
- 2.3** Contacting victim services is also the gateway to accessing specific support for victims of hate crime, domestic violence and crimes against young people. Hate crime is any crime or incident that happened because of race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or disability or if an individual feels they are being targeted because the offender perceives them to be different in some way. Domestic abuse or domestic violence takes many forms and can happen in relationships, in families, shared homes or through previous partners. It affects both men and women and it happens between people of all cultures, backgrounds, religions and social groups regardless of sexual orientation. Young people may be subjected to bullying, threats or harassment and the service allows young

people to speak in confidence with the aim to help them recover from whatever they have experienced. The service aims to help affected young people to move forward and feel safe again.

**2.4** Victims of crime can suffer mental health worries following an incident, and victim services can signpost to mental health support services that offer a range of therapies including counselling and cognitive behavioural therapies.

**2.5** The provision of a County-wide Lancashire Victim Service is a very positive development and one that is being looked at nationally. I welcome the new service and hope and believe the services will help the unfortunate victims of crime to recover from their ordeal in a positive manner.

### **Prevent**

**2.6** Recent terrorist attacks highlight the importance and need to safeguard our communities as part of the Prevent agenda. Unfortunately extremist views are widely available on the internet/social media and it is widely accepted that vulnerable citizens are targeted and may be influenced. Whilst the government is trying to limit the amount of extremist material currently available on the internet it will be very difficult to remove entirely.

**2.7** In response work is underway to try to protect young and vulnerable citizens who could be influenced and are at risk of being groomed across a range of child protection areas. As a council we have undertaken a pilot initiative in association with an online product called Zak which enables teachers in classroom settings to illustrate how social media can be manipulated and the risks involved.

**2.8** This pilot has involved Wyre Council, Smile Mediation and Myerscough College and has delivered training to over 60 students currently attending Myerscough College. The training provides a platform for difficult subjects to be discussed and challenged. An evaluation of the pilot is currently being undertaken and will potentially inform a Lancashire-wide approach. Initial feedback has been very positive with students highlighting that they have learned: not to share their location; to be aware of strangers; not to isolate themselves; to get advice and help and about the risk of radicalisation. I would like to thank both Smile Mediation and Myerscough College for their hard work in delivering the pilot.

### **New Chief Constable**

**2.9** On 19 June I attended the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel Meeting and was introduced to the new Chief Constable, Andy Rhodes. Andy spoke about the changing face of neighbourhood policing where officers are increasingly coming into contact with people with more complex needs including mental health. His officers are spending increasing amounts of time on lost and missing persons and victims of scamming and bullying. He outlined the importance of integrated partnership working in delivering early action and prevent strategies to meet the varied needs and priorities of our communities. He also stressed the importance he would place on delivering good core policing from the initial

reporting and response through to the investigation and prosecution stages. Working with the Community Safety Partnership I look forward to working with Andy and Lancashire Constabulary to address local community priorities.

### **3. Housing – New Disabled Facilities Grants Policy Consultation**

- 3.1** Disabled Facilities Grants provide funding for adaptations to the homes of older and disabled residents to help them maintain independence and prevent the risk of accidents at home. Adaptations include works such as the installation of wet room showers, stair lifts and ramps.
- 3.2** The adaptations we provide also have a key role to play in reducing emergency admissions to hospitals, providing safer and more effective discharge of patients from hospital, they reduce demand for social care and they can delay or reduce admissions to residential care.
- 3.3** We have recently seen increased budgets into Disabled Facilities Grants funded via the Better Care Fund and Authorities are being encouraged to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants in more imaginative ways to support collaborative working across health and social care. In response to this we are now reviewing our Disabled Facilities Grant Policy.
- 3.4** Key changes include a proposal to remove the means test for approved adaptations costing less than £6,000 and for hospital discharge cases supported by health and/or social care professionals. We would welcome your comments on the proposals and for you to help share news of the consultation with your constituents. Details of the consultation can be found at <http://consult.wyre.gov.uk/portal/>.

### **4. Comments and questions**

- 4.1** 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.