



**27.**

## **REVIEW PLANNING**

### **Disability Budget Cuts**

Following a discussion at the Council meeting in March this year, the Team had agreed to include a review on the impact of disability budget cuts on residents in Pendle in its 2016/17 work programme.

Members considered a briefing note which reported on welfare reforms that had taken place in 2013. These had been commonly referred to as the 'Bedroom Tax'. The note provided information on the number of Pendle households affected by the tax and details of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) which had been awarded to provide short term assistance for those in need. It was understood that the claim form to be completed when applying for DHP was 17 pages. Members felt that this was too long and over facing for applicants.

Further changes announced in 2015 meant that Disability Living Allowance (DLA) was ending for the majority of adults. Those people affected had been or would soon be invited to apply for a new benefit called Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Information on the main differences of these two benefits was provided at appendix A to the briefing note.

It was reported that, in order to assess the impact of the changes on Pendle residents, further statistical information had been sought. Information on the number of people in Pendle claiming DLA as at February 2016 was circulated at the meeting. Further information was still awaited.

It was acknowledged that there was limited action that the Team could take on this issue as many of the benefits referred to were issued by the Department for Works and Pensions.

### **RESOLVED**

- (1) That the Liberatora Revenues and Benefits Manager be asked to –
  - provide the Team with a copy of the Discretionary Housing Payments application form, for review at the next meeting;
  - advise the Team on the methods in which Discretionary Housing Payments have been promoted.
- (2) That this Team believes that, in many cases, the opportunity to claim benefits is not made clear to the public and asks that the Member of Parliament for Pendle be made aware of the Team's concerns.

**28.**

## **THE COUNCIL'S FLOOD POLICY**

Further to a review of the Council's Flood policy being included in the Team's work programme, the Neighbourhood Services Manager presented a briefing note on measures to reduce the likelihood and impact of flooding to properties in Pendle.

He provided updates on repairs to properties flooded during Storm Eva, which hit Pendle on Boxing Day 2015; property resilience works and grants paid; flood warnings and emergency planning arrangements; and proactive flood alleviation schemes being investigated, designed or

delivered. Specific information was provided on works at Ghyll Meadows and Gillians Lane/Lane Bottoms, Barnoldswick and work carried out in Earby.

He explained that the Council was about to embark on a final 'push' to encourage eligible households and businesses to submit grant claims. An explanatory leaflet had been prepared and was circulated at the meeting. A further press release and workshop were also being organised. The Team welcomed the decision to keep the current sandbag policy, despite the fact that the Council had no legal liability to do so. However, they were concerned to hear of the decision of the Met Office to remove the 'alert' element of the Flood Warning Service. In future, only warnings would be given.

## **RESOLVED**

That this Team is satisfied with the procedures put in place by Pendle Council to reduce the likelihood and impact of flooding to properties in Pendle and therefore concludes its review.

### **29. PROMOTING PENDLE**

As reported at the last meeting, a Promoting Pendle Action Plan had been developed and approved by Council. The Action Plan was submitted to the Team for information. Members were pleased to note that the parish and town councils of the borough would be involved in the implementation of the Plan.

It was proposed that the Plan be reviewed annually by Scrutiny Management Team.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Promoting Pendle Action Plan be reviewed annually by Scrutiny Management Team.

### **30. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE**

Councillor D. Whipp, the Council's representative on the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel submitted an update on the work of the Panel.

He reported that only one meeting of the Panel had been held since the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in May this year. At the meeting it had been confirmed that the office of the PCC was taking a lead role with the commissioning of domestic abuse services. In addition, the County Council had agreed to continue funding these services. It was noted that Pendle Council may be asked to provide funding towards these services and this had already been brought to the attention of the Community Safety Partnership.

It was also reported that several open meetings had been held in recent months at which people had been encouraged to comment on a new Policing Plan that was being drawn up by the Commissioner. The Plan was to be scrutinised at a special meeting of the Panel to be held later this week.

Following the update, a discussion was held with regard to the reduction in funding and resources of the local constabulary, which was an area of concern for the Team.

**31. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL**

The draft minutes of a meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel held on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 were submitted for information.

**32. WORK PLAN**

The Team's work plan 2016/17 was submitted for information.

**33. EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME/FORWARD PLAN**

The Executive Work Programme and Forward Plan for the four month period commencing 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2016 was submitted for consideration.

CHAIRMAN \_\_\_\_\_