

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet
Date: 25 February 2021
Subject: Housing & Community
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Holly Whitbread

Recommending:

The report of the Housing & Community Portfolio Holder be noted.

Community Resilience: The team changed management reporting lines and now sits alongside the Contracts and Technical and Commercial and Regulatory Services. This new arrangement is working well, there are clear synergies with Regulatory, Waste and Environmental Protection teams. The ease of collaborative working with show positive results for the benefit of residents.

The team is continuing to work on updating policies and introducing new processes where required. Workloads remain high but steady across the ASB and Enviro sections of the team.

Environmental Enforcement: Fixed Penalty Notices served; one for littering in Waltham Abbey (evidence supplied by resident's Ring doorbell) and one for breach of a Community Protection Notice for dog barking at Orchard Gardens. One Community Protection Notice served for light pollution at a property in Theydon Bois, two Noise abatement notices served on a licenced premises for excessive loud music. one successful prosecution for fly tipping heard at the start of December, for an incident which occurred in June 2019, against two defendants. Delay primarily due to Covid and courts being shut. Both the defendants were ordered to pay fines and Council's prosecution costs, a total of £ 3,891. Continued support is being provided to the Public Health team with Covid Compliance Checks. 30 visits were carried out in the first 2 weekends of December between the CR team and Licencing.

Dealing with an ongoing traveller encampment in Waltham Abbey – started in Darby Drive, and we obtained a possession order to move them on (Possession order granted 24/11/20 but only served on the travellers on 03/12/20 due to delay in getting papers from the court). The travellers then moved to the Royal Gunpowder Mills, on private land, and then moved onto Quaker Lane Car park, and have now settled at Cornmill Carpark. Possession order being sought again, however due to the recent lockdown, not sure how this will progress. However, ongoing partnership works with GTRET (Police Gypsy & Traveller Rural Engagement Team) to monitor the site. The travellers are mostly tidy, and are not causing any known issues in the area. We are in court this week to seek a further possession order.

I wrote letters of commendation to Sergeant Neil Ross who leads the EFDC funded Police Team. Two of the officers attended an incident where a dog walker had discovered a male hanging from a tree. Our officers arrived together with a colleague and were first at the scene, they cut the victim down and started CPR. Although the male was unresponsive, they continued until paramedics arrived who then managed to get output and ultimately keep the victim alive. There is no doubt that following their actions they gave the victim a fighting chance until medics arrived.

Anti-Social Behaviour: over the last months 25 ASB complaints have been dealt with. One investigation around a complaint of cannabis odour and general ASB led to Court decision against one resident on grounds of breach of CPN (Community Protection Notice) and was given a financial penalty. Joint work with Police and EFDC at Broadway, looking at different

crime prevention materials to stop the youth nuisance in the area. Parkguard service continues to be utilised in hot spot areas e.g. Loughton, Broadway etc

Safeguarding: there were 30 new cases and 11 that rolled over (Tier 4 has once again delayed visits to hoarders). Out of these there was one child, 16 adult only; 13 both adult/children concerns. There were 35 opportunities for children to be harmed; and 31 opportunities for vulnerable adults to experience harm.

CCTV: There have been 20 CCTV request forms submitted over the past month, which is 4 more than last month. Police requested 10 download requests while internal EFDC services made 9 requests. There are currently three Rapid Deployment Cameras operating out in the field at present. The team has worked with the Police to identify suspects which include: suspected accosting young female in Epping High Street, Knife related assault on Broadway Debden, Identifying vehicle involved in burglary, High Road Loughton and Robbery suspect threatening staff with knife, High Road Loughton.