

Report to the Council

Subject: Community Wellbeing Portfolio

Date: 25 September 2008

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Syd Stavrou

Item: 7(d)

Recommending:

That the report of the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder be noted.

Safer Communities

On Limes Farm, police have responded vigorously to a recent incident involving an 'attack' on the police community office. ASBOs are being utilised to deal with local criminal activities and to deter those thought to be responsible for current difficulties.

Recruitment to the Safer Communities Team

One Anti-Social Behaviour Investigator and the CCTV Officer have been in post since 18 August. The second ASBI post has now been filled and the successful applicant will be joining the team shortly. The Safer Communities Team has been temporarily re-housed on the second floor.

Green Paper on Policing

In July 2008, the Home Office issued a Green Paper on the future of policing. A report on the Green Paper was presented to the Safer, Cleaner, Greener Scrutiny Standing Panel on 2 September. There are many key issues contained within this paper relating to issues of public accountability, answerability and representation. The Council needs to respond to the Home Office within the three month period specified.

Renewal of Dispersal Orders

It is thought likely that we will shortly receive a request to renew the Debden and Loughton Dispersal Orders that expired on 31 August. Officers are now looking closely at an exist strategy as it is unacceptable that these orders are continually renewed without identifying a way forward without them.

Emergency Planning Update

The current issue of the Forester contains features about the launch earlier this year of the business continuity advice booklet and the emergency planning display at North Weald Airfield

in May. The winter edition will contain a two-page pullout supplement providing residents with information on how to prepare for emergencies. This is in line with our statutory duty to inform and educate the public about risks and preparedness and to provide relevant and timely information about the nature of any unfolding event.

The website pages for emergency planning are also being reviewed and updated in a way that hopefully will be easier for the public to negotiate.

Health Inequalities

Following on from the Audit Commission's countywide study into Health Inequalities in Essex, the West Essex Primary Care Trust's Director of Public Health will be presenting the main conclusions for the Epping Forest District, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2008. The report identifies that whilst there is a strong commitment to tackling health inequality issues amongst various partner agencies, there is currently a lack of clarity on the best strategic approach to practically addressing them. The presentation should assist, not only in creating greater awareness of health issues across the District, but also in the delivery of joint working to improve quality of life for our residents.

Active Health Programme

Following the Council's success in securing £158k from Age Concern, as part of the Big Lottery Well Being Fund, the four-year Active Health project has launched a range of new health improvement initiatives within the district.

The most significant of these is based at the Council's Parsonage Court (Sheltered Housing) in Loughton, where a piece of disused grass area has been converted into an allotment for the benefit of the residents. Active Health Project Officer, David Hogg, was supported by Country Care team and volunteers in developing the site. The allotment is now 'worked' by the residents of Parsonage Court, who apart from becoming more physically active, are planning to produce their own organic vegetables. It is planned to rollout similar schemes elsewhere in the district.

Other initiatives in development include production of a Fitness DVD specifically for older people: an audio walking guide based on the Council's Lifewalks routes and the production of a printed seated exercise guide for distribution across Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford.

External Funding

i) Epping Forest District Museum - The Council's Museum service has been successful in attracting £60k Renaissance in the Regions Funding over 2008/9 and 2009/10, to match fund a new Assistant Exhibition Officer post. The post will develop a touring exhibitions programme following on from the success of the Scouting and Slavery Exhibitions and will also provide general duty officer support to the Museum management team

ii) Sports Development - £15k funding has recently been secured from Essex County Council by the Sports Development Team, to develop a programme of social inclusion sports and health improvement activities in rural locations of the District. This work will be led by the Council and supported by Tottenham Hotspur Foundation.

Sports Development has just been notified of success in attracting £200k funding from Essex Football Foundation (via Essex County Council) as part of 2012 Legacy, towards the development of new and improved multi-sport playing pitch facilities at Ongar Leisure Centre.