

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date** 20 December 2016

**Subject:** Safer, Greener and Transport

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor G Waller

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## **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Community Safety**

### *Partnership Working with Essex Police*

Our working relationship with the Local Community Policing Team and Offender Management continues to go from strength to strength, ensuring that local issues and concerns are dealt with very efficiently and effectively. The daily morning conference call with the police enables a swift and open exchange of information and concentrates on the previous day's activities and on planned operations for the next 24 hours. Additionally the Community Safety team is a key partner in and regularly hosts the bi-weekly police district 'tasking', which is undertaken through call conferencing and involves the Police District Commander, Integrated Offender managers, intelligence officers, police analyst, Community Policing team and Operation Raptor representatives.

### *Community Safety Team Work Priorities*

In addition to joint working with the police, our team has a range of priorities, including working to reduce vulnerability to those most at risk of harm and exploitation. Previously, the team only received security assessment referrals from other EFDC colleagues, but they now have regular referrals from Safer Places, which is a voluntary sector organisation supporting people subject to domestic abuse, along with Family Mosaic and Family Solutions, which form part of Essex County Council Social Care provision. They also support the work of the police in relation to 'cocooning' (promoting home security to residents living in the vicinity of crime incidents), and take referrals from them for residents who express an interest in increasing their home security.

### *J9 Domestic Abuse Campaign*

Over the last three years the Council's J9 training programme has been expanded to encompass Uttlesford and Harlow districts and is now set to be rolled out across the rest of Essex. The original programme was developed following the death of a Domestic Abuse victim by the name of Janine and is designed to encourage organisations and staff to identify signs of domestic abuse and to enable them to signpost potential victims to other agencies who can provide the advice and protection they may need. The project has received recognition across Essex and the team has recently secured an additional 12 months' funding from the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner to deliver J9 to eight new local authorities in Essex. The aim is also to expand the project across all Jobcentres in the county.

## *Cuckooing*

This is becoming more prevalent in the district and our team have worked on several cases of cuckooing over the past year. A recent case investigated by Community Safety identified a Council housing property where the occupant was being exploited by drug dealers and his home was being used for the supply and use of drugs. As a joint piece of work involving local residents affected by the problem, the Council's Housing team and Essex Police Operation Raptor, the Community Safety team obtained a Closure Order for the property, excluding anyone entering it who was not named on the order. Police carried out proactive investigations and arrested a drug dealer in the act of re-supplying class A drugs to the house before proceeding to raid the property, arresting two further males for possession of Class A drugs. As a result, the tenant is now working with social care and is no longer being exploited, and the property is back in his and the Council's control. Subsequently, three men appeared at Chelmsford Crown Court on 16 November charged with drugs offences. One pleaded guilty to possession with intent to supply heroin and crack cocaine and received a sentence of 40 months imprisonment. The other two men pleaded guilty to possession of class A drugs and received prison sentences of six and four months. This is an excellent example of the Council's Community Safety team being involved in a coordinated investigation with many different service areas, organisations and the public and obtaining a positive result which has improved the quality of life for all the victims who had been affected.

## *Drug Detection Case Study*

Our Community Safety team was asked to investigate a case where a male was regularly visiting a Council property, parking his car in its vicinity and then being visited by a number of individuals for a short period of time. The team suspected that drug dealing was taking place and gathered evidence from nearby residents, working with them to provide reassurance that action would be taken. Enquiries with the Community Policing Team identified the male and it was ascertained he was wanted by police in connection with drugs offences. Police visited the area and subsequently arrested the male who was found to be in possession of drugs. A warrant was then executed at the property, a small amount of drugs was seized and the female occupant cautioned. All suspicious activity has now ceased in this area and the Community Safety team received an email from one of the members of public who had been affected, as follows:

*"I'd just like to say a massive thank you to the two of you for all your efforts re the resolution of the goings on around this turning. I'm not sure what happened the other week but we haven't seen any sign at all of the people that had been causing all the problems. Consequently the area is a very much nicer place to live and I'm very aware that we have you to thank for that."*

This clearly demonstrates the success of our working in partnership in delivering positive outcomes for residents affected by this kind of anti-social behaviour.

## *Airwave Radio*

I can report that the Community Safety team has now acquired a government Tea2 licence to operate an Airwave radio base station. This will be located in our CCTV room at the Civic Offices and will give our CCTV team the ability to communicate directly with operational front line police units in times of emergency.

## Firebreak

I was pleased to attend the passing out parade at Waltham Abbey Fire Station for young people who have participated in a Firebreak course over a week. This excellent programme run by Essex Fire and Rescue and supported by EFDC involves pupils who have been referred by their schools as likely to benefit from a course which shows them how to work as a team and to participate in some of the basic training undertaken by firefighters. The programme has produced some first class outcomes and is warmly welcomed by the parents and teachers of those taking part.

## Safeguarding

The number of safeguarding referrals and concerns received by our team on a weekly basis continues to grow. This is mainly due to staff awareness and vigilance across all sectors of the Council.

In November, the safeguarding team received 37 referrals involving 72 people, which is one of the highest numbers this year, and the breakdown of these was as follows:

No. of children-only concerns (where children were victims): .....	8
No. of adult-only concerns (where adults were victims): .....	19
No. of concerns that involved both (adult and children were victims): .....	10
Total no. of children involved: .....	41
Total no. of adults involved: .....	31
No. of new cases referred to Essex Social Care: .....	16
No. of new cases referred to Police .....	2
No. of multi-agency referrals made (eg. to Police and Essex Social Care): .....	0
Updates (sent to agencies where victim/perp already known/on-going): .....	4
Referral to Mental Health Service: .....	0
Referred to MARAC: .....	4
Referral to other external agencies (eg. Family Mosaic; CQC; GP) .....	0
Not referred (doesn't meet threshold/not safeguarding): .....	16

### Categories:

Welfare concerns: .....	12	Physical Abuse: .....	0
Domestic Abuse: .....	6	Self Neglect/Hoarding: .....	6
Mental Health/Mental Capacity: .....	9	Homeless: .....	1
Neglect: .....	2	Substance Misuse: .....	1
Emotional/Psychological Abuse: .....	0	Exploitation/cuckooing: .....	2
Financial Abuse: .....	0	CSE: .....	1
Sexual Abuse: .....	0	Suicide/self-harm threats: .....	3
Carer Abuse: .....	1	Child birth not registered : .....	1

The main issues arising from these referrals are as follows;

- **Domestic Violence:** Due to changes in the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC), the Council is no longer involved in meetings for local High Risk cases of Domestic Abuse. This has meant information is not cascaded to a local

level and where there are serious concerns in Epping Forest they may not be discussed at the MARAC.

- *Hoarding:* A corporate Hoarding Working Group has been introduced and is currently focussing on the hoarding cases that have already been identified in the district and how the complex range of issues can be resolved. The group will be working with Lee Markwick from the Fire Service, in order for them to flag them on their system and carry out risk assessments.
- *Referrals:* There has been a slight increase in referrals for Mental Health and Suicide threats, which are being attributed to the recent success of the Mental Health First Aid Courses delivered by MIND and the publication of the new Suicide Protocol.

## **Countrycare**

Since the last report Countrycare has held volunteer tasking days at Swaines Green in Epping (paid for by Epping Town Council), Willingale Community Orchard (paid by Loughton Town Council), Abbots Wood in Waltham Abbey, Linders Field, Church Lane and Chigwell Row Wood. We were pleased to have a visit from the Chairman of the Council, Jeane Lea, at Abbots Wood, a new site that has been neglected and which we are improving for wildlife and people.

The team and a small group of volunteers spent two days coppicing hazel at Belhus Woods, a site managed by the Woodland Trust. Instead of payment we took away the harvested stakes and binders to sell on to the City of London for their hedgelaying over the winter. We spent another two days there harvesting stakes and binders for Countrycare's own activities, representing payment in kind for the coppicing work.

Hedgelaying has continued weekly with work on hedges in Home Mead (particularly fine) and Swaines Green. We also hosted a Field Studies Council hedgelaying course at the North Weald Flower meadow, and in return a hedge was laid there by the students. Following the Tesco Bags of Help vote in the Epping Tesco store, Countrycare's project came third and has been chosen by Tesco customers to receive a grant award of £8,000, which is for replacing the boardwalk and related works in Nazeing Triangle LNR.

## **Energy Efficiency**

### *BioBoost*

EFDC has been awarded EU funding as part of a consortium project called BioBoost. The project is made up of nine partners in three countries (UK, Netherlands and Belgium) and over the next three years will look at ways of using agricultural waste for new products in a circular economy. NIAB, the National Institute for Agriculture and Botany, are the UK lead partner organising research projects, and EFDC will work with NIAB to hold educational and networking events in the UK to disseminate results of the research.

### *Corporate Green Working Party*

The Green Working Party continues to work across departments within EFDC. With the recent adoption by the Council of the Environmental Charter following recommendations brought to Cabinet, the group is updating and adding actions to the objectives and actions.

## **Parking**

### *Implementation of Council Car Parking Strategy*

All pay and display machines have now been upgraded to receive the new one pound coin once it is brought in circulation. Chip and Pin is now also operational in at least one machine in each car park.

I am pleased to inform Members that the project for replacement of older lighting systems with new improved and efficient LED lighting is now in its implementation stage for the Traps Hill Car Park in Loughton, and the installation work will commence shortly. The project will include some new lighting columns, with all new LED lamps with associated electrical circuitry. Once this work is completed a new CCTV system will be installed.

The next phase of surveying the existing lighting provision in the remaining Council car parks has already commenced, and I shall update Members on progress as it takes place.

At its meeting on 1 December 2016, Cabinet agreed to award the contract for the provision of off-street parking enforcement across the Council car parks to NSL Limited, and the new arrangements will commence on 1 April 2017. I would like to thank officers involved in this project as well as members of my Portfolio Holder Advisory Group who have been assisting and advising during the implementation of the Car Parking Strategy and the procurement process for the off-street enforcement contract.

### *Loughton Broadway Parking Review*

Significant progress has been made in the implementation of Phase 1 of the Loughton Broadway Parking Review. This consists of a handful of sites that are experiencing severe parking problems due to inconsiderate parking by commuters. Following consultation with ward members, proposals for on-street parking restrictions in the Oakwood Hill Road and the Industrial Estate have been finalised and the necessary Traffic Regulation Order will be advertised in a few days' time. I shall be holding another meeting with the local members to review proposals for the area wide review.

### *TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) scheme update*

The North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) intends to advertise the following schemes for public consultation in Spring 2017: Albany Court and Allnuts Road in Epping, and Loughton Station entrance. Additionally, the following schemes are being investigated: Green Glade / Pakes Way and Smarts Lane / Forest Road and High Beech Road.

Officers have started work on the following seven schemes approved at the October Joint Committee meeting: Epping New Road (Boleyn Court), High Road (Shore Point), Beech Lane, Bansons Way, Albert Road, Kings Green and Woburn Avenue.