

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 24 April 2007

Subject: Community Wellbeing Portfolio

Item: 6(d)

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ms S-A Stavrou

Recommendation:

That the report of the Portfolio Holder be noted.

Crime and Disorder

The Joint Action Group (JAG) meetings being held weekly at Epping Police Station appear to be working well. This is a weekly meeting which tries to multi agency problem solve emerging problems in the district. JAGs will eventually be fed by Neighbourhood Action Panels (NAPs) once they are up and running. Members will see that over the past few weeks there have been a number of anti social behaviour problems in certain areas. The specifics of these incidents, and the steps taken to remedy them, are outlined in the JAG minutes. These minutes are not restricted and are available for perusal in the members' room.

Three training modules for Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) have been prepared; these are - Policing and Partnerships, Domestic Home Security Surveys and Intelligence Gathering. Once the documents have been printed, the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator will prepare the training package and deliver it to the PCSOs.

The official launch of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel website and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel Induction Handbook was held at 12 noon, at Theydon Bois Village Hall, on Thursday 19 April.

Concessionary Fare Travel 2008

The Concessionary Bus Travel Bill has continued to make good progress through Parliament. The Third Reading, the final stage in the Bill's initial passage through the House of Lords, took place on Monday 5 February. On Tuesday 6 February the Bill transferred to the House of Commons for the First Reading. No date has yet been finalised for the Bill's Second Reading.

All authorities have been advised to check and update databases of existing concessionaires, as well as capturing photographs of their eligible concessionaires. This was undertaken at Epping during the last bus pass issue in February 2006 and is being finalised during February 2007.

Pandemic Flu

Building on the work the Council has already undertaken to implement its on business continuity arrangements for pandemic flu, we continue to work with our partner agencies on

this subject and in early May 2007 officers will be taking part in a multi agency exercise being organised by the West Essex Primary Care Trust.

Other agencies involved in the exercise will include the Princess Alexander Hospital Acute Trust, East of England Ambulance Trust, East and North Herts Primary Care Trust and the District Councils of Harlow Uttlesford and East Herts.

Bell Common Tunnel

Continuing the theme of multi Agency Working, officers from the Council's Emergency Planning and Response Team participated in "Exercise Alexander" on 28 February.

This exercise, organised by the Highways Agency was designed to examine the issues that would arise from a serious incident occurring on the M25 motorway in the Bell Common Tunnel Epping.

Arising from the exercise the Council will be involved in further detailed planning work in relation to receiving and caring for evacuees following a serious incident.

Business Continuity Management

Part of the Council's obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act is to offer advice to local businesses on business continuity management. As a starting point it is intended to publish an advice booklet and distribute it to all businesses in the District.

The first draft of a booklet is nearing completion and it is hoped that the final version will be available for issue later this year.

Training

With the expansion of the Council's role in emergency preparedness and response, training becomes an increasingly important aspect of emergency planning work.

Training needs to be provided for members of the Emergency Response Team, staff volunteers and Councillors. We also need to build on the existing liaison arrangements with Parish and Town Councils.

The first awareness session for District and Parish and Town Councillors was held in November 2006 and it is intended that this becomes a regular component of the Member's annual training prospectus.

We will also be looking at other ways of keeping members more regularly updated on emergency planning and business continuity matters.