

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Subject: Commercial and Regulatory

Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Patel

Recommending:

That the report of the Commercial and Regulatory Portfolio Holder be noted

National Police Aviation Service (NPAS)

Following the small number of complaints regards the police helicopters night time operations the Neighbourhoods Team have installed noise monitoring equipment in one particular property. The data has been collected and the intention is to meet with NPAS again to discuss the results and to look at options as to how the alleged nuisance can be mitigated further.

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust (EHAAT)

I am pleased to report that EHAAT has now started construction on its new purpose built facility at NW. A ground breaking ceremony is due to take place on Feb 12th to which the Chairman of Council has been invited. The completion date is November 27 2020.

HMRC Common Transit Convention site

The HMRC has recently written to local residents to inform them that the CTC site will not be needed for now due to the UK leaving the EU under the Withdrawal Agreement. They are considering other options for the site for the remaining period of the lease.

Building Control

I am pleased to report that the Building Control income of October and December saw record figures for the service with £78k and £90k respectively. This has taken the 19/20 budget income to within 91% of its £550k total with three months remaining.

Private Sector Housing

I am pleased to report that the Private Sector Housing Team, Houses in Multiple Occupation licensing system has been audited and found that the system has an effective control framework in place for licence applications, fees processing and issuing of licences. All audit objectives were fully met. This is following on from the extension of HMO licensing to cover all properties with 5 or more people sharing and the moving of our application form to a fully "online" system."

The Private Sector Housing team has taken over responsibility for the Council's Public Burial function. In circumstances where there are no known next of kin for a deceased person, the Essex Coroner's office refers the case to us to assist in making funeral arrangements. This is a particularly sensitive area of work, requiring tactful investigations into the resident's home and family. However, officers have received extremely favourable feedback from friends of the deceased person who are very appreciative of our services, especially at such a traumatic time as most people are unaware that it is a service that the Local Authority has a duty to provide.

Licensing

I am pleased to report that the First Tier Tribunal (General Regulatory Chamber) Welfare of Animals, has disallowed an appeal against the Council for refusing an application for a licence to provide boarding for dogs. The Tribunal found that our officers had been right in refusing to issue a licence to operate because the applicant held a part time job away from the home and, during these times, the dogs in her care were left alone for periods of time that were likely to cause them distress to the detriment of the animals health, safety and welfare. The Animal Welfare Regulations were introduced in 2018 and are therefore reasonably new to officers to apply and interpret. It is believed that this is the first appeal in relation to animal welfare licensing in Essex and therefore a good result for the Licensing Team.