

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Subject: Community & Partnerships Services

Portfolio Holder: Councillor N Bedford

Recommending:

That the report of the Community & Partnerships Portfolio Holder be noted

Community Resilience

Community Safety Hub & EFDC Funded Police Team: Our funded Police team have had a range of successes over the last month including working with Chingford Safer Neighbourhoods Team from the Metropolitan Police. Through this work there have been multiple operations using mixed resources from both forces in order to target cross-border criminality around the district border with Waltham Forest. So far this has resulted in arrests for drugs supply, vehicle seizures and a large number of stop/searches. The operation will continue to be run on a monthly basis and based on the early success is looking to be rolled out with additional Essex and Met resources. Aside from the operational success, the most recent event resulted in sharing intelligence between the teams which lead to the identification of a burglary suspect from a series of Epping Forest burglaries.

CCTV: The Council now has 800 CCTV Cameras in operation over 62 sites in the district. There has been a continued steady flow of CCTV Requests from Essex Police and other tactical parties related to criminality in the district.

The work on Borders Lane & Pyrles Lane sites has now been successfully completed to upgrade the CCTV systems & cameras onto an IP(Internet Protocol host) Platform and the work on Epping High Street is now in progress, to install the new CCTV infrastructure with the new street columns being installed and once this phase completed work will start on installation of the wireless network to support the new designated CCTV Cameras.

Ongoing work with EFDC Facilities & ICT on the temporary relocation of Communities Resilience Team to Ongar and the temporary resitting of the existing Civic Offices CCTV system to Facilities Office in Condor building from Superintendents Office in preparation for the refurbishment of Civic Offices.

Environmental Enforcement: Members may have seen recent media coverage about Council's carrying out enforcement for fly-tippers caught on CCTV cameras and this is something that the Council has been doing over the last two years.

In Waltham Abbey, the area of Springfields was attracting as many as 2 fly tips a week at great cost to the Council in terms of officer time and costs of clearance. Although CCTV covered the area, many of the fly tips were by residents that lived in the area who dumped the rubbish by hand and there was no way to identify them. However, in 2018 we began to produce 'Wanted' posters using CCTV images which were displayed on the bins stores in Springfields, as a pilot to see if local people were prepared to come forward and assist the Council. During

the trial period a total of 27 posters were displayed and as a result we were able to identify 14 people that had fly tipped. This has resulted in FPNs of £200 being issued and paid and within 3 months of using the posters we were able to see a reduction in the amount of fly tipping. By October 2019 fly tipping in the area had reduced significantly with only 5 incidents since then. It is planned to build on this success by using this approach in other areas.

In general, the EEO team has received 1056 complaints/service requests in the last 10 weeks. These included;

- Three noise abatement notices served – one for a restaurant in Loughton (loud music), one on a property in Chigwell (barking dog) and one to a property in Waltham Abbey (due to unreasonable amounts of shouting) with a Community Protection warning served on a property in Copperfield, Chigwell, due to persistent storage of waste on the balcony.
- Fly tipping in Green Lane, Matching Tye. Defendant pleaded guilty with £1620 in fines and costs.
- Fly tipping in Darby Drive. Co-defendants – one pleaded guilty, the other pleaded not guilty, due to be heard in Southend Court in April 2020
- Fly tipping in Stapleford Abbots. Defendant didn't attend, was arrested and due in Chelmsford for next hearing on 13 Feb 2020
- Further hearing was heard for a fly tipping case at Highwood Lane, Loughton at Basildon Court, where the defendant changed her plea from not guilty to guilty. Was given a 12x month conditional discharge, with a contribution to costs of £400 (plus £20 victim surcharge).

Community, Culture and Wellbeing

Museum: The Museum hosted a commemoration event for Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January. The event was attended by local Rabbis, councillors and schools. A tree was planted in the Museum garden and pupils from Davenant Foundation School, Leverton Primary and King Harold Academy laid painted stones.

As the next phase of commemoration for the Holocaust, an exhibition called "The Boys: Holocaust Survivors in the Epping Forest District" opens at the Museum on 23 May. The exhibition will explore the stories of Holocaust survivors sent to Holmehurst Hostel, Loughton following liberation of concentration camps in 1945. I am delighted that the team has been successful in securing £59,600 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support this project which will also provide a local schools resource, and workshops within the community.

I am pleased to report that following a range of work over the last year, our Museum has been awarded Autism Friendly status by the National Autistic Society.

Cultural Strategy: A Cultural Strategy for the district has been produced which has been informed by hundreds of local residents and partners and this will link directly with our Epping Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The cultural strategy seeks to support the Council's wider wellbeing vision by enabling residents and visitors to the district to access and participate in quality arts, heritage and leisure activities.

Youth Council: The Youth Council's "We R Safe" project which provides advice and awareness for young people across the district through a series of short videos has been Highly Commended by the National Crime Beat Awards Panel.

We are now in the process of delivering Youth Council election promotional assemblies in all secondary schools in the district with Elections planned to take place between 9 - 20 March. The Chairman will announce the election results on the 24 March.

Youth engagement: A new schools initiative called “Stop & Think” for Year 7 and 8 pupils has been piloted in Loughton. The interactive theatre-style assembly raises awareness of police “stop and search” powers and aims to support confidence in the police and the Criminal Justice System.

Cycling for Health: For the second consecutive year an Active Community Grant from the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority has been secured to support the roll out of Cycling for Health Sunday sessions between May to October in the Lee Valley Park. The aim of the project is to encourage less active people to be more physically active, adopt healthier lifestyles and to build confidence in riding a bike.

Loughton Young Artist: The Council’s Cultural Engagement Officer has been on the judging panel for the 2020 Loughton Young Artist competition at Lopping Hall Gallery. The annual art contest runs over four weeks, with a week-long exhibition provided by each of the competing schools, showcasing the best of young artistic talent across Loughton.

This Girl Can Festival: The Health & Wellbeing Team, in partnership with Active Essex, will be running a “This Girl Can Festival” on Sunday 8th March, which is International Women’s Day. The aim of the day is to encourage women and girls to try an exciting range of fun physical activities.

Daily Mile: Supported by the Community, Culture and Wellbeing team, 50% of the district’s primary schools are now taking part in walking or running a Daily Mile, improving the health of pupils and enhancing concentration in the classroom.

Girls Football: The Health & Wellbeing Team has secured funding to run a girl’s football session in Waltham Abbey as part of the Football Associations Wild Cats Programme aimed at encouraging more girls to play football

Economic Development

Economic Strategy: The redrafted Nurturing Growth strategy will be reviewed at the next Cabinet meeting on March 26 2020 in line with initial findings of the Local High Streets Task & Finish Panel. It will outline three key priorities for action and subject to Cabinet agreement, will recommend the production of an Economic Delivery Plan and associated resources.

O&S Task & Finish Review of Local High Streets: As preparation for the task and finish review, the economic development team has been carrying out baseline research including evidence from the annual high street survey regarding vacancy rates and changes in occupancy; data from business rate; information from specially commissioned surveys and input from consultation events. The Task & Finish Panel will be asked to consider the opportunity for officers to undertake a ‘Hothouse’ event with BT to focus on digital ideas to promote the long-term sustainability of Local High Streets and smart parking associated with this.

Green Arc: One to one meetings have been held with core partners of the Green Arc such as the Woodland Trust, Corporation of London and Lea Valley Regional Park Authority to confirm commitment to the vision and corresponding actions of a draft briefing note which has

produced following discussions with partners. Officers are currently in the process of identifying Council owned land across the District which may be potential suitable for tree planting. This has been done using the Legal Land Terrier and Planning Portal. Once all sites are identified and measured, a process of elimination will begin to determine the sites most suitable.

Moving forward the intention is for the Green Arc to host a conference at the end of April inviting key stakeholders to discuss what approach the partnership should take when joint working.

Tourism: Latest Tourism Value Report shows visitor numbers and employment have risen once again and the overall value to the district is £232,766,600 (2018). Plans to secure government funding as part of the Tourism Zone initiative continue and Neighbouring London Boroughs have demonstrated an interest in this.

The film location company that identified Chigwell for the new BBC sitcom King Gary are talking to us about bringing more film opportunities to our district and we have secured the Royal Gunpowder Mills as a location.

The Chairman of Council is liaising with Eleanor Laing MP to arrange an invitation for the Minister with responsibility for tourism to visit our district and a background briefing document with suggested itinerates is being prepared.