

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee: Cabinet**

**Date: 26 September 2017**

**Subject: Safer, Greener & Transport**

**Portfolio Holder: Councillor S Kane**

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## **Recommending:**

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

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## **Countrycare**

Since the last report Countrycare has held seven volunteer project days in the parishes of High Ongar, Buckhurst Hill, Thornwood, North Weald, Sheering, Nazeing and Epping Upland. The tasks were varied ranging from annual cutting of wildflower meadows to making steps and repairing bridges and gates. Attendance has been good. Countrycare is working closely with All Saints Church in Nazeing creating new habitat areas and tree planting. This is also opening up opportunities to work with community groups and the local school for land management or events.

The Ancient Tree Forum held its two-day annual conference at Gilwell Park hosted by the City of London. Countrycare was asked to exhibit its veteran tree survey findings as one of the stands in the foyer. This generated a lot of interest from other parties attending.

Two members of staff exhibited at the North Weald Open Day. Many children were entertained by colouring in and making dragonfly finger puppets and some people won wildflower seeds by identifying wildflowers in a quiz.

The children's summer events have been well attended. River Dipping took place on the Roding and the Teddy Bears' picnic was in Linder's Field. The kids enjoyed a woodland trail and quiz, scavenger hunts, bug hunting, frog finding, arts and crafts and tree decorating.

## **Parking**

### *Off Street enforcement*

The NSL contract for enforcement and associated activities in Council car parks is performing well. I shall be calling the first meeting of the Partnership Board in the near future.

### *Loughton Broadway Parking Review*

Traffic Regulation Orders for the first phase of the review comprising of: Oakwood Hill Road, Oakwood Hill Industrial Estate, Honeycroft, Lenthall Road, Rectory Lane, Chigwell Lane, Colson Road and Torrington Drive have been formally published and adopted. The enforcement for these sites started last month and we are monitoring the movement of the vehicles from those areas in readiness for Phase 2, for which I intend to hold a meeting with the relevant Members in October.

### *North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP)*

We are due to nominate our next schemes at the October meeting of NEPP and we are currently consulting with Members and Local Town Councils on the following schemes. Ivy Chimneys Road, Epping, Lincolnsfield, Epping, Cleall Avenue Waltham Abbey, Lower Swaines, Epping, Willow Tree Close, Abridge, High Road Buckhurst Hill, Market Place, Abridge, Algers Mead/Algers Close, Loughton, Albion Hill Loughton. In keeping with the already established arrangements I shall only nominate a scheme if agreed by the Member. Once Approval has been agreed by the NEPP Committee then they will carry out detailed site surveys, prepare preliminary designs which will then be consulted upon. The whole process, owing to the statutory requirements and resource pressures, schemes have to be fully funded by NEPP, could take up to 18 months.

### *Car Parking Strategy update*

With regards to the LED and CCTV Traps Hill Car Park, Loughton has new LED lighting and CCTV systems, Basons Lane and The Pleasance, Ongar and Queens Road Lower, Buckhurst Hill have new CCTV systems. The installation of LED lighting and CCTV systems for car parks in Waltham Abbey will commence shortly.

New Traffic Regulation Orders have been published for the following new off street parking: the access road along the Burton Road Car Park will be converted to pay and display and permit parking and two new car parks on the Oakwood Hill Industrial Estate. This will improve road safety and create more parking for shoppers and visitors.

### **Community Safety**

The summer has been a particularly busy and challenging time for Community Safety. The commencement of school holidays coinciding with demolition of the Hillhouse community centre to make way for the new leisure centre has created a crime generator. It has provided the opportunity for youths to gather in numbers and cause damage and serious disorder. Initial attempts to police the site with three council re-deployable cameras resulted in one being extensively damaged and the remaining two stolen. Further attempts by Pellikaan Construction to install their own cameras on the leisure site development resulted in three cameras being stolen.

### **Anti-social Behaviour**

At the same time as this significant upsurge in anti-social behaviour complaints from Hillhouse the Community Safety Team received two applications from members of the public for ASB Case Reviews (Community Triggers). Both cases were adjudged to have met the threshold for review on the basis of the persistence of the ASB and the harm caused by it. As a result a multi-agency meeting was convened and recommendations were made in relation to further actions. A comprehensive action plan has been drawn up and is being implemented. Recommendations include the specific targeting of individuals engaged in ASB, assessing opportunities to design out crime, engaging youth diversionary initiatives and deploying hi-visibility patrols for reassurance. Hillhouse has been particularly challenging due to the serious and vindictive actions of a minority group and is stretching Community Safety and Community Policing Team resources to the limit.

ASB Case review applications were introduced by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to allow challenges to response to complaints. One application was received in 2015 and one in 2016. Neither met the threshold for review. Currently we have received 7 applications this year with 2 cases meeting the threshold for review.

ASB Investigators have worked with Essex Police Integrated Offender Management and Housing North and have been successful in obtaining an injunction against a prolific offender who was co-habiting with a female tenant at Birch View, Epping. The man was predisposed to violence and drug usage and was a threat to vulnerable residents. He became a significant drain on council and police resources due to the level of complaints about him. The injunction was granted banning him from the locality and his place of residence and contained a power of arrest. Council CCTV footage was used to support evidence for the injunction. As a result the male and his partner have moved away from the district.

ASB Investigators have been dealing with complaints about a suspected drug den in Sandford Avenue, Loughton. Activity at the premises has caused distress to neighbours, some of whom are elderly. As a result of this Community Safety working with EFDC legal services have obtained a Closure Order on the premises. The order prohibits any visitors to the property not named on the order. Breach is a criminal offence for which police can arrest and prosecute. The granting of the order allows housing to seek possession of the property under 'absolute grounds' which the court must grant, subject to any defence under human rights arguments.

#### **CCTV: Recent CCTV Successes/Outcomes: Jul/Aug 17:**

- 3mth suspended sentence for ABH assault – CCTV supported court prosecution.
- £200 FPN for fly tipping of green waste in the rear service yard of The Broadway (Loughton) on 07/08/ - vehicle and number plate identified by CCTV of offender leading to prosecution.
- Double stabbing at Shelley Close (Ongar). CCTV Team liaised with Police after intercepting emergency calls via Airwave Police radio. CCTV showed various stages of the incident and CCTV Team assisted Police directly at the scene via Police radio system and in person, once crime scene was secured.
- Birch View (Epping) Assault and Dog fight. Detailed CCTV provided to Housing & Police, which ultimately has led to an injunction being bought against the offender.
- Cottis Lane (Epping). CCTV captured an assault of a male involved in drug dealing , with attackers and the getaway vehicles on camera with registrations captured and handed to Police who are continuing their investigation.

#### **CCTV: Projects – Sept to Oct 17:**

- Yellow Block, Limes Avenue (Chigwell). This ten year old CCTV system is being replaced with new High Definition cameras. Works are to commence w/c 18<sup>th</sup> Sept.
- Bobbingworth (former landfill site, Moreton) –CCTV system is being upgraded Oct 2017 using hybrid technology, which allows for high quality images to be provided at a reduced cost (up to 30% financial saving).
- Debden Broadway Road widening scheme is almost complete and arrangements for the re-installation of the CCTV column at the junction have been made bringing 3 cameras back into service after a 9 month shutdown.

#### **Safeguarding:**

**Internal partnerships** – As mentioned in the last Portfolio Holder report to Council, the safeguarding team has built up an excellent working relationship with the repairs managers, culminating in tailored safeguarding training rolled out for all trades staff and the introduction of the Safeguarding Concern Card. This has resulted in trades making significant contributions to customer's wellbeing and the following case studies are excellent examples of where this has been successful;

- A carpenter working reported a tenant being taken away by police and ambulance. We found out she has a history of self-harm and attacking strangers but was not on our Accompanied Attendance (No Lone Visit) list; the carpenter acting as our 'eyes and ears' enabled us to put her on the list and warn Council officers of potential risks to staff.
- A paranoid schizophrenic lady's heating broke which raised concerns about her poor living conditions. The safeguarding team found out that the normal approach to fixing the heaters could have caused a psychotic break so worked with the repairs team to liaise with the lady's mental health worker to fix the heaters in the least disruptive way possible. The tenant was very happy with the results.

[Note: The Safeguarding Concern Card is the mechanism by which trades staff and contractors raise safeguarding concerns with their managers. It enables them to keep their names out of the situation- introduced because we were not getting anything from this team because they were worried about being seen as a 'grass', getting people into trouble and/or having personal repercussions for those who live local.]

**Mental Health Concerns** - We continue to have mixed success working with local Mental Health teams, with only some being proactive in engaging with us around concerns about our vulnerable tenants. The Safeguarding Team are therefore working hard to developing closer relationships with Mental Health Managers to improve joint working at an operational level.

**Staff Training** - One of our safeguarding officers has been working with the Essex Safeguarding Boards to develop a more suitable safeguarding training package for 2<sup>nd</sup> tier authorities and non-core agencies. I am pleased to confirm that this new, Enhanced Safeguarding Training Toolkit will be available from 18 September, with an e-learning package being adapted to follow. All designated Council Staff will need to complete basic safeguarding awareness via e-learning, before undertaking the enhanced session.

**Member Safeguarding Training** – the next training session for Elected Members is being held on 6 November, for those who are new to the Council and as a refresher, for any Members who haven't undertaken training in the last two years.

**Safeguarding Concerns** – Safeguarding Cases arising in the district continue to rise and are often complex and diverse in their scope, often involving close working with the Council's ASB team due the criminal nature, including those around Child Sexual Exploitation and Modern Slavery. The following stats show the rise in the number of concerns received by the team over the last three years;

No of concerns received Jan-Aug in 2015 = 85  
 No of concerns received Jan-Aug in 2016 = 156  
 No of concerns received Jan-Aug in 2017 = 242

This represents a 65% increase in cases over the past two years.

**Visit to the council by the High Sheriff of Essex – Simon Hall and Chief Executive of Essex Community Foundation:**

The Community Safety Team hosted a visit to the Council by the High Sheriff of Essex and Chief Executive of the Essex Community Foundation at the end of August, as part of a tour of Community Safety teams across the County. They were provided with a full day of activities, including presentations by the Community Safety team and external partners, and visits to sites of interest including Norway House and 'Restore' community facility, in Debden

Broadway. Both visitors were extremely impressed with all of the community safety work undertaken by the Council, the innovative approaches taken to address crime and support vulnerable people and the commitment of staff and partners. They were particularly complimentary about the Domestic Abuse J9 programme which was developed in Epping Forest and is now being rolled out across Essex and the Council's MiLife Emotional Health and Wellbeing project for children and young people, which is provided by the Council's Community Health and Wellbeing team.