

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 21 February 2017

**Subject:** Safer, Greener & 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**

### *CCTV at Limes Farm*

CCTV has now been installed within the Green Block accommodation at Limes Farm, including cameras in each of the lifts and a number plate reading camera positioned in the central car parking area of the block. In total, there are 32 cameras, with remote access from the Civic Offices in Epping for viewing. The CCTV team is now in the process of planning the separate ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) system that will capture registration plates of all cars coming on to the Limes Farm Estate, with information held on a database for a period of six months. Planning permission has already been granted for the column to be installed, and it is hoped that this work will be completed by the end of March.

### *North Weald Play Park*

As part of ongoing work to assist local Town and Parish Councils, the CCTV team have responded to a request for CCTV coverage at a play area in North Weald. A local parents' group raised £10,000 to provide funding for camera coverage of the park and immediate location, which is a rural site that is not overlooked. The system will include three cameras which can record in very dark environments, thus providing security for both people and property. A Service Level Agreement is currently being drawn up with North Weald Parish Council for the management of the CCTV system, and groundworks will then commence.

### *CCTV and fly-tipping*

There have been several successful actions against fly-tipping perpetrators, where the footage from the Council's CCTV cameras has been used in evidence. These include a £200 Fixed Penalty Notice for tipping of green waste at the rear of the factory shop in Debden, a £150 fine and costs for fly-tipping in the Broadway area near a charity shop and a fine of £140 plus £375 costs for fly-tipping on the Springfields estate in Waltham Abbey.

### *CCTV secures convictions*

There are two further instances where the Council's CCTV systems have provided evidence to secure criminal convictions. In one case an individual was given a suspended prison sentence for Actual Bodily Harm and in another, a male was given a sentence of five years in prison and a further five year disqualification for dangerous driving and a number of burglaries.

### *CCTV decommissioning*

Following consideration of the views of Waltham Abbey and Loughton Town Councils and those of members of the Communities Select Committee, whom I consulted in advance, I decided that CCTV systems at the Upshire shops and Oakwood Hill estate should be decommissioned and removed. This was based on the Council's CCTV Strategy agreed by Cabinet in December 2015 and the CCTV Code of Practice.

### *Social Media & CCTV*

The CCTV team is proposing to stream its own Twitter account for the Council's CCTV, a project that is currently being investigated with the intention of linking with the Essex Police Twitter page.

### *Crime Prevention*

As a result of recent police re-structuring, the local Crime Prevention Tactical Advisor (CPTA) will now be based in the Council's Community Safety office at least one day per week. This has come about following a change in responsibility for areas responsible for crime prevention, which has seen a reduction from three officers to two in our Local Policing Area, with the CPTA now covering Epping Forest and Harlow. To assist with this geographical change, the CPTA will hot-desk on a more regular basis from Epping, and a bid for additional resources and equipment is being submitted to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

This re-structure has already had a positive outcome for the district, with police recently requesting an urgent Safe House / Sanctuary assessment for a very high risk domestic abuse victim. The CPTA, working with Community Safety, housing repairs and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, were able to undertake this at very short notice and, with an excellent response from the Council's repairs team, were able to assess and install a safe room and additional security measures within two days. All services worked together in a professional and co-ordinated way, providing a first rate level of service delivery. The success of this work has been recognised by Essex Police, who want to promote it as an example of 'best practice' across the rest of the county.

### *Crime Analysis*

Essex Police have now recognised the need for greater analytical support for Community Safety Partnerships, as previously provided by the analyst hosted and managed by the Council's Community Safety team on behalf of the West LPA. As a result, the police have created three new analyst posts and have now taken charge of their management, although we still continue to be provided with excellent support from our analyst who, despite being transferred in September, still hot desks in the Council's Community Safety office. The Council's ICT team have full wi-fi access to the police systems from the Civic Offices and any other Council buildings.

### *Airwave Radio*

There is now a police Airwave radio base station located in the CCTV office. This enables direct communication with the Essex Police control room in times of emergency or urgency. The system is hardwired into the office, and the licence was only granted because of the office's robust security and the vetting status of all staff. The CCTV team have been fully trained in its use, and the system has now gone live.

### *Anti-social Behaviour*

The Community Safety office is the point of contact for the Council in nominating anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases that may benefit from mediation offered by the Restorative Justice Team funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner. To date, four cases have been assessed by the team and all referred successfully. In each case that has been dealt with, mediation has had a positive effect in either resolving ASB issues or reducing the level of reporting of low level nuisance.

### *Essex Police Award*

I am delighted to advise members that the Council's Community Safety Manager and volunteer Crime Prevention Assistant were formally recognised for their efforts in a ceremony held at Essex Police Headquarters on 31 January. Presentations were made by Lorna Rolfe, the High Sheriff of Essex, Jane Gardner, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, and Maurice Mason, Essex Police Assistant Chief Constable. ACC Mason presented the certificates acknowledging the commitment of both officers to working in partnership with Essex Police.



*Community Safety Manager Caroline Wiggins (on behalf of Tony Ellis) and officer Paul Gardener with Assistant Chief Constable Maurice Mason*

### *Senior Safety Day*

A date has been set for our special Senior Safety Day, which will be held on Wednesday 22 March at the Loughton Club, Station Road, Loughton. This public event will enable some of the district's senior residents to access information relating to safety in and around the home. It will include informative talks from agencies such as Trading Standards, Essex Police and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service. There will be a wide variety of information stands, and the day will conclude with a musical called 'Scam Busters' which raises awareness of postal and phone scams and how to avoid falling prey to these.

### **Safeguarding**

Our team continues to receive a very high number of safeguarding referrals, relating to people of all ages and family relationships. In the last month, numerous adult cases have arisen, many of which are complex and take considerable time to work through. One of the main issues that can hinder intervention in adult cases is difficulty in engaging the local Mental Health Team to undertake Mental Health Assessments. Recently, this has resulted in our staff needing to challenge decisions taken by colleagues in Health and Social Care,

and in all cases to date agreement has been reached that professional intervention is needed.

<i>Total no. of concerns received by the Safeguarding Team for this period:</i> .....	33
No. of children-only concerns (where children were victims): .....	4
No. of adult-only concerns (where adults were victims): .....	22
No. of concerns that involved both (adult and children were victims): .....	7
Total no. of children involved: .....	23
Total no. of adults involved: .....	35

Most of the referrals in January have related to mental health and self-neglect and hoarding. As this has been a trend over the last year, the Council's housing teams are piloting new work to address these issues in conjunction with a charity specialising in this work.

## **Countrycare**

Since my last report, Countrycare have laid hedges at Swaines Green and Norton Heath, and in addition to the usual volunteer tasks, the team has undertaken paid-for tasks at Sheering Copse and Lambourne Woods. Countrycare last worked in Lambourne Woods in 2012 but stopped due to lack of funding from Essex County Council. ECC has since found a budget to renew the relationship with Countrycare, who hope to work there more frequently in the future.

The regular volunteer tasks took place in Abbots Wood, Waltham Abbey, Home Mead, Loughton, Bobbingworth Nature Reserve, and three days in Chigwell Row Wood where Countrycare have been 'haloing' around the veteran oaks to reduce competition from other flora and to give them a better chance of survival.

In January I joined a group of seven people from the Green Infrastructure team, tree planting at Roding Recreation Ground. We planted a hedgerow next to the garages near Cranleigh Gardens to help prevent the garages being covered in graffiti. The work was commissioned and paid for by Loughton Town Council.

Before Christmas, a copse was vandalised at Thornwood Common Local Nature Reserve. This was an excellent bird nesting habitat and the damage constituted a major loss. Despite best efforts, it could not be determined who had taken this action. It is hoped that the stumps left will regenerate, but to help boost the area 150 young trees have been purchased by Land Drainage and will be planted in February by Countrycare volunteers.

To help boost Countrycare's profile in the district and to aid in advertising events, a new Facebook page has been launched. Photos, environmental information and events will be posted on the page, and it is hoped that it will gain a good following.

## **Trees and Landscape**

Officers have been seeking ways to bring increased funding into the district to help secure the future of the countryside as a resource to enjoy, while not losing its essential nature as productive farmland. We will take one of the key ideas in the draft Local Plan - a connected and accessible green infrastructure network across the district - and engage with a wide group of partners to seek ways of bringing it about. Under my chairmanship, we are now

establishing a Green Taskforce with that objective, working under the banner of One Epping Forest. A range of potential projects will be explored, including boosting economic activity across the district by increasing tourism, using the district's wealth of green infrastructure as our unique selling point.

## **Parking**

### *Off Street enforcement*

Mobilisation of the NSL Limited contract for enforcement and associated activities in the Council car parks is progressing well. The new arrangements will commence on 1 April 2017, and I shall be presenting a report at the March Cabinet seeking approval of the various policies required to manage the new arrangement.

### *Loughton Broadway Parking Review*

The first phase of the review consists of addressing the parking issues at eight locations that are experiencing severe parking problems, often due to inconsiderate commuter parking. Traffic Regulation Orders for the following will be advertised shortly: Oakwood Hill Road, Oakwood Hill Industrial Estate, Honeycroft, Lenthall Road, Rectory Lane, Chigwell Lane, Colson Road and Torrington Drive.

### *Nomination of parking schemes for restrictions at NEPP*

Each member of NEPP can nominate three minor parking restriction schemes twice a year, in addition to an unlimited number of resident parking schemes, subject to their having majority resident support.

At the next meeting of the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) in March, and subject to favourable outcomes resulting from current consultations with members and town and parish councils, I shall nominate three of the following schemes: Abridge Road, Theydon Bois, Stradbroke Grove/The Meadway, Buckhurst Hill, Tidys Lane, Epping, Stonnards Hill, Epping and Lower Swains, Epping, dependent on which of them receive support.

A consultation is also being carried out for resident parking schemes at: Milton Street, Waltham Abbey, Ivy Chimneys Road and Lincolnsfield, Epping.

I would urge members to respond to the consultation being carried out by the Car Parking team.