

CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL – 20TH JULY 2009

Agenda Item 8(i)

CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Mrs Wendy Schmitt

CABINET PORTFOLIO: Communities

Portfolio covers:-

- Community Development
- External Funding
- Voluntary Sector
- Equality and Diversity
- Community Safety
- Children and Young People
- Community Transport
- Concessionary Fares
- Community Facilities (halls, toilets, etc)

REPORT COVERS ACTIVITY DURING PERIOD COMMENCING 23RD JUNE AND ENDING 20TH JULY 2009

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

8th June Gemma Frost took up her position to carry forward the Creative Communities Project.

VOLUNTARY SECTOR

A Volunteers Make it Happen day was held on 9th July in which BDC thanked, in person some 70 of the over 200 people who work as volunteers for the Council. It was opened by the Chairman, Cllr Mrs Galione, and a DVD was shown of the many areas that volunteers assist us in. This was so successful that some people who volunteered in one area were not aware of other opportunities, and signed up to help in these different areas as well. Stands from many organisations were there and after giving them lunch I thanked them on behalf of the people of Braintree for the tremendous amount of work that they do to help their fellow citizens.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- a. The group met on June 8th, following the achievement of attaining Level 3 of the Equalities Standard for Local Government we needed to improve our process of undertaking Equalities Impact Assessments. A new process has been developed and is currently being trialled by some services. Discussion is underway about integrating this process within a new Customer Service Impact Assessment. A report will be going to the October Cabinet.
- b. A Faiths Engagement Event is being planned for 19th November; and this is being funded by the LSP. It will look at the potential of setting up a Faiths Forum for the District.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

- a. On 5th June on behalf of BDC I accepted the re Accreditation of the Council of the Police Community Safety Accreditation Scheme from the Braintree District Commander, Chief Inspector Allen Gooden. At the same time a member of the Community Safety Team was accredited. This gives these personnel the legal right to request the name and address of people committing anti-social behaviour, to give fixed penalty notices for littering, dog fouling, riding bicycles on footpaths but, most important of all, any evidence that they give is equal to that of a serving police officer. All Community Wardens are now accredited.

- b. 8-12 June was National Drugs Awareness Week. Throughout the week Safer Schools Partnership Officers, Neighbourhood Police Teams, Drug and Alcohol Reference Group(DARG), Essex Drug and Alcohol Action Team(EDAAT), Essex Young People Drug and Alcohol Services (EYPDAS), Open Road and BDC Community Safety Officers participated in various activities across the district. The ones that I attended showed partnership agencies working very closely together out on the ground; giving members of the public the support and help they need if they have concerns that a friend or family member may be abusing drugs. I also was a judge in a competition for year 8 pupils who had to design a poster to show What Would Put You Off Trying and Taking Drugs.
- c. Crucial Crew, co-ordinated and managed by the Community Safety Team, commenced on 6th until 17th July at Braintree College. This is the 16th year it has run and to date 17,700 children have participated. This years sets are shoplifting, smoking, water safety, who do you know (stranger danger a new set run by our Community Wardens), road safety, alcohol awareness (focusing on health problems), first aid, bullying, fire safety and drug information (this year focusing on peer pressure). Teachers inform us that this is one of the most rewarding and successful activities provided for junior children in Essex.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A meeting was held on June 19th with ECC regarding a review of Children's Trust Arrangements. The CYPSP structure is likely to be reduced to 4/5 local groups co-terminus with PCT's linking to the County Board. Braintree core CYPSP have agreed that this would be a good move as long as there is an effective structure for feeding up District needs and issues. Commissioning and Governance decision to be made by September, the final report will go to the Children's Trust Board in October.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

On 17th June I attended the Village Agents Conference as this department will be involved by providing transport for the scheme

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A new Caretaker rota system was out into practice on 15th June, this should cut down the amount of overtime that is incurred.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT CAN BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING:

Cllr Wendy Schmitt 01376 345363
Cllr Liz Edey 01376 563463