

CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL – 21ST SEPTEMBER 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 9TH JULY AND ENDING 7TH SEPTEMBER 2009

VOLUNTARY SECTOR

On September 7th I attended the official opening of the new building for PARC at the Discovery Centre. It is a wonderful example of how volunteers can raise large sums of money for an excellent project. The funds for the kitchen were given by Braintree Local Committee.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- a. At the August meeting it was agreed that BDC would not currently go for Level 4 at this time but would concentrate on embedding our systems and make improvements to the Equalities Impact Assessment. The new Government Equality Bill comes into force this year and will provide a simpler frame work, strengthening and replacing current requirements.
- b. Plans were also discussed for the Faith Forum event on 19th November. Its purpose is to provide information for faith groups on how to engage with the Council and LSP.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

- a. On the 15th July the Responsible Authority Group was held. A presentation by the Creative Communities Project team was given regarding the work that has been done at Nottage Crescent. Residents' surveys, one for young people and one for adults have been developed and can be filled in as hard copies or on line. The Thematic Groups chairs gave feedback on their individual action plans. The date and theme for the annual conference was given, it will be on 4th February 2010 at Towerlands and the subject is Domestic Abuse. As the CYPSP has no funding this time it will be a joint project by Braintree and Colchester CDRP's. Discussions were held to look for more projects for Community Payback Projects. Minutes from the meeting are published on BDC's web site
- b. Meetings were held prior to and after the Dispersal Order for the Freeport car parks was introduced. During the first week a couple of cars who had not heard the news were moved on and since then there have been no repeats of the problems. On 20th July a press conference was held regarding the Dispersal Order and I also gave a radio interview to Heart FM and BBC Radio Essex.

- c. On 17th July I presented certificates to the young volunteers who had helped with the very successful Crucial Crew which had reached the end of its two week run.
- d. Also on 17th July I presented the prizes to the winners of the Drug Awareness Week poster competition.
- e. On 25th July I attended the Police Fun Day at Braintree Rugby Club. Several stands from BDC were there - Dog Wardens, Community Wardens, NACRO and Communities. There was a very good attendance by the public.
- f. I attended both Witham and Braintree Police Joint Action Groups.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- a. On July 15th I had the pleasant task of presenting certificates and giving thanks to the young volunteers who had assisted in the NACRO 5 a side football Tournament.
- b. Craig Horner, BDC's Children and Young Peoples Officer has been elected as Vice Chair for the Braintree District Children's Centre Partnership. The primary focus of the group has been performance managing the children's centres in the District. Suggested targets were proposed for increasing the number of under 5's attending the centres. Negotiations are under way for one further phase three centre in the District, in the Notley area.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

In July the highest passenger numbers ever were recorded.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Four meetings were held of the group that is looking at the feasibility of a new Community Centre for Halstead, this included a visit to the Community Centre at Wickham's Bishop which is run by the community, also a presentation was given by the Development Trusts Association to give advice on how the community could run a new centre if one is built.

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

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