

4th December 2018

Community, Health & Housing Committee

Chair's update report

Report of: *Zoey Foakes – Governance and Member Support Officer*

Wards Affected: *All Wards*

This report is: *Public*

Members to note updates from Officers set out below.

Health and Wellbeing

There has been a period of change with the Public Health Improvement Practitioner. The post has been filled, funding has been released and projects are underway.

The draft workplan has been written to include projects that will reflect the three strategic aims. The plan will be revised as projects develop in discussion with the health and wellbeing board and the new public health improvement practitioner. Priority has been given to ensuring the conclusion of the projects agreed over the last year which are; support for the cycling furtherance group and the construction of the outdoor gym at Warley Playing Fields.

Two future Health and Wellbeing Board meetings have been agreed in December and January to ensure a discussion and development of the workplan.

The workplan projects will focus on

- Tackling social isolation by projects to include launching a loneliness café, a dementia tea party, and providing support for a well-being hub, to be opened in the new year.
- Supported funding for Mental Health Small Grants.
- Tackling Obesity to Improve Physical Health through continuation of work supporting the Cycle Brentwood group, launching new cycle routes around the Borough, consultation with local residents and commuters (at Shenfield Station) to the barriers preventing them from cycling, and looking at how to overcome these barriers.
- The design and installation of the Outdoor gym at Warley. Once installed, gym sessions targeting local inactive families will be implemented, to help promote the new facility and improve the physical health of participants.

KPI Update Housing Quarter 2 July – September 2018

% Rent collected from current tenants only as a percentage of rent due 2018/2019

Quarter 1 98.51%

Quarter 2 96.26%

Rent Arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due 2018/2019

Quarter 1 3.72%

Quarter 2 6.12%

Level of Arrears at the end of the Quarter 2018/2019

Quarter 1 £430,135.95

Quarter 2 £512,489.41

Rent Collection

Rent collection has dropped significantly in Q2 and we are now beginning to see a large increase in universal credit claimants. Up from 16 cases in June 2018 to 58 cases in September 2018. There has also been a lack of staff in recent months which has also impacted on the rent collection. Staff levels are now rectified, and officers are pushing to process rent arrears and improve collection rates.

We held an arrears drive in November 2018 and have already begun to see a decrease in the overall arrears' figures. Following benchmarking on a national database, Housemark, I can confirm that Brentwood's performance levels are mid-range.

Re-Let Periods

Average relet times for local authority housing (days) 2018/2019

Quarter 1 46 Days
(32 Days GN, 115 Days SH)

Quarter 2 33 Days
(25 Days GN, 69 Days SH)

The average re-let time has decreased in Q2. Work is continuing through our weekly void meetings to ensure turnaround times are a priority and continue to decrease.

Temporary Accommodation

Households Living In Temporary Accommodation 2018/2019

Quarter 1 65

Quarter 2 72

Temporary Accommodation ('TA') provision is required by law for eligible households presenting as homeless. Nationally figures for TA have risen every quarter since 2011, with a 65% increase since 2010. Following the introduction of the Homelessness Prevention Act 2017 in April of this year a commensurate effect has been felt in terms of TA figures. Staff continue to work to enable a reduction of TA provision accordingly.

Gas servicing

Gas Servicing 2018/2019

Q1 99.87%

Q2 99.24

It's understood that Gas compliance is a priority. There has been a slight dip in the number of successful gas inspections due to lack of staff available for court attendance. We are currently reviewing the process and training additional staff to ensure 100% compliance moving forward.

Garage Site Development Update

The planning application for additional car parking at Whittingdon Road and Coram Green, Hutton has been submitted to the Planning Department on the 26th November 2018 for validation.

In addition, a planning application for residential development at Barnston Way, Hutton is expected to be submitted by the end of December.

As per previous committee agreement Officers are continuing to work on Housing Garage sites primarily on site location and viability matters with options to be presented to the next committee.

Larkins Playing Field

Discussions have been continuing with Brentwood Youth Football Club with regard to the use of Larkin Playing Fields. A recent meeting with the Chair established the Council's position with regard to this matter and set out a number of actions to be taken to aid the club in its development. This will include the offering of a lease [Heads of Terms to be agreed] for the footprint of the old pavilion building and also the offer of a long term hire agreement for the hire of the pitches at the site, this is expected to be communicated to the club before the end of November.

In addition to this Operational Services have been undertaking additional works at Larkin Playing Fields to bring the second half of the site on line for football in the future. To date this has included the provision of a piped drain along the bottom of the field, verti-quake [linear aerating] of the ground and removal of thatch and rolling of the area. This will be furthered by works in the spring designed to ensure the area is a fit for use playing surface to compliment the built facilities envisaged by the club.

Lighting Up Brentwood

Taking place on Saturday 24th November, Lighting Up Brentwood was once again a great success with a fantastic turn out of around 15,000 despite the chance of showers. The event started at 12.30pm with a Santa Parade from St Thomas' Road, where familiar characters and dancers from local theatre school Razzamataz followed Santa to his Grotto in the Sugar Hut.

2018 saw the largest number of stalls selling their festive goods and 3 stages hosting choirs, soloists, dancers and schools' performances. A range of street performers also kept the crowds entertained, with stilt walkers, musicians and comedic acts. At 5pm, along with the young Christmas Card and Poetry Competition winners, the Mayor switched on the lights to a big crowd and the event continued until 6pm.

The event received some sponsorship from 4 local businesses and once again fantastic support from a range of local organisations working hard to voluntarily deliver elements of the event. In particular, the Community Services Team works closely with Brentwood Rotary Club who provide Santa's Grotto every year and Churches Together in Brentwood who programmed and hosted.



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