

Committee: Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee	Date: 13 th December 2021
Subject: Chairs Update	Wards Affected: All
	For Information

Introduction to new Climate & Sustainability Officer, Otilie West

Otilie will be present at the meeting to introduce herself and her role within the Council.

Littercam Update

Following the decision to trial a Littercam for 14 days the location of this camera has been identified. The location has been agreed with Essex Highways and they are expecting a 'stress test' application for the lamp column once the information on power and installation has been confirmed. We are presently liaising with UKPN, regarding the use of unmetered electricity for a period of 14 days and installation companies have been approached and we await confirmation of cost.

High Street Planter Trial

The Council is aware of the continuing issue with pavement parking in Brentwood High Street and whilst South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP) have patrolled the location far more over the past few months and issued more tickets to this area and surrounding streets the problem still exists when the Enforcement Officers are not patrolling. A pilot to place planters along a 50 meter stretch in the high street has been agreed. This Council has consulted with local businesses who will be directly affected by these planters and Brentwood Access Group.

The planters are expected to be with the Council in December and in place before the end of the month.

Street scene Supervisors

The supervisors have now been in post for approximately six months and are making an improvement in the quality of services being delivered. The supervisors are monitoring the quality of work undertaken and liaising with Ward Members and residents to tackle issues that have arisen. They are meeting residents face to face when possible, rather than by e mail to address any issues which has proven to be more effective and give residents confidence that the Council take their concerns seriously. The supervisors have also reduced the number of repeated missed bins and working with managing agents to bring more multiple occupancy dwellings in line with the new recycling scheme.

They will also be carrying out performance measures of litter and detritus in the new year to provide an indicator of the cleanliness of the borough and manage street scene and ground maintenance teams more closely to improve scheduled service delivery.

Tree Planting Update

Following the planting of woodlands earlier this year there has been a further planting of significant landscape trees around King Georges Playing Fields. This will

be further increased with a few trees at the same site for the landscaping associated to the Pavilion build. A further proposal is for 30 trees in Hutton around the recreation ground and planting on some amenity greens.

The Arboricultural assistant is planning to focus on a Brentwood woodlands year for 2022, starting with extensive regeneration work, harvesting in Tallon Road, Hutton Poplars, Warley country park, Hampden woods plus Shenfield common. All works have been approved by Forestry Commission, Natural England and are intended for the long-term regeneration of Borough woodlands. Later in the year replanting will be undertaken and new woodland planting embarked upon. The large scheme to plant 10,000 trees in Hutton Country Park has gathered pace. However, the intended planting from November 2022 will allow for inclusion of ideas resulting from the highly successful public consultations, including public voluntary input in both design and implementation. In order to execute a properly considered plan which will deliver a woodland in perpetuity it is felt that to start planting by March 2022 would not allow for such a redesign to be effectively planned or delivered.

Two other factors have also come to light, our Arboriculturist has discovered that tree supply, due to unprecedented demand has become almost non-existent and the species we would be looking to plant at this site are not guaranteed to be available therefore leaving us with unsuited substitutes. Further several tree planting companies have already closed their books to new contracts until later next year and would not commit until the site is ready and prepared.

This revised approach will enable the council and its funding partners, Thames Chase and Essex Forest Initiative to ensure early ordering of material and the necessary labour to ensure planting takes place but with the involvement that is desired by public and private organisations within the borough. The Councils Arboriculturist will be developing a plan for implementation which will be best served by creating a plan with differing sections devoted to community involvement. Therefore, creating compartments for schools, Butterfly Meadow, Rotary, BEBA, the commercial & retail sector and any other resident or group who may want to be part of this scheme. The Arboriculturist will develop this plan and then work to implement later next year.

Preparation of the planting site has started with the land being ploughed to relieve compaction and improve drainage; therefore, we are now in a position where the Forestry Commissions will be able to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) so full preparation will be completed in February /March 2022 with planting taking place in November 2022.

Sustainability Strategy Plan

The Sustainability Strategy (name tbc) is under way and is currently in the data collection phase. This is likely to be the longest part of the process, and so a “skeleton” draft is also being created. This draft will include a range of different ideas and strategies which could be used and can be adapted to line up with the key areas and themes once analysis of the baseline has been conducted.

After the baseline has been set (using data from 2019 to rule out anomalies from covid), key areas and themes for improvements will be identified, and SMART (Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Time-Based) goals set. These SMART goals are likely to be umbrella goals, for example “all council buildings will be carbon neutral by ‘a certain date’ but will include smaller actions to contribute to the achievement of this goal.

Once these goals and actions are identified, they will be written up into draft form, ready for a consultation period with stakeholders.

After the consultation period, any alterations will be made, and actions prioritised in terms of budget and the outcome of the consultations.

The first steps to create the strategy have been made. Information/data is being collated to create our baseline. Typically, it is Scope 1 (direct emissions from the burning of fuel) and Scope 2 (emissions associated with the generation and use of electricity) emissions which are used for a baseline and where possible to identify Scope 3 emissions (waste disposal, business travel, purchased goods and services etc).

Contact has been made with a range of councils to understand how they approached the creation of their strategy, and any useful resources they used in the process. This will enable a joined-up approach, best use of resources and source were schemes have already been delivered and can be transferred across.

BEBA

The launch of BEBA was a great success, with 25 businesses signing up at the Business Showcase. Our first meeting with members of the Alliance was held on Tuesday 30th November 6-8pm at Town Hall. The agenda covered the following topics:

- Shaping and agreeing the principles of BEBA
- Forming a management board, including the appointment of a Chair and Vice Chair
- How to establish your business' current CO2 emissions, and how to create a baseline (Guest speaker: Tony McPartland, ZestRecycle)

Enforcement update

Patrols

Patrols are still carried out regularly and a variety of issues are dealt with. The team have carried out road safety checks, stop and searches, parking patrols, rural patrols as well as ASB checks. Throughout October and November over 100 hours of patrols were carried out in the evenings and weekends, some of these in conjunction with partners such as Essex Police, SEPP, and the Environment Agency.

Parking Enforcement

Our partners at SEPP continue to deliver on street parking enforcement across the Borough, alongside the out of hours patrols undertaken with the Enforcement Team. SEPP receive several complaints about parking issues in the Town Centre, outside various schools, on pavements and in other hotspot areas. During the month of November 360 PCNs were issued in the High Street and surrounding area, this

shows an increase of 92 PCNs compared to October which resulted in SEPP issuing 269 PCNs in these areas.

Community Engagement

The Community Safety Team have been able to flourish by increasing its presence across the borough. We have been working alongside the Community Services Team and have used the Community Connect Trailer 4 times in different location. We have also teamed up with partners such as Essex Police & Neighbourhood Watch to deliver engagements around Road Safety Week and general safety.

White Ribbon & DA Awareness

Thursday the 25th November saw the International Elimination of Violence Against Women Day (White Ribbon Day) which also marked the start of a 16 Days of Awareness for Domestic Abuse Campaign. The Community Safety Team were in the High Street engaging with residents and visitors of the Borough promoting White Ribbon and the White Ribbon Promise to never commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women. Daniel Cannon, Isabelle Hatton and Darcie Newton are all ambassadors/champions of White Ribbon and will continue to work with to change the cultures that lead to violence against women. Brentwood Borough Council are currently applying to receive the White Ribbon Accreditation.

Community Alarms Closure

The majority of alarms users have now been contacted to advise them of the intention to close the alarms service with the offer of assistance of being transferred to Lifeline 24. A Data sharing agreement has now been signed between the Council and Lifeline 24 to enable us to share customer contact information with Lifeline 24. The majority of users were happy to transfer over to Lifeline 24 and have been reassured that their payments will remain the same. It is anticipated that most users will have been transferred to lifeline 24 by the end of January 2022.

YMCA update

The YMCA have now finalised the purchase of the vacant Foyer unit, which had been held up due to legal technicalities. Presently, we haven't had any further update from the YMCA, but it is expected that significant refurbishment works will be required to the building. Officers will be working closely with the YMCA during this process.

Sheltered Housing Review

The Sheltered Housing review is still underway, but the scope of the review has now been expanded to include the potential to re-define the service from 'building led' to a person focused approach. With the recruitment of the new Strategic Director for Housing in January a full update report will be presented at the March 2022 committee.

- Sharing ideas on how to realistically achieve our target of becoming carbon neutral by 2040