

Minutes

Community Committee Wednesday, 17th December, 2014

Attendance

Cllr Chilvers (Chair)	Cllr Mrs Hones
Cllr Mrs Squirrell (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Mrs Hubbard
Cllr Barrett	Cllr McCheyne
Cllr Carter	Cllr Parker
Cllr Mrs Coe	Cllr Ms Sanders

Also Present

Cllr Aspinell
Cllr Baker

Officers Present

Kim Anderson	Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager
Ashley Culverwell	Head of Borough Health Safety and Localism
Jo-Anne Ireland	Acting Chief Executive
Jean Sharp	Governance and Member Support Officer
Rick Steels	Revenues and Benefits Manager

345. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence had been received.

346. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2014 as a true record.

347. Chair's Verbal Update

At the request of the Chair, an Officer updated Members regarding the Lighting Up Brentwood and Shenfield events and thanks were given to all the volunteers who assisted with both events.

348. Variation in the Order of the Agenda

The Committee RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that the order of the agenda be varied so that the report on Local Support Services Framework was considered next.

349. Local Support Services Framework

The report before Members provided an update on the introduction of the Local Support Services Framework - a partnership of organizations that would provide specialist advice and support to residents who had suffered major life changing events or who had been affected by welfare reforms which had resulted in a cessation or reduction of payments to the Council.

In addition, the Council had been asked by the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) to provide advice and support to residents on making claims for Universal Credit and enhancing a resident's prospects of finding employment.

It was expected that there would be a soft launch of the framework in early 2015 with Universal Credit support provided from March 2015 onwards. Members were advised that Brentwood was to be included in the first tranche of Universal Credit.

The amount of Universal Credit support was dependant on the level of funding received.

Cllr Chilvers MOVED and Cllr Mrs Hubbard SECONDED the recommendations within the report and following a full discussion it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- 1. Members note the expansion of the group and endorse the continuing development of the Local Support Services Framework.**
- 2. Members agree to the provision of advice and support with claims for Universal Credit, subject to appropriate funding being received.**

350. Community Resilience Fund Update

Members had requested that some further clarification be provided in relation to the Community Resilience Fund report that went before them at Community Committee on 21 October 2014. In particular Members wanted some clarification around the administration of the fund regarding the process for application; the criteria for bid applications; how the bids were processed and scored; and reassurance that Brentwood would still benefit from funding, as it was often perceived that other areas in Essex had a greater need.

The Community Resilience Fund (CRF) had been set up as an endowment fund to provide a sustainable income stream to the Voluntary and Community sector (VCS) in Essex. The Fund would support the VCS to develop the abilities of communities, families and individuals to help themselves and each other. The Essex Community Foundation who would be managing the Community Resilience Fund (CRF) were asking all City, District, Borough and Unitary Authorities to each commit to £20,000 annually for the next five years.

Cllr Chilvers MOVED and Cllr Barrett SECONDED and following a full discussion it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to recommend to Finance and Resources Committee the principle of the financial commitment of £20,000 per annum over the next five years (2015/16-2019/20) subject to final approval through the budget setting process.

351. Fees and Charges

Members were reminded that Fees and charges made by the Council for various services were reviewed on an annual basis by the relevant Committees relating to the services provided.

Cllr Chilvers MOVED and Cllr Mrs Hubbard SECONDED the recommendations in the report and after a full discussion and a vote on a show of hands it was RESOLVED that:

- 1. Members agree to freeze the proposed Fees and Charges at 2014/15 levels as outlined within the report, which would then be incorporated within the 2015/16 Budget.**
- 2. A further report be presented to this Committee providing details of the outcome of the planned review of the current charging policies, which would then inform the 2016/17 charging levels.**

352. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Members were reminded that Brentwood Borough Council had a duty to comply with Section 10 and 11 of the Children's Act 2004 (and by implications sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act), and as part of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) procedures to work together to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Council also had guidance from the Department of Health 'No Secret: Guidance on developing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse', 2000.

Members noted that the Council had undertaken a number of self audits for both Children and Young People and Adults which had informed the Council's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. The outcome from the 2013 audit identified some areas of improvement, especially around some new emerging issues such as Domestic Violence; Honour Based Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation; Child Sexual Exploitation and Counter Terrorism.

Due to the number of new and emerging issues the Council's own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Safeguarding Action Plan had been reviewed and revised for Member approval.

Cllr Chilvers MOVED and Cllr Mrs Squirrell SECONDED the recommendations in the report and it was agreed unanimously that:

- 1. Members agree to the revised Safeguarding Policy and Procedures appended to the report.**
 - 2. Members agree that Officers will implement the Safeguarding Action Plan 2015/16.**
 - 3. Members recommend that the Strategic Safeguarding Lead be assigned to the (Acting) Chief Executive and the Safeguarding Member Champion be allocated to the Leader of the Council, to be agreed at Ordinary Council.**
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