

25 March 2015

Community Committee

Achievements and progress of Community Committee 2014-15

Report of: *Ashley Culverwell, Head of Borough Health, Safety and Localism*

Wards Affected: *All Brentwood Borough Wards*

This report is: *Public report*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The report is to provide Members with an update and progress report on the decisions made by Community Committee this financial year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Members agree to note the report and the progress that has been made to date.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1. The remit of Community Committee is as follows:

- 3.1.1. Community and Localism Initiatives
- 3.1.2. The voluntary Sector and Community partnerships
- 3.1.3. Parish Council liaison
- 3.1.4. Health and Wellbeing
- 3.1.5. Grants to organizations/voluntary organizations
- 3.1.6. Parks, open spaces, countryside , allotments

- 3.2. It also takes the lead on community leadership and consultation with stakeholders.

- 3.3. The report will provide a summary of the reports that have come before this committee and to update members on the progress made to date on the recommendations.

3.4. Community and Localism Initiatives

- 3.4.1. Local Support Services Framework - At the 21 July 2014 Community Committee (min ref 96) Members agreed to endorse the continuing development of the Local Support Services Framework. It was subsequently agreed at the 17 December Community Committee (min ref. 349) that the provision of advice and support with claims for Universal Credit will be enhanced subject to appropriate funding being received. Work has temporarily been put on hold whilst The Council has been negotiating a partnership agreement with DWP to deliver Universal Credit locally. Although there are many similarities DWP wouldn't agree to having one joint agreement so we now have two. 1. LSSF agreement for debt management, budget advice and specific support dependant upon customer needs and 2. Universal Credit agreement for supporting residents to make claims for Universal Credit and provision of budget advice. Should still be on track to start implementation from 1 April 2015.
- 3.4.2. Lights out for the First World War Commemoration- (min ref 99). At the 21 July 2014 Community Committee Members agreed to support this initiative.
- 3.4.3. Borough Bulletin - It was agreed by Members at the 21 October Community Committee, that two further editions of the Borough Bulletin (min ref 196.) would be distributed. Two editions have been distributed to residents.
- 3.4.4. Additional lights and activities – It was agreed by Members to support the additional festive lights and the Lighting Up Shenfield Event 2014 (min. ref 197),. The additional lights and the Shenfield event have had positive feedback and a further report is before Members tonight to agree the festive lighting specification for 2015/16.
- 3.4.5. Community Events Programme –The Community Event Programme was presented to the 21 October Community Committee (min ref. 198). In summary the Council will deliver seven Family Fun Days, Strawberry Fair, a Heritage and Cultural Festival, Lighting Up Brentwood and Shenfield Christmas Fayre. All the dates have been added to Members Events Calendar for information.
- 3.4.6. Assets Of Community Value – The Council has received four new nominations for Assets of Community Value, one of which (Hutton Community Centre) will be considered tonight. The blue badge holder car park within William Hunter Way was nominated by Brentwood Access Group and Members agreed to list this at the 20 November Community

Committee (min. Re. 299). The Amenity Green at Iris Close, in Pilgrims Hatch was nominated by the Flowers Estate Residents Association and Members also agreed to list this at the 20 November Community Committee (min. Ref. 300). Hopefield Animal Sanctuary was nominated by Hopefield Animal Sanctuary and Members agreed to list this at the 27 January Community Committee (min. Ref. 411).

3.4.7. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures – The revised Safeguarding Policy and Procedures was presented to Members at the 17 December Community Committee (min ref 352.) and Members agreed to the revised Policy and Procedures and the implementation of the Safeguarding Action Plan. Members also recommended 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. Basic Safeguarding Awareness Training is being delivered to staff in March and April. Member training will commence after the elections in May.

3.5. The Voluntary Sector and Community partnerships

3.5.1. The Council has a long history of working with voluntary and community organisations. Brentwood Council for Voluntary Services supports over 90 local voluntary organisations and they have regular networking opportunities to discuss issues and opportunities to work collaboratively. The Council has commissioned Brentwood Council for Voluntary Services, Citizens Advice Bureau and Brentwood Community Transport to deliver some of the Council's key priorities which will support Brentwood residents.

3.6. Parish Council liaison

3.6.1. Various one to one meetings have been undertaken with each of the Parish Councils to review the level of funding and looking at ways in which Brentwood Borough Council and the Parish Council can work more effectively together. The Council continues with the two Parish Council liaison meetings a year with invited senior officers and relevant Borough Council Members together with an annual meeting with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

3.7. Health and Wellbeing

3.7.1. At the 21 July Community Committee (min ref. 97) Members approved the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and workplan for 2014-2017. Progress on the workplan will be presented at tonight's Community Committee.

3.8. Grants to organisations/voluntary organisations

3.8.1. Commissioning Prospectus. At the 21 July Community Committee (min ref 98) Members agreed to proceed with the Commissioning Prospectus. Invitations to tender went out in January 2014 for the following service provision: The provision of a free, confidential, debt management, housing needs and welfare benefits advice service for Brentwood Borough residents; The coordination of a Community Transport provision for Brentwood Borough; and the provision of a coordinated framework which supports Brentwood's Voluntary and Community Sector organisations. The deadline for submissions was the 22 February 2015, with notification of winnings tenders by 27 February 2015. The Tenders have been awarded to Brentwood Citizen's Advice Bureau, Brentwood Community Transport and Brentwood Council for Voluntary Services. Contract will commence from 1 April 2015 for 2 years (subject to conditions of contract being met) with an option of a 3rd year.

3.8.2. Community Fund allocation. Members agreed at the 21 October Community Committee (min ref 199.) to agree funding to 12 organisations with a total amount of funding of £42,244.65. It was also agreed by Members that the underspend of the Community Fund would be allocated to the ward budget allocation and split equally amongst Councillors. The 2015 Brentwood Community Fund will be launched on 6 April 2015 and close on 6 September 2015.

3.8.3. Ward budgets – All Members were allocated £1,000 to support projects and initiatives in their own wards. As there was an underspend in the Community Fund allocation and an additional £385.00 was allocated to Members. Apart from local ward initiatives Members also collaboratively supported projects like Keep Safe which supports all Brentwood residents. A separate report is before Members tonight to determine the options for the underspend on the allocation of the ward budget allocation.

3.8.4. Community Resilience Fund - An initial report was brought to Members on 21 October 2014 Community Committee (min ref 200) and a further report was presented to the 17 December 2014 Community Committee (min ref 350.) which Members agreed in principle to support subject to final approval through the budget setting process. Unfortunately because of budgetary constraints this cannot be supported at the present time.

3.9. Parks, Open Spaces, countryside, allotments

3.9.1. King George's Playing Fields – (At the 21 July 2014 Community Committee (min ref. 95) it was agreed that officers in liaison with the ward members of Warley and Brentwood South, work on the development of a long-term strategy for the development of facilities in King George's Playing Fields. The Council are in the process of appointing consultants to develop a Borough wide leisure strategy, which will incorporate King George's Playing Fields. This will be reported to Committee on completion at the end of 2015 with some key recommendations.

3.10. It was agreed by Members at the 17 December Community Committee (min ref 351) that **Fees and Charges** at 2014/15 levels that come under the remit of Community Committee were frozen and that a further report is presented to the Community Committee on the outcome of the planned review of the current charging policies across all council services, which will inform the 2016/17 charging levels.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

The report provides an update and the progress on the reports that have been submitted to Community Committee from July 2014 – March 2015.

5. References to Council Priorities

The majority of the remit of Community Committee sits under the Council's Localism priority enabling communities to do more for themselves and increase volunteering opportunities.

6. Implications

Financial Implications

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This is a progress report and as such there are no additional financial implications

Legal Implications

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This is a progress report and as such there are no additional legal implications

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