

## DUNTON GREEN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS UPDATE

**Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee - 11 February 2016**

Report of Chief Officer Communities and Business

Status: Information

Key Decision: No

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**Executive Summary:** To inform Members of the work of the Community Development Officers for Dunton Green and the key aims of their action plan.

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**This report supports the Key Aim of Community Plan**

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Hogarth

**Contact Officer(s)** Kelly Webb Ext. 7474

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**Recommendation:** That Members note the report.

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### Introduction and Background

- 1 Members agreed, at Cabinet on 6 December 2012, that a proportion of the Dunton Green Section 106 funding would be used to fund a Community Development Officer for 3 years. The project officer would work with the old and new communities to identify community needs and any specific services that should be provided. For example, youth work, provision for teenagers, social opportunities for older residents, working with new residents to bring the old and new communities together, to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and to maintain a good local environment through community pride. Wherever possible this project would make links with other service providers to lever in additional funding for the community.
- 2 The Community Development Officers were appointed on a job share basis in June and July 2015, when the funding became available, and immediately carried out extensive community consultations. The views and needs of local residents and businesses were expressed at a range of focus groups, through consultation surveys and community meetings. The results of these enabled the development of an action plan.

- 3 A community steering group was established with key organisations, residents and local business being invited to attend. At the initial meeting the group established the key aims & outcomes of the project and the proposed action plan was approved.
- 4 The keys focus areas of the action plan are currently young people, older people, community safety, communication, local economy, volunteering and training and community infrastructure. A steering group meets on a quarterly basis.

### **Initial Project Successes**

- 5 A funding bid was submitted to the Kent Youth Diversionary Fund and a grant of £2500 was received. Initial diversionary activities have been established in the form of weekly cheerleading and hip hop dance sessions.
- 6 A funding bid was submitted to the Kent Shed Project and a grant of £3800 was approved. This project will work with isolated and vulnerable older men within the community. It will provide an opportunity for them to gain skills and produce items that can be used within the community i.e. benches, planters, etc.
- 7 A funding bid was submitted & received to purchase and install a community noticeboard at Dunton Green Train Station.
- 8 Weekly armchair exercises have been established at Hamlyn Court and have a core group of attendees.
- 9 The recruitment of volunteers to deliver a monthly lunch club for older people has begun with 6 people already signed up.
- 10 Support and advice has been offered to local businesses leading to the installation of some long awaited Christmas lights.
- 11 The recruitment of people onto two forums has begun. One specifically for older people in the community and the other for young people.
- 12 The Community Development Officers have supported Dunton Green Parish Council in their community events including the Parish Picnic. Monthly meetings are also held with the Parish Council and there is regular attendance at the Parish Council Meetings.

## **Future Proposals**

- 13 Further project delivery will take place with funding from the Kent Youth Diversionary Fund. This will include archery sessions being offered in the spring / summer along with sessions to help young people combat peer pressure and bullying.
- 14 The Dunton Green Shed project will be driven forward with a group of older people attending on a regular basis. A community gardening programme will be established in line with this project. It will engage with the wider community including the local primary school.
- 15 Once a full team of volunteers is recruited the monthly lunch club will be established in partnership with Age UK for older people in the community.
- 16 Local businesses will be supported in the development of an association which will give them a stronger voice locally. A project looking into the viability of a monthly farmers' market is also taking place.
- 17 A course is being arranged for young people to provide them with the skills needed to apply for jobs. The course will be delivered in partnership with Kent County Council.
- 18 The development of a Dunton Green 8 to 12's youth project is currently being investigated with a view to it being in place later in the year.
- 19 A week long health event is being organised (22 to 27 February 2016) to take place in line with National Heart Month. During the week there will be mini taster sessions of a wide range of activities along with talks and workshops.

## **Key Implications**

### Financial

This project is funded from Section 106 monies which were allocated for community development work as part of the West Kent Cold Store development (Dunton Green). There are no other financial implications associated with this decision.

### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications. A risk register for the programme is kept and risk assessments are carried out on an event by event basis.

## Equality Assessment

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups. The decisions recommended through this paper directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and does not vary between groups of people.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Dunton Green Action Plan

Appendix B - Community Newsletter

### **Background Papers:**

None

**Lesley Bowles**

**Chief Officer for Communities and Business**