

## **Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee**

**June 2014**

### **Portfolio Holders Report**

#### **Housing Strategy/Policy and Housing needs**

I attended the Kent Health & Wellbeing Strategy Workshop on Wednesday 30 April. This workshop made clear that all agencies that impact on health need to be pulling in the same strategic direction and pooling resources in order to achieve the county's health objectives. Although Health comes under the Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development; housing policy underpins many of the health outcomes so this committee needs to be aware of our role in improving the health of the people of the District. For more information read the 'Think Housing First: Reducing health inequalities through access to good quality and affordable housing'

<http://www.kentjppbhousing.org/uploads/ThinkHousingFirstNov13.pdf>

I am delighted that Alison Cook, Chairman of the SDC Health Liaison Board is now serving on both this committee and the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee to provide a health link between the three committees that deal with health. I am also pleased that Faye Parkin has agreed to lead on issues to do with the elderly with her wealth of experience as a Trustee of the Darent Valley Age Concern. Hopefully both Alison and Faye will help to continue to make sure that SDC achieves the health agenda objectives in a joined up fashion.

I received positive feedback from Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, (via Michael Fallon MP) regarding extending Rural Designation Orders to allow the building of affordable housing on Greenbelt land where local communities feel there is a need. The next steps involve: liaising with Planning Policy as far as SP4, Consulting with Housing Associations with stock in respective areas and get their current views on the process (most of these views have now been collated), Check how far and wide any consultations should go, take legal advice about removing any established rights from existing tenants, consult with the relevant parish councils and then bring it all together and consult with this committee and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

I attended the West Kent Housing AGM on Thursday 22 May.

#### **Community Safety**

Positive feedback was received from schools that requested e-safety mouse mats for their ICT suites. In total 15 schools (as of 19 May) requested mouse mats and a short article for their parents newsletter. I am in correspondence with Lizzy Yarnold to see if she would endorse the Secondary School campaign.

On 19 May, Kelly Webb and I attended the Anthony Roper school in Eynsford to talk to the children about E-safety as part of their awareness campaign.

I attended the Kent and Medway Community Safety Conference in Ashford on 4 June that focussed on e-safety.

I have a briefing with the Police on slavery on 1 July and will report back to this committee in October.

## **Challenges facing Housing & Community Safety**

- Reducing expenditure and maximising income to help make the council self-sufficient within a decade
- How we can further support the middle income group of people (£33,000 to £60,000) to step onto the housing ladder
- How we can better work with planning to provide the District's housing needs
- Securing HERO
- Changes to DFG funding: challenges and opportunities
- Further consolidation and shared working in environmental health
- Continue with internet safety improvements
- Troubled families – exploring the links between housing and community safety as well as better joint working with KCC
- Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Focusing on how housing policy impacts on the health agenda