

Housing & Health Advisory Committee

14 June 2016

Portfolio Holders Report

Housing

Since our last meeting Pat Smith, Chief Housing Officer, has retired and the new structure has started to bed in. James Cox and the DFGs are now with Building Control (Chief Officer: Richard Wilson); Housing Advice under Andrew Kefford (including HERO) are now under our new Head of Service for Housing & Health – Hayley Brooks (Chief Officer: Lesley Bowles); and Housing Policy has merged with Planning Policy (Chief Officer: Richard Morris).

On Monday 18 April SDC hosted a very successful Spring Forum focussing on Implementing the Kings Fund report – starting with Housing. Local Government Minister: Marcus Jones MP was our keynote speaker, but we also heard from Pat Smith, Richard Morris, a recording from Michael Fallon, Malti Varshney (Public Health – KCC) and me. The feedback from 70 delegates was very positive and they have asked for another one!

The Minister spent his first half an hour visiting our Housing officers, talking to HERO and Housing Advice on the front line as well as James Cox and the DFG team. DCLG were so impressed that they want us to work with them to share best practice. Marcus also hinted in his speech that he was interested in the HERO model as a way of combating homelessness as that is one of his responsibilities.

Malti confirmed that Sevenoaks is the leading district in Kent when it comes to the health agenda and KCC are keen to work more closely with us and the CCGs to implement our vision.

The Forum was also Pat Smith's grand finale, and although she was suffering from a flu bug she dragged herself in to hear a recorded tribute by the Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP and to receive a cake in honour of her 30 years service at SDC. The event was sponsored by two building companies that help with our DFG requirements.

On Friday 29 April met with Clare Whelan, Partner of the Dorson Group, to discuss our progress in merging health, leisure and housing and our plans to put in place the King's Fund report.

I visited Emily Court Care Home in Wilmington, with other councillors, on Wednesday 20 April.

I also attended the Moat opening of the Vales, Moor Road, Sevenoaks on Friday 13 May. Michael Fallon opened the development of 9 homes (100% affordable), two social rented and five shared ownership homes for local families.

The Housing & Planning Act is not good for Sevenoaks and nor was the government's successful appeal of the s106 affordable housing contribution for small developments (most of ours). I am working with Michael Fallon MP to see if we can apply for local exemptions for Sevenoaks.

Health and Leisure

I have been invited to join the District Council's Network (DCN) task force which will be exploring how district councils can implement the King's Fund report. There are two councillors on this task force and three NHS officials.

Gavin Missons, Hayley Brooks and I will be attending the DCN's health conference on 25 July – where again we can share ideas and best practice. At SDC we strongly believe that good housing represents a large share of an individual's overall wellbeing – which is why housing is central to our health vision.

I attended the KCC Live Well mental health services conference on Tuesday 17 May in Canterbury. I met up again with the Shaw Trust again who are offering mental health services to the West Kent CCG (South of our District) and met Porchlight who are offering services to Darford, Gravesham and Swanley CCG (North of our District). I have another meeting with Shaw Trust about how we can work together with them particularly around HERO; and one with Porchlight where we maybe able to work with them on housing as well.

SDC hosted a delegation from South Norfolk District Council as two leading health pathfinder districts in the country. We shared best practice with each other and we learned a lot from each other. South Norfolk will be inviting a Sevenoaks delegation to visit them in the Autumn.

Dementia update – SDC supporting people to live independently

- Dementia friendly training for all front line staff including Dunbrik
- Dementia friendly training for taxi drivers with stickers showing they are dementia friends
- Shop safe scheme launched for people living with dementia
- Community Safety Partnership works closely with social care and refer people for care packages

On Friday 25 May I attended the Dementia Friend's Awareness session for taxi drivers with Tom Tugendhat MP at the Eden Centre; and Thursday 12 May launched the Shop Safe Scheme, again with Tom Tugendhat, for the South of the District.

On Tuesday 3 May it was my turn to present the successes and challenges of the Housing & Health portfolio to the Scrutiny Committee.

On Thursday 14 April I was interviewed by BBC South East about a grant we received from Kent to set up archery lessons for young people aged between 11 and 25.

Our three health objectives are:

Ageing Well –

- Supporting Independent Living: Housing & Planning policy (purpose built homes to meet our need), DFGs, future handy person service, working towards a dementia friendly district, leisure
- Tackling loneliness: Housing & Planning policy, leisure, and community groups

Obesity -

- Enforcement through District tools: Planning, Licensing, EH
- Encouragement: Leisure, EH

Mental Health -

- District's tools: Housing & Planning policy, leisure
- Encouragement: Community groups, outside space, allotments,