

27 February 2018

Portfolio Holders Report

Housing

The Housing strategy was officially launched on 3 November and is already making a difference to residents. This committee will be responsible for measuring outcomes starting with the first report on the strategy's progress this evening.

Progress is being made on establishing whether an affordable housing company is viable for this council to set up and operate. If it is, the company will be able to spend the vast majority of the council's affordable housing contributions on building new affordable homes in the district in line with the housing strategy.

The Department of Communities and Local Government granted Sevenoaks District Council an extra £100,000 for DFGs. As our staff are working at capacity to complete our existing funding for DFGs, we will be working in partnership with the voluntary sector to make the home adaptations. This is excellent news given Sevenoaks has the highest number of hip fractures in the county. The more homes we can adapt the more falls we can prevent enabling older and vulnerable people to live independent and fulfilled lives for as long as possible.

We have developed a new grants scheme for the Better Care/DFG funding, to support voluntary sector organisations who are delivering priorities under Better Care Funding (keeping people out of hospital, reducing falls etc.) so we can complete more home adaptations even faster.

To take part in National Empty Homes Week (16th to 22nd October) SDC held an empty homes drop in surgery in the Conference Room from 1.30 until 4pm with our Empty Homes Officer, Lisa Webb and Andrew Lavender from the 'No Use Empty' scheme giving advice and guidance to people. The event was publicised to all long term property owners and on social media.

A third house in Sevenoaks Town has been approved under the SPVRS scheme. The owners are Christians and wanted to help with the humanitarian crisis. They were not prepared to offer the home to residents on our register.

The council is currently updating our allocations policy. We have currently consulted with many of our stakeholders including the voluntary sector and housing associations as well as members. Members will also have the opportunity to comment on the draft allocations policy.

The housing team are working on implementing the new Homelessness Reduction Act duties and processes (from 3 April 2018 we have 13 extra duties with more intensive housing support for everyone who approaches the Council who is at risk of homelessness), work includes staff training, new upgraded IT system and revising the operational processes.

Health & Leisure

The Council now employs five *One You* advisors that are paid for by public health to work with GPs to identify people most likely to fall to arrange home adaptations, to identify people who are lonely and find solutions, people who are living in inadequate accommodation that is affecting their health - plus a whole range of other health issues where the cause is not medical even if the symptoms appear to be. Two work for SDC, two work for Dartford Borough Council and one works as a pilot in Edenbridge as a partnership between Age UK with DFG funding called One You – Your Home Project.

The *One You* officers are managed by SDC's Healthy Living Project Officer: Anton Tavernier-Gustav and they will link up with Super-HERO officers for more complex cases that involve debt and mental ill health issues.

Although this service is being rolled out across Kent it is based on the SDC's Health Integration deal proposals that recommended HERO officers working from GP surgeries to fix the causes of patients' problems. The Sevenoaks service is more enhanced than the rest of Kent as it is linked to Super-HERO and the DFG service. The service is reducing demand on GPs (each appointment costs £40) and hospital admissions as well as speeding up discharge times. This is a great example of housing and health working together to improve the lives of our residents.

We now have three new HERO outreach surgeries in Swanley: at The Link and PLUS, and a *One You* Advisor working with HERO at Swanley CAB to link Housing and Health even more closely together. The Council has signed new HERO contracts with Dartford Borough Council and West Kent Housing Association for another year. HERO are planning two armed forces presentations on services at local events.

The council has set up five new Satellite clubs with schools using KCC funding. We also have a new archery course starting in Edenbridge on 19 January which is now fully booked. We are working with the Orchard Academy to support them with a self-harm and positive image project.

I attended the DCN Conference on 8th and 9th February and spoke in the main plenary session about building healthy towns and villages, such as what we are doing in Sevenoaks.

I met with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government: The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP when he visited Sevenoaks on 5 February to talk about the council's achievements in housing and health.

The Council continues to encourage more towns and villages to become dementia-friendly helping to enable independent living for as long as possible. Our dementia-friendly work helps to complement the work of Super-HERO and our *One You* advisors meeting our ageing well health objective.

We are supporting Eynsford and West Kingsdown to become dementia friendly and are looking to start a new dementia film night at the Stag. We already have people signed up for the Dementia run in May which will be happening in Knole Park again. This is all delivered in partnership with the Dementia Forums.

The Council is building on its sports development programmes across the district, especially for people who live further away from our three leisure centres. As well as our usual Health Walks and *Up and Running*, we now also have *Every Step Counts* in Otford and West Kingsdown for people who can only walk for up to 20 minutes at a time, From *Couch to 5k* across the district for people who are more fit.

It is a tribute to this committee and the Health Liaison Board that the promotion of wellbeing is playing such an integral part in the council's new corporate plan. The World Health Organisation's Healthy Cities and Towns network promotes local government using all its functions to promote wellbeing and this is exactly what Sevenoaks is doing.