

12 June 2018

Portfolio Holders Report

Housing

It has been established that an affordable housing company is viable and Quercus 7 Housing has been set up with a similar governance arrangement as Quercus 7. The Quercus 7 Housing Board will be meeting this month to look at a variety of options that it could spend the council's section 106 affordable housing contribution on and help tackle our housing need.

We are constantly looking at ways we can free up more social and affordable rented homes and tonight the committee will be looking at whether or not they will support a mortgage deposit loan scheme to encourage people that can afford it into shared ownership housing.

The council accepted the extra £100,000 Better Care Fund grant and awarded money to West Kent Mind to tackle hoarding; PS Breastfeeding to complement the work of KCC's health visitors with breastfeeding support and home adaptations for disabled mothers; Age UK for Pop up Pop Ins around the district giving a range of advice including falls prevention to older people and the CAB for giving more comprehensive advice to disabled people about home adaptations when they are asking about Blue Badges and other related support.

We will be supporting Rural Housing day in Leigh on 6 July, highlighting all that the council is doing to support those in our rural areas including building rural exception sites, surveying villages to establish whether there is need for more, working with alms houses, home adaptations, creating dementia-friendly towns and villages and tackling loneliness and isolation.

We hope that our new Allocations Policy will be going to full Council in the Autumn.

The Homelessness Reduction Act is now in place and we are establishing how much more work this is creating for our Housing Advice team and how we can properly resource them. Rough sleeping and numbers in Bed & Breakfast remain low, due to our prevention work.

We are also planning to support the third Starts at Home Day in September and Social Housing Day in October.

Health & Leisure

The council will be supporting Health Information Week from 2 to 8 July with a launch of the One You service in Swanley. This will involve a One You campaign in GP surgeries, targeted advertising on social media to reach the people we need to reach and a day in Swanley square with One You, HERO, Every Step Counts, Men in Sheds and Sencio.

We had a successful visit with Tom Tugendhat MP visiting the health hub and seeing the support we are offering people from GP surgeries and other settings who are seeking medical help for conditions where the causes are not medical. Examples include: anxiety caused by debt, asthma

caused by damp housing and a range of conditions caused by loneliness, poor diet and lack of exercise.

Finally the council will be celebrating the centenary of women over the age of 30 with a small property qualification being granted the vote; the 90th anniversary of all women over 21 being granted the vote and the 100th anniversary of women being able to stand for Parliament. With the support of the Chairman we hope to have an exhibition visiting the district on the week commencing 12th November celebrating the achievement of women over the past 100 years.

Orchards Academy will be contributing artwork showing how medical advancement has helped women, and the Knole Academy and Trinity are deciding how they can contribute to it. DAVVs, the Girl Guiding movement are also keen to contribute and we have a number of case studies that demonstrate just how much women's lives have changed from a lady born in 1918 who lives at Rockdale, a girl who plays for the England Football team to a woman who had to give up her success career as a physiotherapist in order to get married.