

Community, Economic Growth and Property Committee – 11th January 2022

Communities Portfolio – Cabinet Member Cllr. Palmer

Introduction

This report provides the Community, Economic Growth and Property Committee with an update from the Communities Portfolio.

COVID Community Support

There are a range of support services that are currently operating to support the wider community in relation to COVID19.

- Self-isolation support programme is still available, and we have seen an uplift in requests since the emergence of the Omicron variant.
- Household Support Grant (Winter Grants) launched before Christmas and we are seeing significant demand for this service.
- We are supporting the local effort for increasing take-up of the vaccination and booster programme.

Community Development

- Community grant schemes launched
- Volunteer Awards postponed due to current COVID19 situation and feedback from the last committee.
- Turnover of staff has led to some delays in community-based projects, successful recruitment campaign run.
- Working with East Kent College on the rollout of their Community Renewal Fund bid.
- Part of the Xantura pilot rollout which utilises predictive analysis to identify Low-income families in need of additional support, this also cuts across housing portfolio. This will enable us to target support more effectively to these households.
- Support with Trusts that have had assets transferred to them is being provided to overcome issues. e.g Thistle Hill roof issues and The Mill site access gate issue.
- Sheppey Digital Inclusion Project
 - Timeline: September 2021 – March 2022.
 - Aims: (1) deliver digital skills support to low-income households, elderly populations, and passive/sporadic digital users.
(2) support Sheppey's VCSE groups with grant allocations towards bespoke digital projects and outreach.

(3) invest in Sheppey's digital infrastructure by funding community digital resources.
 - KCC funded: £19,904.00 of Helping Hands funding; £35,000.00 of COMF funding (£54,904.00 total budget).
- KPSN Sheerness Community Wi-Fi Project

- KCC and KPSN-led initiative for installing free public access community wi-fi in the Sheerness high street, beachfields, and marine town areas feasibility study currently underway.

Community Safety

- CCTV service has returned to a 24-hour service in November, this has been enabled through combining parking management services within the multi-storey carpark.
- Milton Creek CCTV Cameras are due to be installed by mid Jan
- Community Safety Strategic Assessment and development of plan is a substantive item on this agenda.
- White Ribbon Campaign – reaccreditation process and new action plan being drafted. Ambassadors (officers and members) from SBC and partner agencies will lead once action plan developed.