

REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL ON 8 OCTOBER 2013- ITEM 5a

Portfolio Report – Policing, Licensing & Emergency Planning Cllr Alastair Walters

1) **Policing in Uttlesford**

Over the past 12 months crime has increased overall by 4.7% (125 more cases), but even so Uttlesford has one of the County's lowest total number of crimes, and number of crimes per thousand of population.

*** Anti Social Behaviour & Night-Time Economy**

Although Uttlesford does not have a significant night-time economy (NTE) in March 2012, an NTE policing plan was implemented to ensure that there was a visible police presence within the main towns to deal with any isolated pockets of disorder or anti-social behaviour.

This has led to a reduction in public order offences and ASB incidents being reported. Having a visible policing presence, especially on Friday and Saturday nights, results in incidents being dealt with quickly and efficiently.

ASB has decreased by 12.3% (180 fewer incidents) for the period covering the 1st September 2012 to 31st August 2013 compared to the previous 12 month period.

***Operation Spring Fair**

On Friday 23rd August 2013 officers conducted a drugs operation within the town of Saffron Walden, involving plain clothes officers, local Neighbourhood Officers and drugs dog 'Charlie', entering nearly all the licensed premises within the town.

It was a hugely successful operation, both in terms of deterring drug use, but also providing reassurance to the local community and the licensees that any concerns made to the police would be dealt with.

***House Burglary**

Recently there has been a spike in house burglary offences occurring in Stansted and Saffron Walden areas, where elderly residents appear to have been targeted. Due to the arrest and charge of an individual identified by local officers, this concerning spike appears to have stopped.

Despite the large percentage increase for this type of offence, up by 55.7% (73 more offences), Uttlesford has one of the lowest house burglary figures per thousand households in the County.

*** Response Time**

Response and patrol cover is provided to the district by officers stationed at Braintree Police Station. All domestic incidents are graded as a priority at the minimum and this initially gives a response time of one hour. Where the circumstances dictate, these calls are upgraded to an emergency response which is currently set to achieve an attendance time of 15 mins in urban locations and 20 mins in rural locations.

*** Street Pastors**

A recent addition to Saffron Walden is the commissioning of a team of Street Pastors, who will provide additional support on Friday nights. Teams in other towns in Uttlesford will hopefully follow in due course.

2) **Licensing and Environmental Health Committee**

This Committee is responsible for most licensing functions of the Council. However, the Committee is primarily concerned with licensing the hackney carriage and private hire trades, and licensing premises and persons under the Licensing Act 2003.

*** Scrap Metal**

One notable exception to the Committee's responsibilities is licensing under the Scrap Metal Act 2013. Parliament seems to have overlooked the need to exclude these functions from the Executive and therefore this is an executive function. Hopefully the government will correct this error in the not too

distant future, so that this function can be delegated to the Licensing and Environmental Health Committee where it belongs.

*** Meetings**

In the course of the last 12 months, the Licensing and Environmental Health Committee have met on 18 occasions. 3 of these meetings were scheduled meetings of the Committee, the other 15 dealt with individual licences. When dealing with such cases, only 4 members form the Committee so as not to intimidate the applicant or licence holder.

*** New Policy Approved**

At the end of last year the Committee appointed a task group to consider a licensing policy for the hackney carriage and private hire trades. A draft policy was drawn up and all of the licensing standards and conditions were reviewed. There was wide ranging consultation on the proposals, leading to the formal adoption of the policy in March this year.

*** Update on Surplus**

In September 2010 it was identified that between 2006/7 and 2009/10 the council had received income from licensing fees which exceeded expenditure by £138,000. Working with the trade, members and officers agreed a reduction in fees with the aim of reducing the surplus to zero within 3 years.

Due to a significant increase in the number of licences issued over the last 3 years, that target has not been met, but the forecasted balance on the licensing reserve for the end of the current financial year is £24,000. This means that there will need to be an increase in fees for the year 2014/15 to ensure cost recovery going forward, which is very much in line with expectations when the surplus was identified.

3) Emergency Planning Update

The role of the Emergency Planning Officer (EPO) has expanded over the past year. Planning and preparedness has always been priority; each director has activation call out procedures, chosen officers deputise for the EPO in her absence.

*** Regular Training**

The EPO holds regular training workshops and exercises are continuously being written and coordinated not only for our staff, but for all districts and other agencies to take part in. Taking advantage of the EPO's position as a qualified trainer, the role has recently expanded to one registered Qualified First Aid Trainer, training our own staff for our own H&S requirements.

*** Corporate Business Continuity (BC)**

This is an important part of the role. Preparing procedures for the Corporate Management Team to work with in the event of emergency at London Road offices.

*** Fire Risk Assessor**

More recently, and probably more importantly, the EPO has qualified as a Competent Fire Risk Assessor and has responsibility to conduct fire risk assessments for UDC properties, such as London Road offices.

*** Partnership Working**

There is a successful mutual aid agreement between Uttlesford and Epping, and the EPO's often work together to produce documentation and training that can be shared not only with each other, but with all other districts. For example, a very successful Resilience Roadshow event to help educate and inform the public of how to remain self resilient and aware of risk, and how the services work to provide assistance in a major event.

Parish Councils are encouraged to hold emergency plans with copies held at UDC.

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Report by Councillor S Barker, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services

Visit to Bywaters Materials Recycling Facility (MRF)

At the end of August Councillors Wells, Barker, Howell and Cant visited the MRF in East London where Uttlesford sends dry recycling for sorting and onward transportation. The visit had been organised (thanks) by Cat Chapman, UDC's recycling officer.

The MRF is on an Industrial Estate with good road links from the M11 and the journey took around 45 minutes from south Uttlesford.

Initial discussions established that Uttlesford sends good quality recyclates to the plant which are sorted into separate waste streams and sold on. They also receive an amount of trade waste and recyclates from other London Boroughs.

Members (after we had sourced suitable Hi- Viz jackets, helmets and appropriate footwear) toured the facility.

On entering, I was struck by the lack of noise (the conveyors were temporarily off), but immediately noted the odour of the plant.

The plant consists of a large number of conveyor belts, skips, walkways, motors , lorries, cranes and the scale is big.

Recyclables come into the building and are unloaded into a holding area. From there they are moved via a small grabber onto a conveyor belt.

This takes them to two manual sorting areas where items such as fabrics, loose plastic, shoes and other non- mainstream items are removed from the system by hand. Materials then move on to a series of runners where most materials fall through but large items such as cardboard boxes are separated onto a new belt.

The items that have fallen through (paper, Plastics, Glass, cans) onto another belt find themselves subject to centrifugal forces that take out the glass by weight and then moving to another belt take out the 2 dimensional paper using air. Iron is removed via magnets.

There is a second manual sort stage where loose plastics and other items re removed.

Aluminium cans are separated out using an Eddy current and the plastics sorted into HDPE and non HDPE. The item that misses all these "sorts" are the plastic carrier bags, that eventually end up in a large heap for onward transportation to a local incinerator to produce fuel.

It is a noisy, smelly, dirty environment. The staff there work incredibly hard and there is more manual input and residual plastic than we had expected. Overall around 5% of weight of recyclates delivered are diverted to produce fuel with the rest being sent for direct recycling.

The recycle market is a volatile market. A few years ago UDC paid to send its recyclates to a MRF. Currently we are paid per ton of material.

At present, milk bottle plastic makes new milk bottles, glass makes new bottles, or is used as an aggregate , depending on market forces, aluminium and material have a market value and , paper and cardboard is mainly shipped to China to be made back into cartons to be shipped back here again.

Our recycling officer is looking to take staff to visit the site. By seeing what can and is recycled they can encourage the public to participate and switch their waste from black bin to green bin.

You can see how the Bywaters system works by visiting the link at

http://www.bywaters.co.uk/news/2008/materials_recovery_facility_video_goes_online.html

Council report – October 8 2013 – item 5c
Howard Rolfe – Communities and Partnerships

Economic Development

Help to start and stay in business

- Stansted Business Forum now has 40+ members and lots of initiatives including a buy local campaign
- Business workshops:
 - Create a business idea 21 people
 - Be your own boss 17 people
 - Social Media 10 people
 - 6 further workshops scheduled which have 60 participants currently booked on them.
 - 19 formal face to face appointments with people seeking to start a business
- Undertaking evaluation in Oct/Nov on the impact these workshops are having i.e. number of people who started a business
- Involvement in the attraction of over £400k of European funding into rural based businesses in Uttlesford via the Eastern Plateau programme.

Access to superfast broadband

- Buzcom
 - now has 700 subscribers
 - Barkway Tower going live next 2 weeks enabling service to be provided along the west of the district
 - Trial underway at Carver Barracks with 3 personnel and 2 office buildings

ECC have signed the contract with BT (August) and we await the rollout plan. 2016 is the date by which all areas are to be covered by superfast broadband.

Town centre management

- Saffron Walden Town Team are delivering their action plan which includes hanging baskets, Waitrose car park, etc
- Dunmow Town Team will be in place w/c 30th Sept
- Stansted research work commencing mid Oct
- Selling Skills workshops commencing mid Oct

More visitors to Uttlesford

- Summit planned for early December (possibly 4th Dec) to consider a tourism action plan

Job Centre Plus

- JCP meeting with us next week (1st Oct) to look at possible location at UDC

Economic Development Strategy

- Review of 2012-14 strategy
- Consultation on 2014-16 strategy commences mid Oct 2013
- Business consultation event late Nov

Communities

- Time Bank Scheme (part of Access to Services project) being launched in Uttlesford in partnership with CVSU, Volunteer Centre and Colchester CVS
- Local Strategic Partnership Assembly – 31 October 2013 – Chesterford Research Park – guest speakers Matthew West, Policy Officer at DCLG and Bob Reitermier, Chief Executive Essex Community Foundation – the theme is Community Development
- Stroke Pilot now commencing in October at the Lord Butler Fitness & Leisure Centre
- Activity sessions – currently recruiting for Nordic Walking training and funding secured from ECC Active Essex for a cycling initiative – to link in with 2014 cycling tour.

Communications/Museum

- A new Uttlesford District Council website was launched in the space of one week – a significant effort by the website team after the old site was subjected to a serious cyber attack
- A successful event was held at the museum to reveal the results of the summer archaeological dig on Saffron Walden Common, helping to improve the understanding of Saffron Walden castle's history

The Museum store project is progressing well and council officers continue discussions with Museum Society representatives. We are expecting the build (on Shire Hill) to commence before the end of this year.