

**Councillor Colin Day,**

**Portfolio Holder for Communities, Youth, Public Safety & Emergency Planning**

**Full Council, 20 July 2021**

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## ***Communities & Public Safety***

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I referred in my last report to you (the May full council meeting) of Officers in the Communities team looking forward to resuming their work out into our communities. This is where they are needed, and I am pleased to say they are now out there.

### **Activity in Rural locations**

80 farms and landowners have been visited in the parishes of Wimbish and Debden by the Uttlesford Community Safety Partnership (CSP). This being part of ***Reaching Our Rural Communities Project*** which aims to reach every farm across the district in the next 12 months. It will see members of the partnership conducting visits to land and farm owners to provide well-being, crime prevention and fire safety advice.

The aim of the campaign is to provide reassurance around the fear of crime and up to date methods on how to report crime; provide details and joining instructions for Farm Watch and Neighbourhood Watch; provide advice about the Farming Community Network and Farmer's Union; raise awareness of domestic abuse, how to report it and where to reach out for help; conduct high visibility policing patrols; carry out fire safety visits, focussing on farm outbuildings and providing advice to prevent fires/explosions; tackle loneliness and isolation by offering advice on clubs and networks specifically targeted to the farming community.

Each farmer and landowner received a pack containing information about Crimestoppers, the Essex Police Farm Watch Scheme, Frontline services, 'What 3 Words' which pinpoints exact locations and QR Codes for easy access in how to report issues to relevant agencies. All who we visited completed a questionnaire that we hope will assist us in feeding back our findings to the Police Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC) and the issues we face with rural crime. Referrals to Essex County Fire & Rescue Service for smoke alarms to be installed at both farmhouses and farm outbuildings which house combustible materials, were also made. Our 'converted horse box', which acts as a mobile café served drinks to members of the community when we used the car park as a base in Debden. 30 premises were identified as working farms in this area alone. I am most grateful to Councillor Stewart Luck for inviting children from the Debden Primary School to visit the roadshow. Clearly these partnership initiatives, consisting of the Essex Police Rural Engagement Team, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, our own Communities Team, the Council for Voluntary Service Uttlesford, Neighbourhood Watch as well as the Farming Community Charity and the National Farmers Union are welcomed by our rural village communities and as such it is our intention to extend them to all other villages and the remote, isolated areas of the district.

### **Other matters – Crime and crime prevention**

The CSP funded a 'virtual' crucial crew this year which reached over 877 year 6 pupils and is in support of the PFCCs Violence and Vulnerability Unit's new County Lines campaign, launched on 27<sup>th</sup> May this year via social media. [www.essexcountyline.co.uk](http://www.essexcountyline.co.uk) 'Crucial crew' is a name adopted by our UDC Community Officers when they come together as a team to specifically work with children in schools. When so doing they wear very distinctive light blue polo shirts carrying the UDC logo and emblazoned on the back is the wording – crucial crew. It allows them to stand out from the crowd and when large numbers are involved, they are clearly identifiable.

The CSP linked in with **The Change Project** to launch a campaign in line with the Euro 2020 Soccer Championships. The aim of this campaign was to encourage change and stop the cycle of domestic abuse. Helpline numbers are on beer mats, posters and tabletop signs, and have been distributed amongst 100 licensed premises across Uttlesford with the assistance of Officers in our Licensing team. The Change Project is a Domestic Abuse and counselling charity. They are a team of highly trained professionals based in Chelmsford who can deliver accredited domestic violence perpetrator programmes with the aim of increasing the well-being of people who are, or have been, living with conflict or domestic violence and abuse.

The CSP have produced postcards reminding residents about how to deter car criminals from their vehicles. This will be specifically targeted at driveways housing work vans and high-performance vehicles.

From the 19<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of this month a National Anti-Social Behaviour awareness week will be running. Members of the Uttlesford CSP along with UDC inter-departmental Officers will be carrying out initiatives and events across the district during this National awareness period.

### **Safeguarding**

Our safeguarding officer took part in Operation Henderson, which was a National campaign, together with other partners and organised in the County of Essex by the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board (ESCB). The partners, we, members from ESCB, uniformed officers from both Essex Police and British Transport Police visited three train stations (Elsenham, Newport and Audley End) and carried out the outreach work, raising awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) to passengers and staff at the stations.

The safeguarding officer is involved in the Rural Communities outreach work in Wimbish as part of the CSP team, distributing Domestic Abuse and Suicide prevention information.

New training for all taxi drivers is now in place, and safeguarding is an element of this training. The safeguarding officer alongside the licensing team, attended a training day to understand the training being delivered by Green Penny, and to ensure all areas were being covered. This now forms part of the new policy which is mandatory for Private Hire and Taxi operators and drivers licensed within Uttlesford.

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## **Youth**

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### **Hate crime**

There is to be a follow up to the recent Diversity Day at Saffron Walden County High School, which is to be delivered by TicBox Productions, a theatrical performance group and is planned as a workshop for September. This will be funded by the Youth Initiative Working group (YIWG) and will equip students with the knowledge and skills to become Hate Crime ambassadors helping the school to address issues and incidents relating to hate crime. We are looking at the possibility of offering similar workshops to the other secondary schools in the district.

### **The Youth Council**

Work continues to re-establish the Youth Council with a recruitment campaign in schools/colleges and through community projects aiming to create better links and communication between young people and their local councils. Projects aiming to achieve this are taking shape in Stansted Mountfitchet, Takeley, Thaxted and Saffron Walden.

The Environmental Working group are planning some recruitment events to attract new members and promote participation in the Great Big Green Week. They are also working with Cllr Pepper to identify young people to sit on the councils Climate Change working group and how they can best represent the views of their peers.

### **Youth Initiatives Working Group**

The YIWG started their financial year with the renewal of match funding relationships with:  
Saffron Walden £10,000  
Stansted Mountfitchet £7,500  
Great Dunmow £5,000  
Additionally, two specific grants have been awarded, - £1,975 to the Diversity Workshop LGBTQ Group in Saffron Walden and £1,495.50 to the Radwinter BMX Bike workshops and activities.

Moving forward the group, which consists of stakeholders within Uttlesford who have an interest in supporting the young people of this district, are looking to restructure with plans to create smaller working groups. In so doing it is hoped they will be able to respond more effectively and rapidly to changing circumstances. The group is Chaired by Richard Porch who is a Saffron Walden Town Councillor and currently the Mayor. There are representatives from Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow Town Councils, Stansted Parish Council, Takeley Youth Club, Essex County Council Youth Services, Essex Boys & Girls Clubs, the District Scouts, Essex Police and me as the UDC Cabinet Member with responsibility for Youth. It is administered through the Community section of UDC.

### **Summer Events**

As you will be aware in my previous report I outlined our intention of running a series of summer events to act as a means whereby we could re-engage with young people at these events, which we would call 'Summer Spectaculars'. It was envisaged this would be an opportunity for us to listen to the needs and aspirations of our youngsters. I am sure you will appreciate for these events to be successful a considerable amount of forward planning would be required. Time was therefore critical to enable us to organise these

events in a relatively small window of opportunity before the schools closed for the summer holidays. Sadly, the uncertainty of what to expect the lockdown restrictions would actually be in the government's decision to delay full reopening to July 19<sup>th</sup> it was decided not to deliver these events. The uncertainty was just too much. There are however some smaller events already planned and we will provide some funding / resources to support these. In essence we have encouraged the local communities to organise their own events. At the time of writing events in the diary are: -

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July - Thaxted Football Club Funday

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> July – Takeley Community Hub Opening Event

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August – Stansted Mountfitchet Young Peoples Funday

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> August - Saffron Walden – Young Peoples Music Festival

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August – Great Dunmow Skate Jam

Although UDC are now playing less of a role in these events it would be good to see the respective Ward councillors coming along to show their support. Please make a note in your diary. I will circulate times and exact locations closer to the dates.

***Colin Day***

**District Councillor** for Great Dunmow South & Barnston Ward

**Cabinet member** for Communities, Youth, Public Safety, Emergency Planning, and liaison with the Police & Fire Service