

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

From: Councillor Julie Flatman, Cabinet Member for Communities	Report Number: CMU3
To: Council	Date of meeting: 26 September 2019

TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES

1. Overview of Portfolio:

The Communities Portfolio includes:

- 1.1 Safe Communities (including community safety, anti-social behaviour, safeguarding and the Community Safety Partnership).
- 1.2 Strong Communities (including grants, external funding, community development and community rights).
- 1.3 Healthy Communities and Policy (including health and wellbeing, Health and Wellbeing Board, health interventions and preventative activity).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Council notes the report.

3. Key Activities/Issues Over the Past Six Months

- 3.1 Officers had contact with a range of voluntary organisations to provide support and ongoing advice for projects including village halls, play areas and sports facilities. In Babergh, this included Boxford Pavilion which has undergone a partial refurbishment and improvements, Belstead Village Hall and the Assington Community Farm Hub, which has also been supported.
- 3.2 In Mid Suffolk, capital funding was provided for the netball court and car park project at Needham Market Community Centre, heating at Battisford village hall, a play area project at Woolpit and improvements at Offton and Willisham Village Hall. Developer contributions enabled the rebuild of the historical band hall/meeting room for Gislingham Silver Band.
- 3.3 External Funding advice has been provided to a range of organisations and the National Lottery regional team has been to visit the districts and discuss potential projects. In Babergh, the AONB team has been assisted to secure £140K of Leader funding for their "Improving the Stour Valley for Visitors" project and Section 106 funding of £79,657.30 has been allocated to skatepark and play improvements at Belle Vue Park Sudbury.
- 3.4 In Mid Suffolk, the team have provided significant support to Needham Market Train Station Access for All Group, who are applying for funding to enable disabled access on and off the north side platform as well as working with a range of village hall committees.

- 3.5 On 7 September the first Sudbury Silk Festival took place. The Communities team secured £43,000 from Arts Council England to bring the work in the Sudbury Mills to life by enabling the facilitator, Carole Creasey to work with local schoolchildren to interview the people who work in the mills and produce a short film. The festival included talks in the Town Hall Assembly Rooms, the Silk Mill shops were open, Gainsborough's House had free admission to see Vivienne Westwood silk dresses and there were guided walks around the town.
- 3.6 The Communities team also collaborated with the Housing Enabling team on the planning and development of a Lunch & Learn Event held on 3rd July during National Housing Week. The event brought together a range of partners with communities to share learning on Community Land Trusts, Assets of Community Value, Housing Needs Surveys and Funding.
- 3.7 The Active Wellbeing project, which is supporting older residents to become more physically active, is progressing well. Last year we supported over 150 older residents to remain and become more physically active and socially connected within their local community. This is a 3 year project and year 2 locations have been confirmed (Debenham, Bildeston, East Bergholt). These projects have now commenced in both districts, with East Bergholt and Capel due to start in September 2019.
- 3.8 Building on this, the Active Schools project was launched in July. This is a three-year programme designed to reduce childhood obesity/excess weight amongst primary school age children by providing bespoke support to 20 primary schools across both districts, helping them to better utilise their DfE Pupil Premium Funding for physical activity. Sample Interventions offered as part of the programme include: active travel plans, healthy food awareness, extra-curricular clubs, Teacher Continuous Professional Development, Active classrooms and whole school activities such as the Daily Mile.
- 3.9 Officers are also working closely to support Social Prescribing across both District areas. Schemes are now active across the Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG area and being developed across the areas covered by the West Suffolk CCG.
- 3.10 The Health and Wellbeing Team are working on a range of other activities. An all Member briefing on all aspects of Health and Wellbeing related work will be held later on within the year.
- 3.11 Key recruitment of new Grants Officers has now taken place. Josh Holmes, who has been providing administrative support to the wider team, has been successful and will move into the Grants role imminently. Roy Emmerson will join the organisations on 30th September as a senior Grants Officer.

Leisure Assets:

- 3.12 The current contract for Mid Suffolk Leisure Centres concludes in October 2020. In July 2019 a cross party panel met with our two current Leisure providers to discuss the future of these centre. A recommendation on the future delivery model for leisure in Mid Suffolk will come to Cabinet before the end of 2019.
- 3.13 Capital works have commenced on site on both Kingfisher and Hadleigh pools in Babergh. Kingfisher is programmed for completion in April 2020 and Hadleigh for July 2020.

4. Key Activities Planned for the next 3 months

- 4.1 The external funding officer will be supporting funding surgeries in our communities in collaboration with Suffolk County Council. Dates and locations have not yet been finalised but will be communicated to Councillors in due course.
- 4.2 There will be a period of refocusing of the grants service as two new postholders take up post and are tasked with reviewing the current arrangements in the light of the Council's priorities, the Communities Strategy and need to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.
- 4.3 Reports will be brought to Babergh and Mid Suffolk Cabinet meetings looking at longer-term funding arrangements for Citizens Advice. This has been our intention for some time and reports will come to Cabinets before Christmas.
- 4.4 Working with Suffolk Artlink, Rural Coffee Caravan and Dance East, officers will continue to deliver a project reaching rurally isolated older people to make a positive impact on their lives. The work will focus on delivering a high-quality arts outreach programme, led by artists. It will be co-produced with older people, to ensure that the individual needs of each community are reflected in the work. What we are calling the 'The Make, Do and Friends' project has involved £100k of Arts Council 'Celebrating Age' Funding.
- 4.5 We will continue to work in partnership to contribute to enabling community-level health and wellbeing outcomes, particularly in relation to the development of leisure, physical activity, the arts, sports and natural environment for their health benefits. Highlights have included development of GP exercise on referral schemes, high profile walking, running and cycling initiatives and a range of healthy lifestyle and later life programmes. Other activities have included those linked to the Dementia Action Alliances, as well as providing local support for national events and campaigns that address the related issues of loneliness, social isolation and mental health.
- 4.6 Work also continues to address anti-social behaviour and other community safety issues and support the work of the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership.