

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

2 December 2021

COUNCILLOR SAM SANDELL - CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

For the period 15th October 2021 to 2nd December 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Over the last 6 weeks I have been spending my time having briefings from officers within my portfolio. The officers from this Council all work very hard. You will see just from my Portfolio report the sort of workload officers are dealing with. As this is our last Full Council before Christmas, I would like to wish you all Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Housing advice and homelessness approaches by reporting (financial) years

Housing advice cases

2019/20 1553

2020/21 1361 – small reduction due to Covid measures eg moratorium on evictions in private sector

2021/22 834 to date (October)

All contacted to give housing advice on circumstances and to assess what further advice and assistance is required, and whether a legal homeless duty is owed.

Of these the following numbers moved to a full homeless declaration which means a minimum of 56 days of advice and assistance in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 effective April 2018– prior to this many cases could be closed within 14 days with no further input required

Homeless cases – minimum of 56 days assistance for each case

2019/20 538

2020/21 590 – cases increasing due to Covid measures, duties and impacts eg 'Everyone In' scheme accommodating all rough sleepers, increasing number of complex cases

2021/22 417 to date (October) – removal of moratorium on PRS evictions, Domestic Abuse Act 2021 in force (all applicants are now owed full housing duty under HRA)

2020/21 81 approaches due to Domestic Abuse

86 approaches due to eviction from PRS

2021/22 67 approaches due to Domestic abuse to date (October)
108 approaches due to eviction from PRS to date (October)

MHCLG advise case officers should average max 30 cases each

Current caseloads 43 per officer

For Homechoice

1126 live applications on register

3 Emergency
134 High
345 medium
644 low

199 new applications/ changes of circumstances received

30 lets

For Housing options

137 applicants given general advice

81 of these have also made a formal homeless declaration for investigation

CSNN

Launch of the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP).

The CAP launched on the 22 October and held its first partnership meeting on the 25th October. The meeting was well attended and work has begun on creating an action plan for delivery of the CAP.

The council has consulted on the renewal of the Public Space Protection Order for Control of Dogs and is currently considering the responses. The proposal is to keep the PSPOs as originally made.

We have served the following CPN's and FPN's for ASB related incidents in the year to 5 November.

Breach of PSPO (*inconsiderate and inappropriate vehicle use*)

10x FPN's issued
9x FPN's paid
1x withdrawn

Community Protection Warnings

50 issued for various different asb related matters

Community Protection Notices

8x issued

Breaches of CPN

3FPN's issued

1x paid (*2020 CPN breached in 2021*)

2x pending

Housing Standards

The Minimum Energy Efficiency Project is underway and a radio advertising campaign is currently underway. Work has begun on identifying those properties most likely to be in breach of the standards and we will soon be writing to landlords and tenants over the coming months. We have served 11 compliance notices to date. Compliance notices require landlords to provide information to the council so that we can determine if the property is compliant or not. Failure to comply with a compliance notice is an offence with a maximum penalty of £2000.

The council's bid for funding for money through the LAD3 scheme was submitted via a Norfolk Consortium. The bid was successful securing £3.8m across the participating authorities to deliver more decarbonisation schemes for properties.

Careline – Ask Lily

Our website for Careline is very useful for familiarisation - <https://www.careline-cs.org.uk/products/careline-personal-alarm/>

A piece of work we have been looking at through Careline is how we link with the Almshouses. The Kings Lynn General Charities (KLGK) is made up of 5 sets of Alms Houses and they are:

- Gaywood (next to KES)
- Frammingham (London Road)
- Elvesdone (Friars Street)
- Smiths (Chequer Street)
- Marion Seamans (Sir Lewis Street)

Many of these locations have Careline but we have been finding that the clients within them were advised to press their Careline for OOH support for other issues such as boiler maintenance etc. This is not generally what Careline is for but we are developing an arrangement with our monitoring provider (Lifeline24) to deal with these calls. We have met with KLGK and Lifeline24 separately and come to the arrangement which does not incur a charge. This is helpful to Alms Houses clients and they are able to continue using their alarms for OOH boiler support.

Digital Switchover

In 2017 BT announced plans to turn off their analogue telephone network and

switch over to a faster digital system. Work has already started and BT plans to switch the old network off permanently in 2025. This change will affect everyone who uses a landline telephone and therefore will affect our customers as our Careline alarms connect via the telephone line. The new system uses Voice over Internet Protocol technology or VoIP. It allows us to make telephone calls via the internet, which is much cheaper (especially if calling internationally) and the connections are much quicker as it isn't carried by physical wires. The data is transferred digitally via the internet which means when the client presses their pendant, their call will be received much more quickly saving valuable seconds of time.

From 2025 landline telephones will no longer plug in to a socket on the wall, they will plug into the wifi router and will work via an internet connection.

Clients will be contacted by their phone and internet provider when the switchover is due to take place in their area. The phone provider will supply clients with a Home Hub, complete with an Analogue Telephone Adaptor (ATA). This is designed so that they can plug their Careline Alarm into the hub and the ATA will convert analogue signals to digital, allowing clients to use their equipment in exactly the same way as before. However, they will no longer hear a dialling tone as the call will be placed digitally.

All calls will go through the Home Hub which is connected to the mains power, so in the event of a power cut, the home hub and therefore the Careline Alarm will not function. Even if the alarm unit has a battery back up this will not work as the Home Hub will not function without power and will not be able to send data through including the emergency call. The same applies if the broadband goes down, the alarm will not be able to send a call through to our monitoring centre.

This is a major concern for the telecare sector and at the present time some internet providers (not all) have promised to provide all 'vulnerable' residents with a battery back up lasting one hour, albeit with varying functionality.

The BCKLWN is working with the College of West Anglia to provide its students with valuable work experience in the public sector. Careline will be having a work experience placement and Lily will be having a volunteer to gain experience in Mental Health.

Lily has temporarily had to pause receiving referrals due to capacity. Funding for Social Isolation and Loneliness (SIL) is lower this year, which means there has been a reduction in Lily Advisors across the partner charities (West Norfolk Carers, West Norfolk Befrienders, Family Action and Norfolk and Waveney Mind) meaning they are at capacity much quicker.

Lily is also working on Hardship provisions for clients affected by Covid. As infections are rising again we have seen demand for food supplies rise in the last week, we also anticipate that winter pressures will impact on these demands.

Lily has been successful with its application for funding through Orsted (East Coast Community Fund) to run a 'Food for Thought' course, this is to be delivered alongside Freebridge and the College of West Anglia to provide two 12 week healthy eating initiatives at the Discovery Centre in North Lynn. The aim is to encourage local residents of all ages to come along and find out about healthy eating on a budget.

After many delays from Central Government the Community Renewal Fund bid for the project of providing Community Pop Ups has been unsuccessful. We did consider other funding routes but with the demand on resources, increasing covid cases in the community and the need for hardship support we have decided not to pursue it again until early 2022.

Lily is also managing and co-ordinating the Household Support Fund – this fund was awarded to each district based. We take internal referrals and referrals from NAS. NCC are working on a communications plan - but there are no communications at present. The purpose of the grant is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support, who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs (in exceptional cases of genuine emergency) this winter as the economy recovers. This fund will be delivered until March 2022.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Cabinet Sifting
Cabinet Briefings
Cabinet Meetings
Councillor Community Grant Scheme Training
Local Plan Task Group
Briefing -Sports Facilities and Playing Field Strategy
Health and Wellbeing Board Development Session
Information and Advice Services, Money Hub advice
Meetings with Officers.
QEH Covid Briefing Session
Member Engagement Session Multi Community User Hub