

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

## COMMUNITIES ADVISORY BOARD

08 June 2011

### Report of the Chief Executive

#### Part 1- Public

#### Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

#### **1 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK – UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

**To provide an update on community development work taking place in the Borough's three priority communities**

#### **1.1 Background**

1.1.1 Nationally Tonbridge and Malling is one of the most prosperous boroughs in the country, however this advantage is not shared equally across the borough and there are some small areas where real disadvantage persists. The communities of East Malling, Snodland and Trench ward Tonbridge, are the most deprived areas of the borough, based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

1.1.2 In order to reduce inequalities, the Borough Council, working in partnership with a wide range of agencies, has engaged the services of the Beat Project to provide Community Development Coordinators in each priority community. The purpose of this report is to provide a brief summary of project work undertaken by the Beat Project in each area.

#### **1.2 East Malling**

1.2.1 Most of the community work undertaken in East Malling is now based around the recently opened St James Centre on Chapman Way. This facility provides a base for Angela Borsos (East Malling Community Development Coordinator) and a focal point for activities and projects. The East Malling Partnership also operates as a community regeneration partnership that meets twice a year and aims to bring together agencies from the public, private and voluntary sectors operating in East Malling to ensure activities are properly co-ordinated.

1.2.2 During the past year, Angela has continued to build on a number of successful projects currently running in the area, as well as developing new projects. Angela also takes an active role at various community meetings including the recently formed Family Focus initiative. The aim of this group is to work towards resolutions for families who have been highlighted as requiring further support,

interaction or intervention. A targeted approach for priority families enables all agencies to work in partnership to hopefully prevent further problems arising and intervention being required at a later date.

- 1.2.3 Regular, ongoing projects include the Dance for Fun classes, open to all ages to encourage participation in physical activity, the weekly vegetable bag scheme to encourage healthier eating and a number of Community Days – the most recent of which had a “wellbeing” theme and proved to be a successful way to engage with all members of the community and to enable a variety of service providers to meet with residents and promote their services.
- 1.2.4 Other popular projects include the very successful Craft and Chat group, with increasing numbers of participants at every session. The group provides a skill sharing opportunity with enthusiastic and supportive participants. There are also a number of outings in association with the Craft and Chat group, such as visits to specialist craft shows in London. The Olympic Quilting project is linked to the Craft and Chat group and adults with learning difficulties regularly attend.
- 1.2.5 New projects and forthcoming events include the recently started library service, the Urban Soundz project which was well attended and enjoyed by young people, the bulb planting event, world book event, libraries make lives awards – the award is working to include adults with learning difficulties as well as a Malling Mini Arts Festival which will run from June 18. Angela also assists many regular volunteers who are placed at the St James Centre to cover various projects and tasks.
- 1.2.6 Improvements are currently underway at the St James Centre and subject to successful funding bids, a Community Café is being built which will be an excellent facility and will further increase community engagement at the centre.

### **1.3 Trench**

- 1.3.1 The Community Development Coordinator for the Trench ward in Tonbridge is Luci Napleton. Unlike in East Malling, there is no specific community building for Luci to operate from and the success of her work is due to extensive partnership working with multi agencies. The Trench Neighbourhood Action Group (TNAG) consisting of partners from the Borough Council, PCT, Police, Russet Homes and Tonbridge Baptist Church have been fundamental in overseeing the development work in this part of Tonbridge.
- 1.3.2 Projects currently underway or planned for Trench include the Family Cook and Eat sessions to enable families to learn how to prepare, cook and eat together over a six week course. Recipes and informal education around healthy eating will be delivered to the whole family by a community chef who will issue certificates at the end of the sessions. A crèche facility is also provided to encourage parents of very young children / babies to take part.
- 1.3.3 C Card and Registration Access Points are being set up, delivered in partnership with the Beat Project, Little Foxes Children’s Centre and the secondary schools to

enable young people to get free condoms and advice about sex and relationships. The Beat Project will hopefully be invited into schools to promote this service and the new access point operating from the Children's Centre.

- 1.3.4 Other projects due to take place include the Fit and Fun and Pic n Play events which will operate fortnightly during term time and additional sessions for the summer holidays. The aim will be to provide active sports such as rounders and cricket with a picnic at the end of the summer holiday sessions. Ongoing projects in Trench include the monthly coffee mornings which provide an opportunity to engage with the older members of the community and the weekly vegetable bag scheme which operates from the Children's Centre. Regular Community Days are also held in the Trench area and again the most recent Community Day had a wellbeing theme which was well attended.
- 1.3.5 It has recently emerged that many of the actions within the TNAG Action Plan have similar objectives to those within the Tonbridge Federation Development Plan covering Hugh Christie School and Long Mead Primary School. Following a meeting with TNAG and the Tonbridge Federation it was felt that by pulling resources together many of the actions could be tackled in partnership. It has therefore been agreed that the two groups will develop a combined annual action plan to address key priorities across the community relating to community/ family engagement, education, health and young people which should further enhance community development work in Trench.

## **1.4 Snodland**

- 1.4.1 The Community Development Coordinator for Snodland is Nicky Delacey who works very closely with the Snodland Partnership, a long running partnership which aims to improve the quality of life for Snodland's residents. Again, there is no specific community building for Nicky to work from, so partnership work in the community and with other agencies is vital to the success of the projects.
- 1.4.2 Similar to the other areas, projects include the Dance for Fun classes, weekly coffee and chat sessions, weekly keep fit classes, Urban Soundz and the weekly vegetable bag scheme. The latest Community Day with a wellbeing theme was a huge success with many residents receiving advice and information in an informal way via a large range of agencies. Family Cook and Eat sessions have also been undertaken and well received, with further sessions due to take place in the near future.
- 1.4.3 New projects include the recently established YAPS Group (young parents groups) as well as a fun day and dog show which is due to take place in July. Again this will provide an informal venue for residents to access information and advice from local agencies.
- 1.4.4 All three Community Development Coordinators put in a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and commitment to the projects they run which ensures the success of the variety of initiatives undertaken in each area.

## **1.5 Legal Implications**

- 1.5.1 A Service Level Agreement with the Beat Project is in place and regularly reviewed.

## **1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.6.1 Multi agency funding for the Community Development Coordinators provides excellent value for money. The Borough Council contributes £15,000 annually to this work which is met from existing budgets. The Beat Project's charitable status also enables them to successfully apply for funding which would be impossible for statutory organisations to obtain.

## **1.7 Risk Assessment**

- 1.7.1 The Community Development Coordinators rely on funding from a variety of agencies in order to continue each project.

## **1.8 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 1.8.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

## **1.9 Policy Considerations**

- 1.9.1 Delivering projects in priority communities which focus on raising aspirations, promoting health, supporting children and young people and improving basic skills, is an action within the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **1.10 Recommendations**

- 1.10.1 That progress on community development work within the Borough's priority communities BE NOTED and;
- 1.10.2 The Beat Project Community Development Workers BE INVITED to present to a future meeting of this Board.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Gill Fox

Nil

David Hughes  
Chief Executive

<b>Screening for equality impacts:</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Explanation of impacts</b>
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The community development work noted in this report aims to reduce inequalities.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	See above
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		N/A

*In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.*