

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 11 JULY 2017

Title:

BRIGHTWELLS SITE SECURITY

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Julia Potts]
[Wards Affected: All Farnham Wards]

Summary and purpose:

The Brightwells site in Farnham is experiencing an increase in anti-social behaviour. In addition to the existing security measures, further urgent actions have been undertaken to address this.

The Executive is requested to approve the arrangements that have been made so that they can continue over the whole of the Summer period.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

Community Wellbeing and Environment

The Brightwells regeneration project will improve the living environment for local people. Until its completion, the developer will be responsible for ensuring the site is safe. Before the site is handed over to the developer, Waverley is responsible for ensuring the site is as safe as possible.

Value for Money

Anti-social behaviour, property damage and preventing injury related to these problems have the potential to incur substantial costs to the Council. Investing in measures to prevent or reduce these issues represent mitigation against these risks.

Legal Implications

1. The Council needs to ensure that its land and buildings are secure, for a number of reasons. One of the key reasons is in order for the Council to do everything it can to prevent crime and disorder within its area. These proposals seek to achieve that, and are specifically targeted at a period within the year when anti-social behaviour is known to be likely to increase.

Financial Implications

2. The continuation of the security measures will cost an estimated £7,700. This report requests supplementary estimate approval to cover the additional cost.

Background

3. The Redgrave Theatre and Brightwell House have been closed for many years and during this time the buildings have been secured and monitored to ensure the site is water tight and entry is prevented. Since early 2016 the site has been subject to an increasing amount of anti social behaviour (ASB) including breaking and entering. The building is considered unsafe for access, there is asbestos within it and the roof has been damaged as result of forced entry.

4. The Marlborough Head public house was subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) as part of the site assembly and enabling works for the Brightwells Scheme. The Pub's ownership passed to Waverley Borough Council on the 1 December 2016. Work was undertaken to secure this site and included boarding windows, the securing of all entrances and the protection of the outside area to restrict access to all areas of the site.
5. As a result of the delays to the Brightwells Scheme created by the Judicial Review challenge, the overall development site has not yet been passed to the developer. Once this has happened it will be part of a secured construction area. Until then, Waverley continues to be responsible for the security of land and buildings within its ownership.
6. On 20 January 2017, Surrey Police attended the site with Council officers and carried out an Environmental Visual Audit (EVA) with a view to reducing the ASB in the area. The recommendations of the audit were subsequently implemented and these included; installing a secure fence line between Brightwell House and Bright House (the former CAB building), cutting back of foliage, affixing extra signage and the securing of bins that were being used as climbing aids. In addition to this a temporary CCTV unit is to be installed at Faulkner Court that will face Brightwell Gardens, the tennis courts and the Southern elevation of Brightwell House.

Current Issues and Actions

7. June 2017 has seen a substantial increase in anti-social behaviour at the site. Breaking and entering has occurred at the Redgrave Theatre/Brightwell House with a more concerted effort than has previously been witnessed.
8. There is a significant risk of these anti-social activities increasing and spreading from the Redgrave Theatre/Brightwell House to other buildings within the Brightwells site such as the Marlborough Head and the former toilet block. As a result urgent action has been taken to put in place a temporary on-site security patrol for the entirety of the site. A security officer from the contracted security company will be on site at priority times 7 days per week.

Conclusions

9. These measures will go a long way in addressing the escalation in anti social behaviour at the Brightwells site and the associated security and safety concerns. These measures will also help mitigate against the additional risks that arise during the longer summer days and as schools start to break up for the summer holidays where seasonal increases in anti-social behaviour occur.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive approves the additional security measures set out in this report, namely daily security patrols during priority times at the Brightwells site, and agrees a supplementary estimate of £7,700 to enable these arrangements to continue until they are reviewed again in mid September 2017.

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