



Committee	FULL COUNCIL
Date	15 MARCH 2023
Title	LEADER'S UPDATE
Report of	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Adults Social Care and Housing Needs teams continue to work hard to ensure that people can access the support they need. I understand that balancing resources continues to be a challenge. I am pleased to see the hard work of the teams has been recognised this month with both the Living Well and Early Help Service, and the soon to be launched Well-Being App, receiving national recognition. The Living Well and early Help Service has been identified as a finalist in the iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards 2023 and the Well-being App has been shortlisted in the 2023 Local Government Chronical Awards. This national recognition is great testament to the hard work and innovation of our teams. I await the outcome of both sets of awards.

Public Health are developing a new “Domestic Abuse Services” to support meeting of the new Domestic Abuse duties places on Local Authorities. The team, with partners, are also developing the Island Strategic Drug and Alcohol Partnership Delivery Plan. I am grateful that the Office for Health Improvements and Disparities has confirmed the Island will receive an additional grant of £280,580 to support the delivery plan.

In February a new support service commenced supporting children and young people affected by self-harm. This service is being delivered by Solent Mind.

In response to the cost-of-living crisis the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) announced details of two new schemes to be implemented by local authorities. The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding (EBSSAF) is aimed at providing support to households not eligible for the automatic Energy Bills Support Scheme (£400 payment already paid by energy suppliers) by way of providing a one-off £400 payment. Households must be resident at the eligible property on the date they apply for the scheme, and it must be their sole or main residence. They must have a responsibility for paying energy and can only receive one payment per eligible property. This scheme went live on 27 February and to date 164 applications have been received from park home and houseboat residents, self-funded care home residents and off grid households.

In addition, going live from 6 March is the Alternative Fuel Payments Alternative Fund (AFPAF) which aims to support households that use fuels other than gas to heat their

homes by way of providing a one-off £200 payment. Applications for both schemes will be open until 31 May 2023.

The newly established welfare benefits role, sitting in the revenues team, is proving it's worth. The officer has been working with some of our most vulnerable residents assisting them with completion of forms and signposting them to Isle Help for further support and guidance. She has also tackled customers who are avoiding payment and during the last six months, through her efforts, she has enabled the additional collection of some £114,000 of council tax monies. The one to one help and support is exceptional, very well done.

Regulatory activity in relation to food premises is nearing the end of an interim recovery plan set by the Government. The approach by our teams is risk based, focusing on those food businesses which are the highest risk to the public. I am pleased to report that in a recent meeting with the Food Standards Agency they have acknowledged our risk based and intelligence led planning and are satisfied of our assurance in meeting the requirements.

The green garden waste renewal and new subscription window this year has so far been incredibly successful. I would like to thank all of our wonderful gardening community for recycling their green waste with us! There are only a few spaces left for new subscribers, so please don't delay sign up today if you want to be part of this years' service.

I was delighted to see the first businesses moving into the new units at Branstone Farm and look forward to visiting and finding out more about their plans. With the next group of Island residents due to move into new homes this month, the vision of a new sustainable community, living the principles of the Biosphere, is starting to become a reality. We are also pressing on with implementing the Shared prosperity investment in employing new area regeneration managers and extending a "Skills for work" programme to help Islanders access jobs.