

## Ashford Borough Council

### Decisions taken by the Cabinet on 25 June 2020

Minute No	Topic	Decision
431	CO-VID 19 - Ashford Borough Council's Response	<p>The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which documented the Council's emergency response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The report included details of: - the command and control arrangements; the establishment of the Ashford Response Depot (ARD); the Voluntary Emergency Response Appeal which had earlier that week broken its £10k target; the assistance provided to those on NHS shield lists and other vulnerable people; and grant support arrangements for the voluntary sector. It also outlined the significant steps taken to keep essential services running, as well as responding to immediate emergency needs. He said that the report was not definitive but provided a really good overview of all the areas covered by the Council, and its unique and beneficial relationship with the local voluntary sector. He also wanted to praise Council Officers and Members for their ability to adapt to an ever-changing landscape and deal with all of the challenges thrown at the Council and to look after the most vulnerable in the Borough.</p> <p>Cabinet Members echoed those comments and drew particular attention to the work and effort of Council staff in a number of areas including Aspire, Biffa and the waste management service who had managed to keep operating a full capacity throughout, those involved at the ARD for food distribution, the work undertaken on grant schemes, support and project funds and business support. Thanks were also expressed to the school staff who had managed to keep schools open for children of key-workers in difficult circumstances, and now had allowed as many children as possible to return to school, as well as the population of the Borough in general, who had really pulled together as a community as well as obeying the restrictions that had been put in place for everyone's safety. The Deputy Leader advised that Kent County Council had earlier that week taken a decision to increase its budget for the Community Wardens by 50% and there were opportunities for Ashford to get its fair share of that additional money during the recovery process.</p>

		<p>The Chief Executive thanked Members for their comments about staff and said she was pleased that their efforts had been recognised. Officers has undertaken some extraordinary work, often outside of their own remits and skillsets, in a quick and responsible fashion and even those not involved with the incident had kept on with the day job, often working from home or in new ways, and worked hard to keep the Council operating as normal. She would ensure that the Cabinet’s thanks were communicated to staff.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p><b>That (i) the report outlining the Council’s response to date to the COVID-19 pandemic be noted.</b></p> <p><b>(ii) the Cabinet pay tribute to residents, businesses, wider communities, volunteers and staff for all of the support and help they have provided, the sacrifices they have made, and the personal challenges they have and continue to face as a result of COVID-19.</b></p>
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