

STRATEGY FOR SUPPORTING NEW COMMUNITIES

To: General Purpose Committee

Meeting Date: 15th September 2015

From: Adrian Loades,
Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: 2015/050 **Key decision:** Yes

Purpose: To seek endorsement for the Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Strategy for Supporting New Communities.

To inform General Purposes Committee of the specific opportunities and challenges faced by CCC in responding to the needs of new communities

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to:

- a) Comment on the CCC Strategy for Supporting New Communities;
- b) Endorse the recommendation that we specifically address the funding shortfall which occurs in the first years of each new development through business planning; and
- c) Delegate authority to the Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services in consultation with the Chairman to finalise the strategy, incorporating the feedback from committee members.

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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Growth brings huge benefits to the county and is a core element of our vision for Cambridgeshire. However the challenge of planning for this growth and meeting the needs of the residents of new communities is significant. While recent growth sites such as Cambourne have developed into thriving communities, in the initial years of the development we did see higher needs and less positive outcomes resulting in greater demand on CCC services.
- 1.2 In order to plan proactively for these growth sites and ensure we have the necessary support in place to meet needs as they emerge a County Council-wide Strategy for Supporting New Communities has been developed. The Strategy been endorsed by Strategic Management Team (SMT), Children, Families and Adults Services (CFA), Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE), Corporate Directorate and Public Health (PH) management teams.

2.0 CCC STRATEGY FOR SUPPORTING NEW COMMUNITIES

- 2.1 The CCC Strategy for Supporting New Communities provides a cohesive approach for how CCC will organise people-centred support for new communities. The aim of the strategy is to ensure the requirements of all CCC services are included in the planning, design and delivery in new communities. The strategy also reflects the current need for CCC to manage demand for services within limited resources.
- 2.2 The emphasis of the strategy is on people-focused support in new communities rather than hard infrastructure. Some of the supportive services will require infrastructure in the new communities, such as shared access to community facilities or dedicated library provision, so this will be included in the scope of the strategy. However, traditional planning functions such as provision of open space or public transport, although important and related to CCC supportive services, are not included in the remit of this strategy and will continue to be considered in existing planning processes of which the strategy will align with. It is vital to recognise that this strategy does not cover all the functions of CCC in the planning of new communities but is rather one part of an essential process in the development of healthy, sustainable new communities
- 2.3 The strategy provides a vision for new communities that is essential to achieve a sustainable development as detailed in the National Planning Policy Framework. The vision is to:
 - Ensure that infrastructure in new communities is designed to meet the needs of the community now and in the future
 - Support the development of a self-supporting, healthy and resilient community by helping to build peoples capacity to help themselves and others in order to create a good place to live, improve outcomes, support economic prosperity and make people less reliant on public services.
 - Ensure that where people's needs are greater than can be met within community resources they are supported by the right services and are helped to return to independence
- 2.4 Recognising that each new community is different and places different demands on CCC services, the strategy does not create a fixed blueprint of

how new communities should be supported but rather establishes four guiding principles to shape support in new communities: **community development, partnership working, co-location and innovation**. As well as detailing a governance structure, the strategy also provides outcomes, in line with the Operating Model outcomes, to test whether the County Council is achieving its visions for new communities.

- 2.5 In order to influence planning and gain funding from other sources, we have also developed a level of requirements framework (**Appendix 6** of the strategy) which provides an outline for the type of people centred support needed in new communities and evidence for why it is required. This work maintains the flexibility needed to reflect local requirements but also provides more robust evidence to enhance the County Council's ability to influence planning and lever in the necessary funding. The level of requirements framework is intended to be used alongside the strategy by relevant officers when requesting funding from developers and to support ETE colleagues in their discussion and negotiations with planning authorities and developers.

3.0 THE CHALLENGES OF NEW COMMUNITIES

- 3.1 We believe that in the long run the additional demand and costs of growth are met as more people and businesses mean higher tax revenue and higher grant funding. Equally we know that new communities bring many wider opportunities and benefits to the county not least in addressing the chronic shortage of housing which is a national priority.
- 3.2 However there are also specific challenges which must be addressed, particularly in the initial years of developments. The New Communities Team have been undergoing research into the specific challenges which exist for CCC in supporting new communities. Research highlights a pattern of higher demand for services and poorer outcomes during the initial years of a new community compared to that of an established community. Although research also shows that the need of the community will eventually decrease to expected levels, as we now see in Cambourne doing nothing in the initial years of development exposes people to the risk of intensified needs, especially for children and families.
- 3.3 Data suggests that despite some changes (for example, earlier community facilities and community development work) the new communities currently being built are replicating this trend. In addition, the need in new communities is not created by already vulnerable families but is new need. Looking into children's social care referrals from the past three years it was discovered that the majority of referrals to children's social care from the new communities were from families who had no previous involvement with any CCC children's services.
- 3.4 At present the funding structures and planning system make it difficult to cover the financial gap in the first years of each growth site when needs are highest. There is often an inability to match bricks and mortar infrastructure with sufficient people-centred and community development work in the first few years of new communities and this is the gap we need to address in order to avoid the worse outcomes and higher demand which we have seen in some developments.
- 3.5 The principles and outcome based approach as detailed in the strategy will

help shape the support, but unless consideration as to whether CCC can engage with and support the redesign of the financing and delivery of structures to ensure intervention in the first few years of the new communities, CCC will be unable to afford to fully support new communities which will result in additional business planning pressure as higher needs develop.

- 3.6 To address this issue the strategy includes an appendix outlining approaches to funding challenges (**Appendix 7**) and explores a number of options for how funding can be sought to provide greater savings in the long term by avoiding the significant costs of increased demand for high level services. It is recommended that CCC focus on forward investment in preventative services across new communities in the initial years of the development to avoid high demand on services and help facilitate the development of a socially sustainable new community.
- 3.7 If the principle of forward investment in preventative activity is endorsed by the Committee then it would be reflected in the County Council's business planning strategy and 5-year financial plan. The New Communities Team will continue to progress this work, developing proposals with the aim of creating a sustainable system which does not result in an over reliance on public services but expedites the development of the new community to be self-reliant and make best use of resources. Where specific funding proposals or changes are recommended specifically to respond to new communities these will be highlighted to committee members as part of business planning.

4.0 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

Supporting people moving into new communities will help develop the local economy for the benefit of all by:

- Building a learning culture in the community which is central to the well-being, resilience and sustainability of communities
- Ensuring all members of new communities are supported and able to access education, employment or training within their community
- Supporting the development of an active and inclusive community with a work ready community to help attract new businesses

4.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

Supporting people moving into new communities will help people live healthy and independent lives by:

- Helping to build community cohesion and establish a sense of belonging
- Improve participation in community activities and events by a wide range of people
- Promote and support the development of positive mental and physical health

4.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

Supporting people moving into new communities will support and protect vulnerable people by:

- Helping all people, especially those from vulnerable groups, to participate in their community
- Bring about safe and accessible infrastructure and services
- Deliver accessible and timely support if needed and supported back to independence

5.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

The Strategy does not include any specific financial recommendations at this stage but the resource implications of new communities will be very significant in the coming years. Section 3.1 and **Appendix 2** set out the scale of expected housing and population growth in the next 20 years and the County Council is planning to meet the needs of this significantly increased population across the full range of our responsibilities.

In particular Appendix 7 sets out the potential resource implications arising from higher levels of need and demand generated by new communities if we are unable to provide sufficient preventative people-focussed support. It is vital that we succeed in mitigating this demand which will otherwise lead to a further pressure on business planning at a time of reduced funding and expanding need.

The recommendation in this paper to endorse the principle of early investment in prevention in new communities is therefore a key demand and resource management strategy.

5.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

Failure to implement the Strategy for Supporting New Communities will result in CCC not providing appropriate people centred support to new communities. This will result in continued high needs developing in new communities and the resulting high cost services being required in the new communities and reputational damage to CCC.

5.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

Implementing the Strategy for Supporting New Communities will provide greater access to services for residents of new communities. If the strategy is not implemented there will be a lack of resource available in the initial years of a development. In addition, new communities contain a higher amount of affordable housing than most established communities which will mean that some of our most vulnerable residents will find it difficult to access any support they may require.

5.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

The Strategy for Supporting New Communities has been endorsed by directorates across CCC. The draft strategy was also shared with District and City Councils, Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS and the some housing colleagues via the Sub Regional Housing Strategy Co-ordinator and has been well received.

5.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

Implementing the Supporting New Communities Strategy will equip and empower communities to develop into self-reliant communities and will maximise community potential to help equip communities to enable greater community participation in decision making and the planning and delivery of

services in their area.

5.6 Public Health Implications

Implementation of the Supporting New Communities Strategy will support all residents, especially those who are more vulnerable, to engage with their community and enhance their physical and mental health in line with the key health and wellbeing priorities in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17. The Strategy will impact of the needs identified in the New Communities JSNA 2010 and will be reviewed upon publication of the 2015 new communities JSNA.

Source Documents	Location
There are no source documents for this report.	Box No: CC1003 Room No:2nd floor Octagon Shire Hall Castle Hill Cambridge CB3 0AP