TIMEBANKING IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE: AN EXAMPLE OF DEVELOPING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

To:	**Adults Committee**
Meeting Date:	**4th December 2014**
From:	**Sue Grace, Customer Service and Transformation Director**
Electoral division(s):	***All***
Forward Plan ref:	***Key decision:* No**

Purpose:	a) **To update the committee on the development of Timebanking across the county, including the County Council's role in facilitating growth of the network.**
	b) **To consider future development of Timebanking, and how learning from our experience to date could inform the County Council's approach to developing Community Resilience.**
Recommendation:	**The Committee is being asked to:**
	a) **Note progress and achievements to date**
	b) **Comment on the plans for future development**
	c) **Consider and advise upon the most effective way to involve members and any support that is needed for members to help take this type of development forward in their division.**

Officer contact:	
Name:	Wendy Lansdown
Post:	Community Engagement Programme Manager
Email:	Wendy.lansdown@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01223 699683

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 In the context of the current financial pressures, we are taking a new perspective on our work with communities. This is demonstrated in a number of programmes including Transforming Lives and Early Help. A senior level group has recently formed, including Directors from across the organisation and the lead member for Localism, to focus on Community Resilience; one element of which will look at how we integrate services at local level and engage with communities on how they can help.

1.2 Both Transforming Lives and Early Help programmes are predicated on facilitating community self help and mutual support. Community based support is becoming increasingly central in the thinking of staff considering their future operating model, for example some locality teams are currently undertaking a community asset mapping exercise.

1.3 Three Community Engagement officers work across the organisation to help build community capacity. These staff are supporting the Community Resilience work, providing guidance and making links to existing initiatives, including Timebanking.

1.4 Time Banking is a way for people to come together and help each other by exchanging knowledge, help and skills. Time is exchanged on an 'hour for an hour' basis and encompasses a huge range of skills e.g. gardening, IT, support with homework, CV writing, ironing, companionship. Further explanation, including case studies are included in the appendix.

1.5 Timebanks build social networks of people who give and receive support. It enables people from different backgrounds, who may not otherwise meet, to come together and form connections and friendships. Generating social capital in this way can be an important determinant of health, wellbeing and resilience, all of which can prevent needs arising.

1.6 The first Timebank in the county was set up in Cambridge in 2006. In 2011 The County Council supported the Somersham Parish Council to set up the first rural Timebank. Today there are six Timebanks, with around 500 members. Four of the Timebanks employ coordinators, two are led by volunteers. A wide variety of skills are exchanged; from ironing to voice coaching, IT skills to support with shopping. Local organisations and services are engaged, including churches, libraries, children's centres and businesses.

1.7 This report focuses on community Timebanks. It is important to note that the County Council is also working with Spice Innovations to deliver a three year Time Credits programme. Time Credits are a form of Timebanking which encourages people to give their time to organisations and receive one Time Credit as a 'thank you' for each hour they have given. The credits can be exchanged for a range of activities, from a swim at the local pool, to bowling, to an after school club. The programme focuses on three priorities; older people, skills and employment and strengthening families.

2.0 Main Issues

2.1 The County Council's Current role

2.1.2 The County Council's Adult Social Care and Community Engagement teams supported the development of the Somersham Timebank as a pilot project. It was undertaken to test out Timebanking as an approach to building community capacity from the grassroots.

2.1.3 The pilot was very successful, both in terms of the Parish Council hosting the Timebank and the approach stimulating community activity.

2.1.4 As the Somersham initiative became more established and other organisations began setting up their own Timebanks, the County Council's role changed to one of enabling and facilitating; leading the development of the Cambridgeshire Timebanking Partnership where coordinators come together to share good practice, tackle challenges and host joint events.

2.1.5 The County Council also have an important role in making links to services. For example, Timebanks are increasingly linking up with older people's homes; a Littleport Timebank member runs a crochet club at a local sheltered housing scheme, and in St Ives, a care home has joined as an organisational member, hosting film nights for the local community in exchange for Timebank members providing companionship for the residents. In St Neots a Timebanker offered British Sign Language to enable a student to access an adult learning course. Subsequently there were so many requests to learn from other members that he ran a basic signing course through the Timebank.

2.2 The County Council's Future role -

2.2.1 The success to date is primarily due to the energy, commitment and competence of the coordinators. The most successful Timebanks are led by people who have a passion for their community. They report that the relatively light-touch support from the County Council has been very helpful in enabling them to sustain, develop, learn from each other and reach a wider audience; they are keen for this to continue.

2.2.2 The Timebanks extensive reach into communities has only been possible through strong partnership working. Many of the achievements have required us to think creatively with partners in order to work with communities, some examples:
- Engaging businesses through a 'team day with a difference' – providing a make over for the garden at a sheltered housing scheme, now maintained by the local play group.
- CHS Group secured Local Enterprise Partnership funding for the partnership to utilise Timebanking as a tool to support people into work. The connections, experience and confidence people gained helped them into work, some even setting up their own businesses.
- Partnering with a GP practice in Somersham to link patients into their local Timebank, especially socially isolated people.

2.2.3 Key to success has been the organic, collaborative approach. One of the challenges is to maintain this whilst growing the Timebanking network.

2.3 **Councillors' Role**

2.3.1 The local County Councillor's role as an ambassador was key to the success of the Somersham pilot. Having supported the Timebank to develop Cllr Criswell's has not only championed its growth, but also utilised the Timebank as a foundation for further community capacity building, most recently through the formation of the Somersham Health and Well Being Group which brings together local practitioners to collaborate and provide improved health outcomes for the local community.

2.3.2 Cllr Tew has seen the benefits of Timebanking in other parts of the country and is keen to support growth in Cambridgeshire. He approached the Community Engagement team and we worked together to develop a resource (presentation, film clips and leaflets) that he has used to engage Parish Councils. A cluster of parishes are now working together to consider a joint Timebank.

2.3.3 A steer would be welcome as to whether more Councillors would like to develop their Community Champion role in a similar way. This could include:

- Promoting initiatives such as Timebanking to their parish councils
- Supporting local community partners to make connections and collaborate
- Supporting community ideas for grassroots projects

2.4 **Developing Community Resilience**

2.4.1 The development of the Cambridgeshire Timebanking network is one example of how Cambridgeshire County Council can help build stronger, more resilient individuals, families and communities. Community resilience is a key requirement of future service re-design right across the public sector and can be part of a solution to growing demand and diminishing public sector resources. The public sector needs to change its approach to delivery so that we help build resilience rather than dependency by nurturing the strengths and connections that are already present within communities. Timebanking is a great example of this asset-based approach.

2.4.2 We are developing an increasingly joined up approach across services and teams, this will be enhanced by the Community Resilience group. In the case of Timebanking there is a strong link established with Community Navigators, and an example in Somersham of where they have successfully made a joint approach to the GP surgery. There are also some early examples of good partnership working with Better Health Network.

2.4.3   In the recent *People Helping People* report, Nesta outlined the changes needed for councils to enable the communities they work with to build their capacity. Key points are outlined in the table below.

2.4.4

Old Model of Public services: The delivery state	New model of public services: The relational state
Done to: led by professionals, citizens disempowered, passive consumers	Act with: citizens as equal, collaborative partners, co-producers
Top-down organisational decision making	Recognising insights of frontline staff and the public
Closed	Open, transparent, listening, responsive
Delivering	Facilitating
Services delivered through large institutions	Services embedded in homes and communities
One-size-fits all, standardised, prescriptive	Personalised, flexible, holistic, diverse solutions
Disjointed service episodes	Services integrated with people's lives
Defining people by problems & needs	Starting with people's assets

2.4.5   Officers from across the council are working together to look at how the changes to our approach recommended by NESTA are embedded more fully across the work of the organisation with Timebanking being one of the mechanisms that can be employed to help us to shift from delivery into facilitation of community self help and self support

2.4.6   As this work develops we need to be mindful of the importance of 'narrowing the gap'. For example, in the case of Timebanking, we are providing light-touch encouragement and support to community Timebanks, and focusing a higher level of support to our more deprived communities through Time Credits, which have been shown to be an effective tool for building community capacity in deprived communities.

3   ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1   Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.2   Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The report above sets out the implications for this priority, showing how individuals and communities can be empowered to take more responsibility for their own lives, examples in 2.2.2

3.3   **Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:
- By successfully developing community resilience local communities will be better equipped to support and protect vulnerable people in their area.

4   SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1   **Resource Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2   **Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3   **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The report above sets out details of significant implications in 2.4.6

4.4   **Engagement and Consultation Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5   **Localism and Local Member Involvement**

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:
- Timebanking is given as an example of community empowerment. It is a tool for harnessing community energy.
- This paper actively seeks guidance from members on increasing their involvement.

4.6   **Public Health Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

Source Documents	Location
Nesta, *People Helping People - The Future of Public Services, 2014*	http://www.nesta.org.uk/event/people-helping-people-future-public-services#sthash.ZJEB9fF5.dpuf

Appendix 1

Timebanking enables the exchange of time on an hour for hour basis, helping to connect people with others in their community and helping to build community capacity.

Community Timebanks and Spice Time Credits are two different forms of Timebanking, both adhering to the same core values of a strengths based approach. They differ in a number of ways, including;

Community Timebanks	Time Credits
• Primarily person-to-person • Credits are held centrally • Time exchanged for skill • Each Timebank has a coordinator	• Primarily person-to-organisation • Uses a community currency • Time exchanged for a range of activities (including corporate) • One facilitator supports a large area, each earn organisation takes responsibility for their own activity

Community Timebanks

Put simply, by giving one hour of your time doing something you enjoy, you 'bank' one hour, which you can then exchange for an hour of someone else's time, offers include – painting and decorating, learning a new IT skill, and simple DIY.

Each Timebank has a coordinator, this can be a paid or a voluntary role. Timebanks are run by a range of different organisations including; Housing Associations, charities and parish councils.

The Timebank Coordinators come together in the Cambridgeshire Timebanking Partnership. This group shares good practice, tackles challenges and collaborates on projects.

Case Study

When Pat, 82, joined the Timebank she was unsure whether she had anything to offer, the reality is that everyone does.

Pat garden had become overgrown. Timebank members gave a few hours to tidy the garden up.

Pat was then able to manage it herself, she said "I've been pottering in my front garden and got it just how I want it. I'm really rather pleased with myself".
In return, Pat has wonderful social skills and a great knowledge of the local area and transport links. She acts as a local oracle at Timebank coffee mornings, providing information on everything from local buses to the best places to eat.

Time Credits

Time Credits encourage people to give their time to organisations and receive one Time Credit as a 'thank you' for each hour they have given. The credits can be exchanged for a range of activities, from a swim at the local pool, to bowling, to an after school club.

EARN

Give 1 hour
of time to help your community

Get 1 Time Credit
worth 1 hour

SPEND

- on an activity at the place where the credit was earned
- on other local activities and opportunities
- as a gift or thank you to someone else
- somewhere else in our UK network

Case Study

Mandy has been unable to work for some time for health reasons. She had become very isolated and unhappy.

When Orchards Primary School in Waterlees joined the Time Credits initiative, Mandy was keen to take part. She has become a regular face in the school, and a superb support to the children. She has been involved in reading with children and takes a leading role in the Families and Schools Together programme.

Mandy likes to gift some of the credits she has earned to her grandchildren. In turn, they have experiences they would otherwise miss out on including bowling and fitness sessions.