

**BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

*To:* **Adults Committee**

*Meeting Date:* **1 March 2016**

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

*Electoral division(s):* **All**

*Forward Plan ref:* **Not applicable**      *Key decision:* **No**

*Purpose:* **To introduce *Stronger Together – Cambridgeshire’s Strategy for building resilient communities*, and to seek the views of Adults Committee on the actions taking place in support of this strategy.**

*Recommendation:* **Adults Committee is asked to comment on the actions proposed to support the Community Resilience Strategy.**

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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The public sector faces enormous challenges in the next few years. Rising demand together with significantly reduced resources makes redesigning public services imperative. Put simply, the public sector cannot continue delivering services in the way that it does now.
- 1.2 Alongside this, there is a growing body of research and evidence to show that local community-based support can be more effective in supporting some vulnerable people – and better at preventing some of the crises which necessitate costly Council services.
- 1.3 *Stronger Together – our strategy for building resilient communities* represents the culmination of work that has been happening across the Council on the back of these two immediate imperatives. It proposes a fundamental shift in the way that service provision and local communities interact; essentially, repositioning the Council as part of the wider community, with a real focus on building the capacity of local people to help us to meet local needs together.
- 1.4 The concepts and actions within this strategy have been informed by officers and Members across the Council, from a series of meetings, workshops, discussions, Member seminars and more latterly a more formal Programme Board with membership drawn from each directorate. It has been developed alongside the Council's new operating model, reflecting the cross-cutting nature of both the work and the potential impact. Community Resilience is an enabler within the operating model.
- 1.5 The Council's General Purposes Committee agreed to adopt this strategy at its meeting in October 2015. Since then officers and Members across the Council have been developing activity to make this strategy a reality.

## 2.0 FINANCIAL BENEFITS AND BUSINESS PLANNING

- 2.1 There is evidence to show that this approach can deliver improved services for less money. But it is difficult to accurately predict the savings that will accrue from fostering more resilient and supportive communities. Our business plans will consider the following:
  - **Costs avoided** – for example, less costly care packages for older people, where neighbours and friends can do some of the things that we currently ask domiciliary care providers to undertake;
  - **Helping to guide where savings could be made in front line services** – for example, where local parents step up to successfully offer peer support through children's centres or other community spaces and therefore reduce the need for services for parents in crisis, or where communities part-fund some highways improvement work or help to maintain local footpaths;
  - **Mitigating the impact of cuts which will have to be made to front line services** – for example, by ensuring there is a greater wealth of volunteer capacity in local areas with people willing and able to give some time to help others including through more organised opportunities such as timebanks, or through raising awareness and perceptions of volunteering opportunities.

- 2.2 There is increasing emphasis on demand management within the Council's business plan. This strategy is central to our ability to manage demand for our services - through supporting families and communities to do more to prevent the escalation of need and also to support the most vulnerable. It will drive our work with local communities to help, for example, to support a network of opportunities for socialising to combat loneliness and isolation in older people, or to encourage local people to look out for their vulnerable neighbours. For the most vulnerable, this strategy articulates our intention to combine our own care delivery with that from local people, for example by building capacity locally to support carers with their caring, or including local community support within care plans for adults with disabilities.
- 2.3 Council staff will place additional focus on helping to create groups and networks of people who face (or have faced) similar issues or needs, for example, parents with children who have a disability, or people with caring responsibilities. In this way people will increasingly be able to get some of the help and advice they need without recourse to our services.

### **3.0 SUPPORTING ACTIVITY**

- 3.1 Our strategy proposes six areas of activity. Each represents a specific part of the work we need to take forward, and there are developing action plans for each area. The six areas are:

- Communication
- People helping people
- Council members
- Our workforce
- Community spaces
- Partnerships

- 3.2 Further detail on each of these areas can be found within the strategy document itself, together with a clear articulation of what the Council aims to achieve by 2020.

### **3.3 Communication**

- 3.3.1 A comprehensive Communications Strategy and Action Plan are in place to support the Community Resilience Strategy. In the meantime work has already started in raising awareness of the challenge being faced by the Council and ways we and the community can help one another as part of the Council's Budget Challenge Campaign.
- 3.3.2 A regular update is now being sent to Parish Councils and a letter has also been sent with supporting materials that they can use themselves or in local publications. A menu of ideas and support offers, case studies and online resources are now being developed to help Parish Councils, the community and other organisations to develop their own local activity that will mitigate the impact of our budget and service reductions. Communications to staff have begun and will increase with official launch of the Community Resilience Strategy, and we are increasingly publicising the good work that is already happening in local communities, with or without our support.

- 3.3.3 The way the Council is using social media has been changing in order to better place the Council and its services as part of the wider community rather than a centralised provider of services. This means the Council can actively target communities in a geographic location but also communities who share an interest or need. This in turn allows a much more targeted and cost efficient approach as well as engaging with people where they are having the conversations rather than expecting them to come to the council.

### 3.4 **People helping people**

- 3.4.1 This workstream aims to facilitate people helping people in a range of capacities across the county. People help people in a broad range of ways – from very informal help for a neighbour, through to more facilitated volunteering such as peer-to-peer support. Within this workstream we will look at how the Council can support people helping people in both formal and informal ways. We aim to build on existing good practice across the Council, for example, in libraries, and develop the links between service provision where this is needed.

#### 3.4.2 Activity planned includes:

- The delivery of three pilot learning sites aiming specifically to build community capacity. These will take place in Godmanchester, Ely and Littleport, and the Abbey area of Cambridge. The Godmanchester site will build upon the “mini-patches” work happening through Transforming Lives.
- Work on building peer support mechanisms across the county.
- Aligning our VCS contracts around our Community Resilience strategy.
- Making available a toolkit for staff and Members, providing advice on sources of funding, support and training that community groups can access, useful tools, tips and techniques for building capacity in communities, and examples of successful activities and case studies.
- Identifying occasions where our staff may not feel they are able to link vulnerable people with sources of support from within the community – and making sure our policies and processes facilitate this whilst also keeping people safe from harm.
- Further development of Time Banks and Time Credits.

### 3.5 **Council Members**

- 3.5.1 The first Councillors as Community Connectors cohort is now complete. Two further cohorts are planned. The purpose of this group is for pro-active Members to work together to mutually improve knowledge of how to help build capacity within the communities in their divisions. The material they have covered includes: community engagement techniques, discussions with service leads regarding how the councillors’ community role can support services, and practical ideas to take forward. Attendance has been slightly lower than anticipated; of the 18 who signed up, 12 remain engaged with the programme. A number of councillors on the programme have initiated new activity including; holding a village meeting to ask how the community can do more, arranging for members to be trained as Community Navigators and instigating parish clusters.

3.5.2 The programme has been a conduit for the Cultivating Communities Small Grants pilot through which communities can work with their County Councillor to apply for a grant to fund local community-led partnership projects.

3.5.3 **Stronger Together** has stimulated positive conversations with local councils. Some have approached the council to ask what they could do to help mitigate the impact of the cuts, and a number of county members have started discussions with their parishes to stimulate ideas. Examples of activity include:

- Histon and Impington parish proactively working with a county officer to further develop their already substantial community offering
- Development of a Parish menu outlining examples and suggestions of ways our two councils can work together
- An invitation to officers to attend Huntingdonshire Joint Rural Forum to discuss 'Where will the axe fall and how can towns and parishes help?'
- Cllr Tew convening parish cluster meetings where parishes are now collaborating on projects
- Cllr Downes holding a Village Meeting explaining the situation and asking for ideas. These are now coming forward through their Community Plan.
- Monthly briefings of relevant information to all Local Councils from the County Council Communications team

3.5.4 At this early stage the approach we are adopting is to work with the willing, engaging with proactive local councils who approach us.

### 3.6 **Our workforce**

3.6.1 LGSS have the lead on this workstream, and due to other priorities they do not yet have plans in place. The draft Council Workforce Strategy is being revised to reflect the new direction of Customer First that the new Chief Executive is introducing and the final product will include the requirements of our work on community resilience.

3.6.2 In the meantime, there will be a workshop in the New Year to plan how we will support our staff to gain the skills and expertise they will need for this new way of working.

### 3.7 **Community spaces**

3.7.1 The use of the Council's assets will play a pivotal role in supporting an integrated approach to community resilience. At this point however there is still work to be completed before a detailed proposal can be developed that sets out how we will use our assets to help our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient. There are a number of stages that are necessary in this process. The first is to define exactly what the Council's service offer is. Work has been undertaken on this and it is starting to take shape. Once complete this will be mapped against an assessment of community need using the various data sets and forward projections to facilitate this process. Having determined the needs and priorities of communities a gap analysis will be undertaken by comparing this assessment to the location of the existing public estate. It is highly unlikely that the existing infrastructure and the identified infrastructure needs will be aligned and therefore the process will create some surplus assets and perhaps some investment requirements.

- 3.7.2 We have begun work on identifying those aspects – buildings, staff and activity – which we could potentially bring together across children’s centres and libraries in a given geographical location. We will build on this over time to identify one community-facing hub space in each community (geographical size to be determined), which will be the local “front door” for the provision of information and advice, preventative activities, developing and brokering community support, and networking and partnership working across all of our services. This will mean reducing our property portfolio as we join up across services, and will involve working with other Partner organisations who also desire a local presence.

### **3.8 Partnerships**

A series of individual meetings are taking place with partners to explore the resonance of the strategy with their own objectives. Discussions are also taking place at partnership boards to establish any cross-cutting strategic links which need to be made. From these discussions, any countywide actions and goals will be developed as well as any specific local activity to take the work forward. These conversations will have been concluded by March 2016, with a proposal that they are presented back to Cambridgeshire Public Services Board for strategic sign up. In Fenland, initial discussions have been taking place under the auspices of the Fenland Strategic Partnership to look at whether rethinking the totality of the resource being allocated across agencies in a community through the lens of community resilience could assist the process of re-focussing services.

## **4.0 ACTIVITY IN ADULTS SERVICES**

- 4.1 The aim in Adults services is that local people in local communities are aware of and responsive to the needs of people in their community who may be frail, isolated or vulnerable and are inclusive of people who may be marginalised. This means that our services will increasingly work alongside local people – friends, neighbours, volunteers and the voluntary sector – to help to meet the needs of vulnerable adults. Our role will increasingly be to raise awareness of ways in which community networks and support may help to meet their needs, ensure they feel part of the community and enable them to maintain their independence living in their community. In practice many older people, people with mental health needs and people with disabilities are already well supported and also reliant upon their family, neighbours and community. The longer term aspiration is that work on community resilience will build on and strengthen this approach in a more systematic way.
- 4.2 In addition the aspiration through the work on Transforming Lives is that social care staff will work in a way that is more closely connected to the community and other partner agencies. This will enable them to identify need earlier and to develop creative solutions to meet need that do not rely on statutory support, until or unless this is the most appropriate way forward. These solutions involve working with and in communities, building on the strengths that exist locally and within the networks of support around each vulnerable adult. In the case of older people, this will also involve close working with Neighbourhood Teams and primary care/ GPs who are often the first point of contact for older people when needs are increasing. Where people do need statutory support, we will seek innovative ways to coordinate statutory support with that from family, friends and the community to ensure that the person’s

involvement and connection with their community is maintained.

4.3 Our work and our plans across Adults services have already begun to take the approach outlined above. Specific examples include:

4.3.1 **Changes to the way that our practitioners work:**

- Transforming Lives, and a new strengths-based approach for adult social work
- Strengthening and developing the workforce through changes to job descriptions and through workforce development
- An Adult Social Work recruitment campaign which will feature the concepts outlined in the Community Resilience Strategy
- The development of an Early Help team for older people and vulnerable adults
- The move towards more local patch-based teams, linking more closely with Community Health Neighbourhood teams

4.3.2 **Changes to our work with the voluntary sector:**

- Work to remodel the Community Navigator contract to have a greater focus on building community resilience, initially through a pilot in Fenland
- A contract with MIND to build resilient communities to support stronger mental health and wellbeing
- The development of Shared Lives
- Expanding time banking opportunities for adults with disabilities

4.3.3 **Working better across the Council:**

- Work with libraries so that they can offer better help for older people locally

4.3.4 **New and innovative ways of working to help people to link with sources of local community support:**

- Building networks of people receiving personal budgets, with brokered support to use budgets collectively in innovative ways
- Developing new 24/7 supported living schemes so that people can remain living within their local communities rather than entering residential care
- Developing our approach to peer-to-peer support so that we can help people to access support and advice from people who have successfully overcome problems themselves.

5.0 **ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

5.1 **Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The Bank of England estimates that around 15 million people volunteer regularly on a formal basis, and that the same amount of time is spent on informal volunteering, which might be running a neighbour to a doctor's appointment or taking an elderly relative to do their shopping. They calculate that the economic value of volunteering could exceed £50bn a year.

- Individuals benefit from doing things for others, though the balance of benefits differs across individuals. For example, younger people highlight the importance of acquiring new skills and enhancing employment prospects, while older volunteers benefit from increased social interaction and improved health. Enjoyment and satisfaction rank high across all volunteer types, and it is clear that there are economic benefits for the individual. The Bank of England estimates that the gains to the individual in terms of wellbeing, improved health and increased employability might exceed the £50bn-plus benefit to the recipients of volunteering.
- It is therefore reasonable to suggest that building and supporting increased volunteering across the county will have benefits for the local economy.

## **5.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives**

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- There is evidence that community engagement and resilience supports the adoption of a healthy lifestyle as a community norm and engagement in health improving initiatives
- The benefits to those supported by volunteers include improvement in health, wellbeing and independence
- Supporting community resilience builds increased social capital; cohesion, empowerment, and improved relationship with organisations.

## **5.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:

- The County Council, along with other partners in the public sector, will have to make reductions in front line services in order to meet the significant financial challenges ahead. This strategy is a key aspect of the Council's approach to mitigating the impact of those cuts on those who need support but could manage without the intervention of statutory services.

# **6.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

## **6.1 Resource Implications**

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Implications for delivery of savings are outlined in paragraph 3. There are no significant additional costs incurred in the delivery of the overall strategy – though some actions may require short-term revenue input in order to achieve identified savings (invest to save). Delivery requires no additional staffing capacity, rather it asks our staff to work in different ways to secure support for people and places from within the local community.
- The strategy helps to establish how we best use our property assets to achieve the most value for Cambridgeshire residents.

## 6.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The strategy is designed to mitigate the impact of reductions in local government funding. As such it should help to guard against the risks identified in the corporate risk register around failure to deliver our five year business plan, namely:
  - Lack of capacity to respond to rising demand for service provision, in new and existing communities
  - Failure to produce a robust and secure business plan over the next 5 years
  - Failure to deliver the current five year business plan.
- There will be a continuing legal duty on local authorities to ensure that vulnerable people are not exposed to additional or unreasonable levels of risk as a result of the implementation of these strategic objectives.

## 6.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Evidence indicates that services delivered by local people within local communities can be more successful than statutory services at reaching people who may need support. Our strategy should therefore support more equal and diverse accessible provision locally.
- Our services will become increasingly more localised, less uniform and more bespoke, so that we can meet local and individual need within each specific community context.
- People identify themselves within different communities, not only the geographical community in which they live. People are also part of communities with shared interests (e.g. the Women's Institute, or the local Allotment Society) and this strategy will drive our approach to building relationships and harnessing capacity within these communities too.

## 6.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- We recognise that successful delivery of this strategy will hinge upon the relationships we have with other agencies in local communities – at a strategic planning level as well as between people working in local areas. There have been some early discussions with voluntary sector organisations and other statutory agencies further develop a partnership approach to developing and supporting community resilience.

## 6.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The role of Members is critical to the success of this strategy – in engaging communities and in acting as community advocates. For this reason, this strategy has been circulated in draft form to all Members for comment prior to being considered at General Purposes Committee. The role of Members is further outlined on pages 11-12 of the strategy.
- A number of councillors have volunteered to become early adopters of this work, piloting this new and critical way of working. They have formed a “Councillors as Community Connectors” group, meeting as an action learning set, and the learning from their experience will inform our direction going forward. Councillors are invited to express an interest in joining cohort two of this programme, which will begin in January 2016.

## 6.6 Public Health Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- There is evidence that community resilience and engagement can have a positive effect on the health of Cambridgeshire residents, by supporting the adoption of a healthy lifestyle as a community norm and improving engagement in health improving initiatives. Targeting efforts where people have greater health needs will have the most impact. This would include focusing on more deprived areas, on those who are isolated and do not access services, or those where increased self-care or community support is required would have a larger impact on health.
- Building community resilience will impact on many of the needs identified in different Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs), including the following:
  - Migrant communities
  - Long Term Conditions
  - New Communities
  - Homelessness and at risk of homelessness
  - Vulnerable children and adults
  - Autism, personality disorders and Dual Diagnosis
  - Carers
  - Older People’s Mental Health

Source Documents	Location
<i>Stronger Together – Cambridgeshire County Council's strategy for building resilient communities</i>	<a href="http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20076/children_and_families_practitioners_and_providers_information/370/providing_children_and_families_services/5">http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20076/children_and_families_practitioners_and_providers_information/370/providing_children_and_families_services/5</a>
<i>In giving, how much do we receive? The social value of volunteering.</i> Andrew G Haldane, Chief Economist, Bank of England	<a href="http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Pages/speeches/default.aspx">www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Pages/speeches/default.aspx</a>
<i>NICE Guidelines PH 9 Community Engagement</i>	<a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph9/chapter/Appendix-C-the-evidence#evidence-statements">https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph9/chapter/Appendix-C-the-evidence#evidence-statements</a>
<i>JSNAs</i>	<a href="http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/jsna">http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/jsna</a>