

LOCAL COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017-2022

To: **Communities and Partnership Committee**

Meeting Date: **26 October 2017**

From: **Councillor Steve Criswell: Chairman Communities and Partnership Committee**

Elaine Matthews: Strengthening Communities Manager

Electoral division(s): **All excluding Cambridge City**

Forward Plan ref: **For key decisions**
Key decision: No

Purpose: **To consider the draft 5 year Local Council Development Plan, which has been developed in partnership with Parish Councils, District Councils and Support Organisations.**

Recommendation: **Communities and Partnership Committee is asked:**

a) To consider the draft Local Council Development Plan as part of the consultation.

b) To consider any key actions the Committee would like to commit to as part of the Development Plan

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Meaningful and successful working with Parish Councils is an essential element of the County Council's future. Parishes hold some of the closest relationships with the communities that we need – and are banking on – to help people stay independent and healthy for longer.
- 1.2 As a Council, it has been recognised that our relationship with the 211 Town and Parish Councils in Cambridgeshire can be patchy and needs to be strengthened. There is also an unquestionable need to strengthen support, engagement and collaboration between Local Authorities and support organisations to support Town and Parish Council ambitions for their communities.

2. LOCAL COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017-2022

- 2.1 Over the last year, the Council has worked alongside Parish Councils, District Councils and support organisations such as Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Council Association (CAPALC) and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC), co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) as part of the Support Cambridgeshire contract. This Stakeholder Group has surveyed Parish Councillors and Clerks (full results can be found at <http://www.cambsparishes.wordpress.com>). The results have been used as the basis for the Local Council Development Plan 2017-2022. (see separate appendix currently titled to the year 2017-2021)
- 2.2 Town and Parish Councils are also known as local councils as they can include city, neighbourhood or community councils, and this term has been agreed with the Stakeholder Group.
- 2.3 The development plan is the first plan of its kind in Cambridgeshire that sets out our collective aspirations for Cambridgeshire's Local Council Sector. It will also help deliver the aspirations of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the National Improvement Strategy for Parish and Town Councils (2017 – 2022) by providing a focus for the support for all Cambridgeshire Local Councils, drawing upon the national expertise, training and programmes offered through NALC, the Society of Local Council Clerks and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
- 2.4 The surveys of Parish Councillors and Clerks and will be repeated every two years to measure improvement and change and to allow us to evaluate the impact and success of our overall collaborative approach. A 'How will we know we have been successful?' element of the improvement plan has set out social impact measurements across all areas of improvement agreed by partners.
- 2.5 Increased engagement with the sector will help with the development of better datasets that will provide a more in-depth understanding of successes and the targeting of advice and support. A measure of success will be the increased reach of all Local Councils and their ability to be proactive and to engage with those not currently engaging in the support available. Other measures of success include the monitoring of the use of powers given under the Localism Act 2012 such as Neighbourhood Planning, Community Rights and devolved services.

2.6 The development plan will be resourced through:

- A part-time Development Officer, employed by Cambridgeshire ACRE, who facilitates the Stakeholder Partnership funded by Cambridgeshire County Council through Support Cambridgeshire.
- Cambridgeshire ACRE membership fees and a Defra grant to improve and sustain rural services through Rural Community Council with funding until August 2019 in the first instance.
- Aligning resources already available and increasing their effectiveness by working in partnership. For example, a comprehensive training programme for Councillors and Clerks is already established and delivered by CAPALC; District Councils often hold training and networking meetings; SLCC supports Clerks through training and mentoring; and Cambridgeshire ACRE has connected community-based programmes and runs a neighbourhood planning service. Many other locally and nationally based voluntary organisations offer useful practical advice across a range of specialisms that support community well-being. By aligning these existing resources the aim is to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency in Local Council support as well as to provide clarity as to what provision is available and how it can be accessed.

The development plan will also include new untested work which is currently not funded. Partners will work together to seek further funding to support this and to increase the overall support available.

- 2.7 A new website (<http://www.cambsparishes.wordpress.com>) has been launched to improve access to information, resources and a joint calendar for events and training. Social media (Twitter @cambsparishes and Facebook) will be used to drive forward a better networked online community of Local Councils.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The development plan is currently out for consultation with Local Councils until 8th November and will be launched at the countywide conference at Burgess Hall on 17th November 2017.
- 3.2 The consultation results so far show that 73% agree or strongly agree that the Plan will help the local council sector develop positively over the next 5 years. Comments include 'I think this is an enormous and very welcome step forward for Cambridgeshire', 'Excellent starting point and a base to work from, hopefully all partners will pull their weight and proactively work towards delivery' and 'This is a well-considered piece of work that will undoubtedly facilitate positive change for those who are open to change. It will go a long way towards addressing the concerns of the 20-25% of councillors who responded to the initial survey.'

4. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

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

- A number of Local Councils already have links with local businesses and support schemes that help people develop their skills. This work will support those Local Councils who are keen to do the same.

4.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The following sets out implications identified by officers:

- A number of Local Councils already deliver work that supports people to lead healthy and independent lives. This work will support those Local Councils who are keen to do the same.

4.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

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

- A number of Local Councils already deliver work that supports and protects vulnerable people. This work will support those Local Councils who are keen to do the same.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

The resource implications are set out in 2.65. County Council resources for this work are already identified in the Council's budget for 2017/18.

5.2 Procurement implications

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

- Support Cambridgeshire's grant agreement was subject to a full tendering process in 2016 in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

5.3 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

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

- There is 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.

5.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

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

- Evidence indicates that some services delivered within local communities can be more successful than statutory services at reaching people who may need support. Building capacity within local communities to help people help each other should therefore support more equal and diverse accessible provision locally;
- Some of our services will become increasingly more localised, so that we can meet local and individual need within each specific community context;
- This work will help to address issues of rural isolation.

5.5 Engagement and Consultation Implications

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

- Successful delivery of all aspects of the development plan will only be possible with significant engagement with our partners and with County Council staff. The plan is currently out to consultation as set out in 3.1.

5.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

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

- The work set out in the development plan will help empower Local Councils to harness the energy of local communities. The role of Members is crucial to help build relationships with Local Councils.

5.7 Public Health Implications

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

- A number of Local Councils already deliver work that supports the adoption of a healthy lifestyle and builds engagement in health improving initiatives. This work will support those Local Councils who are keen to do the same.

A copy of the full plan is included as a separate Appendix to this report. (Local Council Development Plan 2017-2021 - Draft For Consultation – September 2017) The finalised Plan following the consultation will have the revised date to 2022)

For information, the agreed partnership actions start on page 12 of the attached plan. Those actions where Cambridgeshire County Council is the lead partner are shown on page 20 and of particular interest to this Committee include the action:

Support County Councillors to connect with local councils through the Councillors as Community Connectors programme. (Lead: CCC)

For those wishing to view online, the link to the plan is as follows:

https://cambsparishes.files.wordpress.com/2017/09/local_council_development_plan_consultation2.pdf

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Tom Kelly
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Paul White
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Lynne Owen

Law?	
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Matthew Hall
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Val Thomas

Source Documents	Location
Town and Parish Council Survey Results Report 2017	http://www.cambsparishes.wordpress.com
The National Improvement Strategy for Parish and Town Councils (2017 – 2022)	http://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/2192-draft-improvement-strategy-consultation-october-16/file