

## **COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** Thursday 21st November 2019

**Time:** 10:00am – 11:10am

**Venue:** Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge

**Present:** Councillors S Criswell (Chairman), M Goldsack (Vice-Chairman), B Ashwood, A Costello, L Every, C Richards, A Taylor and S Taylor

**Apologies:** Councillor J French

### **208. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Committee was advised of the appointment of Councillor Mark Goldsack as Vice-Chairman of the Committee by Council on 15th October 2019.

### **209. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies were received from Councillor J French.

No declarations of interest were made.

### **210. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH OCTOBER 2019**

While presenting the Committee's Action Log, the Service Director of Community Safety informed Members that further updates had been received since the agenda had been published, which were read out to the Committee and will be included in the Action Log in the agenda for the Committee meeting on 17th December 2019.

Attention was drawn to the Members Seminar scheduled for 13th March 2020, which would include presentations on the work carried out by Support Cambridgeshire and Cambridgeshire Insight.

The Committee was informed that a number of local authorities across the country provided mortuary facilities in their area and that consideration was being given as to how such a scheme might work in Cambridgeshire, with the conclusions to be included in the next Committee report on the Coroners Service.

While acknowledging the ongoing interaction between the Council and trade unions regarding Cambs 2020, one Councillor queried whether feedback from the trade unions was being acted on and whether they were able to feed into the decision-making process. A further update was therefore requested to demonstrate how such feedback was being acted on. **Action required**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10th October 2019 as a correct record; and
- b) Note the Minutes Action Log.

## **211. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No petitions or public questions were received.

## **212. SUPPORT CAMBRIDGESHIRE: LOCAL COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee received a report on the progress that had been made since the launch of the Local Council Development Plan in 2017. Attention was drawn to the increased uptake of training and attendance at training sessions by local councillors and clerks, as well as the continued publication of Cambridgeshire Matters. It was noted that there had been an increased usage of social media by smaller councils to make announcements and engage with residents, while councils had reported having greater awareness of the opportunities available to them across the County.

The fourth Cambridgeshire Local Councils Annual Conference had been held on 8th November 2019 and was attended by over 220 local councillors and clerks, representing a total of 65% of town and parish councils, with an 83% satisfaction rate being awarded to the event. Further workshops were arranged based on the requests that emerged from the 2019 survey of Clerks and Local Councillors, including on climate change issues and Think Communities. In the year ahead there would be increased efforts to involve the remaining 35% of the 250 local councils in order to encourage their engagement and develop the opportunity to share experience and knowledge amongst councils and an event would be planned to strengthen the working relationship between local councillors and clerks.

While discussing the progress of the Development Plan and the next steps laid out in the report, Members:

- Expressed support for further efforts to engage with the smaller parish councils that had so far not been involved, noting that no authority was too small to contribute and that communities that were not represented were being held back as a result.
- Acknowledged that the annual conference had expanded in size and scope since the first one in 2016.
- Recognised the importance of the role of clerks in local councils and their relationship with elected councillors. It was suggested that efforts to attract their interest should be proactive, rather than simply waiting for them to develop an interest. The Committee was informed that there was a high turnover rate of clerks in Cambridgeshire, with the role having changed substantially over recent years and Members agreed that it was important for the clerks to be aware of the requirements of their role from the start but also for them to receive continuous training.

- Acknowledged the high percentage of councillors who expressed willingness to attend training and considered whether training and development sessions could be held at different times and on different days of the week in order to permit attendance by a wider range of people. One Member noted that County Council Member Seminars were always held on Fridays and asked whether these could alternate with other days and times, so that Councillors who were required to work on that day of the week were still able to attend and take advantage of the sessions.

**Action required**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Consider progress made in year two of the five year 'Support Cambridgeshire' Local Council Development Plan; and
- b) Consider the next phase of delivery for the Development Plan.

## **213. SUPPORT CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee received a report on the achievements of Support Cambridgeshire over the previous year, which also included the priorities established for the following year. The Chief Executive Officer of Hunts Forum and Support Cambridgeshire drew attention to the five strands in section 1.3 of the report, which represented the main focus of work. She informed Members that Support Cambridgeshire encouraged greater involvement of businesses with the public and voluntary sectors. Having arranged workshops to bring the different sectors together, she noted that progress had been made, with businesses providing increased support, space, funding and advice to the voluntary sector. It was noted that advice on how to successfully obtain funding was one of the main areas of assistance requested by organisations, while extensive discussions were held with statutory partners on issues such as commissioning. Referring to the priorities detailed in section 2.4 of the report, the Committee was informed that they had been developed based on the feedback from the State of the Sector Survey and the County Council's priorities. It was noted that such an approach was strongly aligned to the Think Communities strategy.

Members were asked to amend the terms of an extension to the current Support Cambridgeshire contract as originally agreed at the Committee meeting on 10th October 2019, with the extension running from 31st August 2020 to 1st April 2021 instead of 31st July 2020 to 1st March 2021. It was noted that, if agreed, the value of the extension would subsequently be reduced from £84,060 to £73,560.

While discussing the report, Members expressed support for increasing the engagement of businesses with the public and voluntary sector. It was suggested that businesses could be encouraged to provide staff with time and the opportunity for voluntary work. It was acknowledged that such policies were not mandatory for businesses and therefore it was important to work with any arrangements that were established, noting that the main source of support sought was for skills as opposed to funding.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note and approve the suggested amendments shown at 1.6 to the Recommissioning of Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Support Services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough paper, presented to Communities and Partnership Committee on 10 October 2019;
- b) Note key achievements as summarised in paragraph 2.1. and detailed in Support Cambridgeshire's Annual Report (September 2018-August 2019); and
- c) Endorse the Council's priorities for Support Cambridgeshire to further strengthen the Voluntary and Community Sector for the coming year.

## **214. COMMUNITY SAFETY PROPOSAL – COMMUNITY EYES AND EARS INITIATIVE**

The Committee received a report on the proposal to adopt the 'Community Eyes and Ears' initiative as the model to develop community resilience across the County. It was suggested that the project, which had been designed and implemented by East Cambridgeshire District Council, aligned closely to the Think Communities approach because it empowered the community to respond to multiple issues. Many of these issues were in the remit of the Committee, such as hate crime, domestic abuse, scams and modern slavery, while some were in other public service areas, such as dementia and fire risk. Members were informed that kickstarter funding had been provided by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for two years and training support had been established for residents and Councillors, alongside work with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

While considering the proposed model, Members discussed the success of the scheme as implemented by East Cambridgeshire District Council, noting the increased networking and strengthening of relationships between residents and councillors.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Adopt the 'Community Eyes and Ears' initiative as the model for community safety resilience across the County.

## **215. FINANCE AND MONITORING REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2019**

The Committee received the September 2019 Finance Monitoring report for the People and Communities directorate, which did not include any significant changes to areas under the Communities and Partnership Committee. Members were informed that the forecast pressure on the Coroners Service, as well as the forecast over-recovery of income in the Registration Service, had led to reviews being carried out on both services in order to reduce or remove the pressures. The Committee would receive reports on the reviews at its meeting on 13th February 2020.

While discussing the report, Members expressed concern about staff vacancies in the Registration and Citizenship Service and sought clarification over the cause of the vacancies. The Service Director of Community and Safety acknowledged the concerns and informed Members that the review would collect and provide information on the vacancies. It was noted that the service had not been significantly impacted as a result

of the staff turnover, due to the supply of relief staff who were able to provide assistance.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Review and comment on the report.

## **216. COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS ORAL UPDATES**

The Committee noted brief oral updates provided by the following Councillors:

- Councillor Every, who reported that East Cambs Youth Strategy had secured some funding. Noting that previous and future decisions made by the Council to take children into its care made each Councillor a corporate parent, she encouraged Community Champions to be aware of the children in such a situation in their area. All Members were being asked to contribute business contacts to try and encourage their involvement, in order to work towards the Council's goal to provide a business mentor to each of the 350 over-18's.

She also noted that there had been significant help with fostering recruitment which had led to a fostering association being set up by fostering carers and workers, and Members were asked to signpost foster carers in their area to the association, although it was noted they would need to attend meetings that involved foster parents in order to establish contact with them. A written update was also provided and is included as **Appendix 1** to these minutes.

- Councillor Richards, who drew attention to efforts to expand the provision of free sanitary protection to libraries and other community buildings across the County, noting that the University of Cambridge was joining the scheme. She also informed Members that joint work with Cambridge City councillors on the issue of housing and homelessness had continued. She suggested that the Council should be able to expand council tax exemptions and requested to be involved in work on the area.
- Councillor Costello, who drew attention to the launching of 'Essentials by Sue' in Sawtry. She informed Members that St Neots remained the only place left in the district without one and that efforts would begin in 2021 to develop one. A written update was also provided and is included as **Appendix 2** to these minutes.

## **217. COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE – AGENDA PLAN**

While acknowledging the submission of reports on the reviews of the Coroners Service and Registration Service meant that the reserve meeting on 13th February 2020 would now be used for a Committee meeting, along with the rescheduling of a number of reports to later Committee dates, the Committee noted its Agenda Plan.

Chairman  
17th December 2019

**Community Champion of Community Activity update**

<b>Community Champion:</b>	Councillor Lis Every (East Cambridgeshire)
<b>Date:</b>	21st November 2019

**NEW CONTACTS, PROJECTS AND PRIORITIES**

- Local provision for Adult Skills in East Cambs moving forward. Now a member of the Combined Authority on their Skills Committee.
- Working on funding opportunities - meeting with CCF.
- East Cambs Youth Strategy working on introduction of the YAB
- Better communications through a bi-monthly newsletter – supporting awareness of the Think communities approach
- Working on the development of the POW and related services

**UPDATES**

- Strategic plan for Littleport on social prescribing moving forward. Now seeking matched funding to support a co-ordinator. Recruitment process in place. Seminar/exhibition being planned for autumn.
- Planning continues on turning Littleport into a Dementia town and working with stakeholders on how this can be achieved.
- Liaising on funding issues for the Soham Man Shed project.
- Supporting a group of young people in Ely and area on building a skate park, working on feasibility studies, sites etc.
- Planning for the pilot for a Local offer plan for our care leavers in Cambridge City well in hand. Obtaining 10 business mentors for the initial group of 10 students. Working with Cambridge Regional College.
- Part of the multi-agency Mental Health Task Group for children in care researching the level of support provided by local universities.
- Working on widening Eyes and Ears project
- Identifying business mentoring for post-16 students and post-18 students leaving care.
- Discussions with VCAEC to extend car share scheme and attract volunteers outside Ely. Completely revamping provision and marketing strategy. Funding being sought.
- Continuing to work with City College, Peterborough to grow numbers on their Health and Social Care courses in East Cambridgeshire

**COMMUNITY GOOD PRACTICE**

- Initial research has been undertaken to identify the organisations in existence, what they currently offer; how these services could overlap and determining a network strategy;
- Working with parish and district councillors to create capacity and information base supporting their work in their Parishes/Wards as required;
- Building network of community providers and champions across the District.
- Improve communication with County, District and Parish Councillors, particularly embracing social media.

**Community Champion of Community Activity update**

<b>Community Champion:</b>	Councillor Adela Costello (Huntingdonshire)
<b>Date:</b>	21st November 2019

**UPDATES**

- Meeting held with Principle of Sawtry Village College to discuss Essentials by Sue. This was launched at Sawtry on 5<sup>th</sup> November with the support of the library, Caresco, the Food Bank and school. It is now planned to move the project to St. Neots at the beginning of next year. A meeting has been held with a local councillor to discuss possibilities.
- Monthly article in the local newspaper highlighting the work of the council plus the continued need to recruit foster carers and re-ablement workers.
- A consultation took place in Ramsey to consider the Combined Authority Travel Plan which was extremely well attended by local residents who expressed their concern at the lack of public transport for the area.

**NEW CONTACTS, PROJECTS AND PRIORITIES**

- Ramsey Town Councillors attended training in order to promote a Dementia Friendly Community. A meeting was held at the Library with the locality Manager as to how libraries could become more aware of the needs of not only people with dementia, but also learning difficulties and mental health issues. Discussions involved the introduction of a quiet hour one day a week. It is also proposed to initiate a training session for local business owners.
- A meeting was held with a Councillor from St. Neots who is keen to establish the town as a Dementia Friendly Community. The Town Council is very interested in the proposal and training will be arranged for the New Year. An approach in Huntingdon will also be considered then.
- A meeting was held with an Officer and staff from Switch Now who are applying to the Innovate and Cultivate Fund to develop another site in St. Ives for the training and work placement for adults with learning disabilities. The present location in Eaton Socon is quite a distance to travel for residents of the north of the county and St. Ives would be a more central location attracting people from Fenland and East Cambs as well as Huntingdonshire.

**COMMUNITY GOOD PRACTICE**

- Joint working between Officers and Members of HDC and CCC including Library Staff and local community groups in establishing 'Essentials by Sue' and promoting Dementia Friendly Communities.
- Supporting Time Bank co-ordinators in identifying new projects which will benefit local people such as gritting pavements in the winter months.
- Arranging meetings with local parish/town councillors and clerks to discuss issues in their areas. A joint meeting of several parishes successfully took place in October. The main topic for conversation was increasing housing development with a lack of infrastructure plus little affordable housing available for young people. Concern was also expressed at the lack of available public transport in particular as many of the villages were growing in size.