

**SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS**

Service Specification No.	
Service	<b>Engaging and Strengthening Communities in Fenland Programme</b>
Authority Lead	
Provider Lead	
Period	
Date of Review	

**1. Population Needs****1.1 National/local context and evidence base**

There is an increasing focus on strengthening or engaging communities enabling them to identify and address their needs. The focus is upon building strong resilient communities that take ownership of their communities and its challenges. Cambridgeshire County Council is committed to strengthening and building resilience in communities throughout the Council

It is difficult to identify a single definition of strengthening communities with the concept being found embedded into theoretical models such as community development, community resilience, community engagement and social capital.

In recent years there have been different policy initiatives that reflect the concept of strengthening communities. The Wanless Report in 2004 focused on people being responsible for their own health stating that

“Individuals are ultimately responsible for their own and their children’s health and it is the aggregate actions of individuals, which will ultimately be responsible for whether or not such an optimistic scenario as “fully engaged” unfolds.”

A fully engaged scenario being when individuals take on full responsibility for making decisions about their health. The Report however emphasised that for communities to make these decisions they needed support and information.

The White Paper *Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England (2010)* set out the vision for public health in England. It reflected the issues identified in the work of Professor Michael Marmot. His Fair Society, Healthy Lives report with adoption of life course approach for tackling the wider determinants of health with the aim of building people’s self-esteem, confidence and resilience right from infancy for early years.

More recently in Cambridgeshire there has been a focus on developing community resilience that uses an assets base approach to strengthening communities which is based on the principles of:

- Appreciating and mobilising individual and community talents, skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs)
- Community-driven development rather than development driven by external agencies

It builds on:

- *Appreciative inquiry* which identifies and analyses the community's past successes. This strengthens people's confidence in their own capacities and inspires them to take action
- The recognition of *social capital* and its importance as an asset focusing on the power of associations and informal linkages within the community, and the relationships built over time between community associations and external institutions
- *Participatory approaches to development*, which are based on principles of empowerment and ownership of the development process
- *Community economic development* models that place priority on collaborative efforts for economic development that makes best use of its own resource base
- Efforts to strengthen *civil society*. These efforts have focused on how to engage people as citizens (rather than clients) in development, and how to make local governance more effective and responsive.

The key themes and principles of these approaches are embedded in the service specifications

## 2. Key Service Measureable Deliverables

### 2.1 Outcomes

This Programme is required to support the achievement of the following outcomes

- Strong and resilient communities in Fenland that are fully engaged in identifying their needs and taking decisions to identify and address their needs
- Improvements in the Health and Wellbeing of communities in Fenland

### 2.2 Service Deliverables

#### Aim of the Programme

- To support communities to increase their resilience and be fully engaged with identifying and addressing their needs. This includes supporting agencies to use an assets based approach when working with communities

### 2.3 Objectives

- To administer the Healthy Fenland Fund which aims to support improvements in health and wellbeing through the use of a community assets approach to strengthen communities and build their resilience. The Fund has been established for communities in Fenland to access small grants to develop local projects and interventions to address their needs. This funding may be used to strengthen the community by supporting the “building blocks” or for a specific project that addresses a community issue. Over the course of the Programme there will be an annual fund for

allocating grants to communities. The criteria will be agreed with the commissioner.

- To enable communities to become stronger and more resilient by providing community workers to build community capacity through identifying “enablers” and supporting them to work with their communities to enable them to realise their assets and manage their own needs. Enablers are community members who identify and use their community strengths, physical and social assets and make connections in their communities to develop resilience and strengthen their communities.
- Support the identified community enablers to work with their communities to access funding from the Healthy Fenland Fund.
- Identify and pursue additional funding opportunities to augment the size of the fund available to communities.
- Provide an easy access and single point of contact for communities with online and digital information to ensure that resources can be used to best effect and connecting with all relevant community groups and organisations.
- Work with partners for robust and effective collaboration for supporting communities. This will be at a strategic and operational level.
- The service needs to be proactive, identifying and anticipating changes and supporting the communities to meet changing circumstances, providing insight and intelligence to inform community decisions and action

### 3. Scope

#### **Deliverables**

This Programme will cover the Fenland District Council area and address the needs of its residents

It has three main elements

- Co-ordination which includes, in addition overseeing the Programme, working with local organisations and partners to identify and secure their support for any community initiatives
- Administration of the Fund through a robust process that is fair and transparent
- Provision of community workers, who will increase community capacity through developing local community enablers to work with their communities and access the resources of the Healthy Fenland Fund.

#### **Length of Programme**

The Programme is anticipated to run for 5 years but the initial contract will be for 3 years with a possible extension of plus 1 and plus 1.

#### **Value of Contract**

The annual contract value for the administration of the contract and community enablers is £90,000

The annual value of the grants will total £75,000. Please note the grants are for community groups and high value bids are not anticipated.

#### 4. Applicable Service Standards

The following are the principles that the Programme will adhere and be reflected in its delivery.

- The Programme will focus on the strengths that exist in community often termed social capital or assets. A focus on the assessment of needs and deficiencies of individuals, neighbourhoods, towns, villages, schools etc. should be avoided.
- Community assets and individual strengths are key building blocks in ensuring that communities are strong and people have a life of their own choosing. The building blocks need to be supported to build capacity within local communities so that they can be strong, manage their own needs and support each other;
- The Asset Based Community Development model identifies the following building blocks as being key to strengthening communities
  1. the skills of local residents
  2. the power of local associations
  3. the resources of public, private and non-profit institutions
  4. the physical and social environment maybe
  5. economic resources of local places.
  6. the shared stories, culture and heritage of communities
- All engagement activities to strengthen communities should reflect their values and principles.
- Communities to identify their own needs

## 5. Key Performance Indicators

<b>Building the Communities</b>	<b>Monitoring schedule</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Staff in post and project established within 3 months of contract award	Progress to be demonstrated at 2 months into the Programme	
Number of community connectors recruited through the project	Monthly reporting	
Number of communities with local enablers	Monthly reporting	
Number of communities with <u>enablers</u> that apply for funding from the Healthy Fenland Fund	Monthly reporting	
<b>Healthy Fenland Fund</b>		
The number of funding enquires or requests for funding	Monthly reporting	
The number of funding requests/projects assessed against the criteria	Monthly reporting	
The number of projects funded (to include a description of what was funded and the value)	Monthly reporting	
The number of communities that have received funding. A definition of community will be agreed with the commissioner)	Monthly reporting	
Number of projects funded by type. The criteria for funding as indicated above will be agreed with the commissioner.	Monthly reporting	
Number of projects that provide feedback on their projects NB It is not anticipated that communities will undertake a formal evaluation but feedback should be provided on the outputs of the grant funding	Quarterly	
<b>Monitoring Outputs and Outcomes</b>	These will be developed with academic support.	