

**COMMUNITY RESILIENCE STRATEGY**

To: Health and Wellbeing Board

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**1.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this paper is to present Cambridgeshire County Council's (CCC) Community Resilience Strategy with objectives of:

- considering whether there are principles to explore in developing a joint approach to building resilient communities; and
- where there might be opportunities to develop joint activity.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Community Resilience Strategy is set within the wider context of change in the approach to business planning across the County Council. This moves the Council from an incremental year on year approach to business planning, focused on specific services, to a longer term outcome-led approach to planning for the whole council. As pressure on resources continues across the public sector the challenge of providing effective public services in the midst of increasing demand and growing customer expectations requires new approaches and new thinking.

2.2 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. The resilient community – whether it is defined by a shared neighbourhood (a 'community of place'), family ties, or even just a common hobby (a 'community of interest') – is therefore a key asset for investing in and protecting.

**3.0 SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS**

3.1 The Council's General Purposes Committee recently agreed a Community Resilience Strategy for Cambridgeshire. This is intended to articulate and drive the way we work with local communities, proposing 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.

- 3.2 *Stronger Together – our strategy for building resilient communities* represents the culmination of work that has been happening across the Council on the back of two immediate imperatives:
- Diminishing public sector resources; and
  - the 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.

The full strategy can be accessed at

<http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CommitteeMinutes/Committees/AgendaItem.aspx?agendaItemID=12223>, and a summary is attached at Appendix A.

- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 It is clear that the County Council can't do this alone. Joining up with Partners in local areas to build local initiatives will bring far more benefits to communities, and coherent efforts across Partners will make far more sense to local people.
- 3.6 The County Council also recognises that we need to work with our Partners to develop a joint approach to building community resilience, so this strategy is intended to pave the way for these cross-Partner discussions. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to consider whether are there principles we'd want to explore in developing a joint approach, and where there might be opportunities to develop our activity together.

#### **4.0 ALIGNMENT WITH THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

- 4.1 The Strategy aligns with the with the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy

**Priority 3: Encourage healthy lifestyles and behaviours in all actions and activities while respecting people's personal choices**

- 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.

## **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

- 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.

### **5.2 Resource Implications**

- 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).

### **5.3 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**

- The strategy is designed to mitigate the impact of reductions in local government funding, and as such should help to guard against the risks identified in its corporate risk register around failure to deliver the 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.

### **5.4 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 successful at reaching people who do not access Council or statutory services but who may need support.

### **5.5 Engagement and Consultation Implications**

- Delivery of this strategy cannot be undertaken unless there is collaboration with agencies across the system. Successful delivery will hinge upon the relationships 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.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATION/DECISION REQUIRED

- 6.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to consider the Community Resilience Strategy and its implications for its work and the delivery of the Health and Well Being Strategy

Source Documents	Location
<i>Stronger Together – Cambridgeshire County Council's strategy for building resilient communities</i>	Box OCT 1210 Shire Hall Cambridge  <a href="http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CommitteeMinutes/Committees/AgendaItem.aspx?agendaItemID=12223">http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CommitteeMinutes/Committees/AgendaItem.aspx?agendaItemID=12223</a>

## APPENDIX A

# ***Stronger Together*** - Cambridgeshire County Council's Strategy for Building Resilient Communities

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.

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. The resilient community – whether it is defined by a shared neighbourhood (a 'community of place'), family ties, or even just a common hobby (a 'community of interest') – is therefore a key asset for us to invest in and protect.

*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, building on the strengths within individuals and communities rather than always being the provider of services.

Our vision is that Cambridgeshire will be a place where people are part of well-networked communities, and where they get the right help to play an active role within their neighbourhoods

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**

The Council will initiate an honest conversation with the public about the reality of future public service provision and the role of the local community in the future. Within this conversation, we need to work with the community to find out what they might be able to do without our help, and how we can work better alongside local people, local groups and local community assets.

We will improve the way we gather local communication, knowledge and information so that information on very local activities and support are accessible in very local areas, for example, through community hubs.

### **People helping people**

Small, locally-driven groups are often better at meeting the needs of their own communities, and are able to lever other sources of support and funding to add value to their offer. Equally, community leaders exist

in all communities, and where these leaders have plans to build community action and community support, we will help them to do so.

We will provide information and advice to help local people to establish local activity, for example, through developing an online toolkit giving advice on sources of funding, support and training that community groups can access, and through opening up our own buildings to local community groups so that they can work alongside us.

### **Council members**

Members facilitate the flow of information and intelligence between local communities and the Council, both in identifying the issues and opportunities within their divisions, and in providing the intelligence local communities need in order to get involved.

Elected Members will identify the needs, wants and assets in the communities they represent, both in terms of vulnerable people and in terms of agencies working in the local area. Members can then act as a conduit between community groups and public services to build real grassroots partnerships to meet the local identified need.

### **Our workforce**

We need to reposition our workforce across the whole of the Council so that practice is built on a strengths-based approach, building on the strengths of each individual and their networks and neighbourhoods, rather than a focus on deficits and needs. This will mean redefining roles and responsibilities both for frontline practitioners and for management roles.

We also know that community volunteers will need to be properly trained and supported in order to carry out their roles safely and effectively. We will therefore look to expand our workforce development opportunities to include our role in identifying, encouraging or supporting people we work with to give back to help others.

### **Community spaces**

We will network best within local communities in buildings which are already well used by local people. This may be a building currently run by the Council, e.g. a library or children's centre, but may equally be a community centre or village hall. We will support the development of a network of spaces, services and activities in an area around this central hub – providing the opportunity for local service providers and local people to work together through this network to identify and respond to local issues. This network will be key to recruiting, supporting and deploying volunteers within local areas, and will link vulnerable or isolated people into sources of community support.

### **Partnerships**

The relationship between local authorities, NHS, police and housing providers needs to be more flexible, with efforts made to break down the traditional delineation between services in order to make better use of our joint capacity, and to make more sense for local people. Statutory and voluntary sectors including

faith-based organisations need to create better forums for sharing insight and jointly building platforms for commissioning and delivering services.

There is also an opportunity for public agencies to think about the contribution that can be made by the private sector and the ways that businesses can work in partnership with local authorities, not just as service deliverers but also as corporate citizens.

Further information on each of these six areas of activity and what we hope to have achieved under each of these by 2020 can be found in the full strategy document, along with some case examples of what Community Resilience looks like in practice.