

## CUSPE Policy Challenge on the Effect of Council Decision Making on Community-Led Initiatives

To: Communities and Partnership Committee

Meeting Date: 3 December 2020

From: Director of Business Improvement and Development, Amanda Askham

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Outcome: The committee is being asked to consider the findings and recommendations resulting from the Cambridge University Science and Policy Exchange's (CUSPE) Policy Challenge research into the question on how Council decision making affects the ability of Cambridgeshire communities to develop initiatives that lessen the need for formal health and social care services. The intended outcome is a decision as to whether and to what extent the research report's recommendations will be agreed to and implemented within the relevant Council services.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note and comment on the findings of the research undertaken by CUSPE relevant to the effect of council decision making on community-led initiatives;
- b) Consider the recommendations made by CUSPE as set out in the full report at Appendix 1; and
- c) Task officers, in response to the discussion at Committee, to prepare a detailed strategy setting out the ways in which recommendations can be driven forward and delivered, either by the council or in collaboration with our partners, and in the spirit of Cambridgeshire Local

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### Member contacts:

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# 1. Background

- 1.1 In October 2016, Cambridgeshire County Council initiated an annual collaboration with the Cambridge University Science and Policy Exchange (CUSPE). The programme, known as the CUSPE Policy Challenges, brings teams of researchers from the University of Cambridge together alongside supporting members and officers to explore challenges the Council faces in the form of research questions.
- 1.2 In February 2020, the question of how growth affects community groups and community-led initiatives was formulated by Cllr Mark Goldsack and Amanda Askham and pitched to researchers at the programme's 2020 launch event at the University of Cambridge. In March 2020, the researchers who expressed high interest in this question were formed into a research team that began work in April 2020 with Cllr Goldsack's and Amanda Askham's support. The research report under consideration here is the outcome of the researchers' development of and response to this question.
- 1.3 At this time it was agreed that Communities and Partnership would be the most appropriate committee to consider the researchers' work and recommendations, given their focus on the Council's relationship to communities and community groups and the expectation that this would inform further development of the Council's Cambridgeshire Local approach.

# 2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The Cambridgeshire Local approach aims to transform the relationship between local government and communities, while the Council and its relevant partners continue their response to a situation in which prevention of ill health is a priority amidst a growing and ageing population with complex needs. The primary contention of this CUSPE research is that increased action supporting community-led initiatives is the most viable response the Council can make to this situation, in light of the evidence of the link between community-led initiatives and the health and wellbeing of the communities they serve.
- 2.2 The key findings of the research are that:
  - It is possible to empower communities to provide their own solutions to health and social care issues.
  - There are both social and financial benefits to supporting communities to improve population health and social care.
  - Community development has a greater impact on a community's health and wellbeing than the healthcare system itself does.
  - Population growth in Cambridgeshire is widely perceived by local community groups to be a positive opportunity for them to increase diversity and participation.
  - Inclusivity should receive greater focus in community development as socioeconomically deprived communities have less support, and individuals from minority groups within communities are underrepresented in community groups.
  - The Council can improve its support for community-led initiatives through further development and implementation of its Cambridgeshire Local approach, among other ways.
- 2.3 The research report begins with an introductory section (Section 1) that explains the

rationale for the focus on health; the current picture of growth, demographics, and health outcomes in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in comparison with the national picture; and the current Council policies and initiatives responding to these circumstances.

- 2.4 Section 2 details the methods used to acquire qualitative and quantitative data in the research: rapid literature reviews of the impact of growth on community-led initiatives and the impact of such initiatives on the health and wellbeing of their participants; a questionnaire for people running community-led initiatives in Cambridgeshire on these two topics as well as the effect of Council decision-making on their initiative; follow up telephone interviews with selected questionnaire respondents for more in-depth information.
- 2.5 Section 3 concerns the ability of community-led initiatives to lessen a population's need for formal health and social care services. It focuses on community engagement in healthcare commissioning; the effect of community development on health and wellbeing; the economic benefits of community development; and community response to COVID-19.
- 2.6 Section 4 concerns the effect of population growth on health, wellbeing, and community-led initiatives. It focuses on the 'New Town Blues' phenomenon in general and in Cambridgeshire in particular; how to avoid this phenomenon and related problems in new developments; and community groups' perception of the effects of growth in Cambridgeshire.
- 2.7 Section 5 concerns the risks of embracing localism in a manner that exacerbates some of the problems it is intended to solve. It focuses on the history and debates surrounding localism in the UK; the effect of Neighbourhood Plan processes on deprived communities; and the importance of engaging marginalised groups within communities and how to do so.
- 2.8 Section 6 concerns the effect of Council decision-making on community-led initiatives. It focuses on the broader picture suggested by questionnaire answers from community group workers on this topic and related issues, including a subsection on Council support in light of COVID-19.
- 2.9 Section 7 concludes the report by summarising the recommendations offered within the preceding sections (most of which are further detailed with recommended actions or sub-recommendations for implementation) and then places them within a theory of change logic model that can serve as a tool to evaluate their implementation.
- 2.10 The full report is attached at Appendix 1.

### 3. Alignment with corporate priorities

#### 3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

The report above sets out the implications for this priority in 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, and 2.7

#### 3.2 Thriving places for people to live

The report above sets out the implications for this priority in 2.2, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

There are no significant implications for this priority

## 4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The report above sets out details of significant implications in 2.2 and 2.7

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The report above sets out details of significant implications in 2.4 and 2.8

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The report above sets out details of significant implications in 2.2, 2.5, 2.7, and 2.8

4.7 Public Health Implications

The report above sets out details of significant implications in 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, and 2.6

**Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes**

Name of Financial Officer: Martin Wade

**Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement? Yes**

Name of Officer: Gus de Silva

**Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law? Yes**

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

**Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?**

Yes

Name of Officer: Amanda Askham

**Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes**

Name of Officer: Christine Birchall

**Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes**

Name of Officer: Amanda Askham

**Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health Yes**

Name of Officer: Val Thomas

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – CUSPE Report

6. Source documents

None