

Community Champion Activity updates

Community Champion:	Councillor Elisa Meschini
Place:	Cambridge City
Date:	August 2019 – July 2020

Collated Activity

Cllr Elisa Meschini: May to July 2020

The greatest part of my role has been carried out during the height of the covid pandemic; as a result, it is difficult to hypothesise what the role would have been like in “normal” times.

Most of my role during April (when I was waiting for the County AGM to confirm my place on the C&P committee) – July 2020 has consisted of staying in close liaison with the Executive Councillor for Communities on Cambridge City Council, keeping each other well informed of the progress with the community and food hubs, and feeding back to our respective officers. I was intending to perform a greater role with the City’s shielded lists for the duration of the scheme, although that was not to be.

Over the last couple of months, the greatest ongoing project with Cambridge City Council concerns the review of New Ways Of Working, focusing on the different ways in which the Council might work in future to deliver their priorities, and the links between these and some of the key service reviews and COVID recovery work currently underway. While these are being described as ‘New ways of working’, many are things the City Council already champions or is doing successfully. The review will focus more attention on those ways of working in order to drive better outcomes for our communities and to reshape the council over the medium to long term in order to deliver them. This is only just beginning, but it will occupy me for the foreseeable future.

Barriers to successful performance for me which I have identified over the last few months are as follows:

- I would have appreciated a greater remit to work with Adrian and the senior officers on the shielded scheme; I saw this as a possible overarching role for me to see how the participants in the shielded scheme were doing, and if any lessons were to be learned in the whole city. Unfortunately, there were two problems: data were only shared over a brief period of time, and even then only with division councillors, limiting my possible involvement.
- Despite the breadth of the role, agency and decision making power are very limited; this is something that is particularly the case when the political control for Cambridge City and the whole County is different. It was evident for me in 2017, when I was briefly in the role for the first year of its existence, that the City would like more involvement and better relationships with the County. This I suggest as a priority for my work in 2020/2021.

In terms of planned meetings, I retain excellent access to Cllr Anna Smith and City officers, and I plan to continue to have a close working relationship with them.

In terms of good practice, much has been and is being learned from community hubs and

mutual aid work which is informing our ways to help communities band together and provide support to each other as the pandemic progresses. As the work described above progresses, a framework for community good practice will become possible to embed.

Community Champion:	Councillor Lis Every
Place:	East Cambridgeshire
Date:	August 2019 – July 2020
Collated Activity	
<p>A good quality of life for everyone. Gain a deep understanding at a District/City level through discussion with officers and local members where appropriate, of key issues which impact on demand for County Council Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the continuing County research and data via the Community Safety Partnership (of which I am Chair), identify areas of concern and key action points for the Delivery Group on Domestic Violence, Hate Crime, County Lines and Transforming Lives programme, Scams, modern day slavery and have now added support for care leavers. We now meet 4 times a year with stronger links to the Problem Solving Group (which is now flourishing) and the Partnership Agency Delivery Group (being re-vamped). Outcome: A re-shaped and energised Community Safety Partnership more readily able to support community issues. A new engagement and training programme for all Parish Councils. Adoption of the Eyes and Ears Project across the County and a schools programme to recruit and train young Eyes and Ears Ambassadors. Outcome: a recognised approach to the support the Think Communities approach to identifying neighbourhood or individual issues and alerting/signposting to relevant and appropriate agencies/community groups. Working with partners on local pockets of anti-social behaviour, determining reasons for this and identifying how to prevent this in future. Outcome: looking at demographic changes and what this can create and consider ways of changing variables. Also looking at ways of changing behaviour, eg restorative justice, employability programmes and ways to support those with mental health issues. Full programme of training received. 	
<p>The best start for Cambridgeshire's Children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focussing on relevant issues for the District/City, report back to Committee and the Communities Network on areas of strength and areas for improvement which would strengthen impact on outcomes. Following representation to the District Council we are now developing the East Cambridgeshire Youth Strategy based on initial consultation. Outcome: Agreement with County Council for a Youth Advisory Board for the area with identified schools to be set up by the end of the year. Now working on recognition and funding for Youth leaders in Littleport, Soham and Ely which support the existing and emerging youth groups. Issue for prevention funding identified through the Innovation and Cultivate fund (which we as Champions support and serve on the Awards Body). Anticipated outcome will be more youth groups across the District. 	

- Sponsored bids for the County's Community Fund 4 of which were successful. **Outcome:** funding for community hubs/village premises to support Think Communities all with a youth focus. Development of relationship with those not successful to find funding for their individual plans (sport and leisure facilities identified as a key area for development)
- Supporting the feasibility of a splash pad and skate park for East Cambs identified through resident petitions to find locations and help with fund raising. **Outcome:** A Sports, Leisure and Outdoor facilities Working party working across Councils and other stakeholders has been formed to look at all aspects of this area which contributes to the well-being of our young people
- Working with the Corporate Parenting team to enhance life chances of our young people leaving care in the District through an employability programme and greater wrap around support. **Outcome:** knowing who our young people leaving care are and ensuring they have the support they need.

Thriving place for people to live

Engaging and working with communities and other elected representatives for relevant Divisions as needed across the District so people's voices are heard and self-sustaining communities are encouraged.

- Engaged as a member of the District Bus, Walking and Cycling Review working party prior to recommendations to the Greater Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Authority and member of the CPCA Bus Task Force. **Outcome:** a set of proposals to be submitted to CPCA based on consultation.
- As Chair of the Library Presents Board and working with Ely Museum and Cambridgeshire Music, encouraging joint working to promote the arts and heritage in the area through inclusivity programmes. **Outcome:** Greater level of engagement even during Covid with innovative programmes offered digitally.
- Just been appointed Armed Forces Veteran Champion at ECDC to ensure the appropriate housing offer outlined in the Covenant is working. **Outcome:** through collaboration an ensured pathway to housing for our veterans and their families.
- Throughout Covid, working with the ECDC Community Hub and local volunteer Mutual Aid organisations and a member of the Parish Forum. **Outcome:** local targeted support and now a programme for post-Covid (after lockdown) programme to retain the volunteers gained through lockdown and identify ways of working with them with a place based, bottom up strategy.
- Member of the ECDC Post-Covid Working Party. **Outcome:** a collaborative cross party approach to strategies on work streams based on the needs and concerns of our business community, understanding needs and concerns of Parish Councils and community groups; exploring transport initiatives to promote active modes of transport, encouraging the delivery of affordable and social housing, reviewing working practices including better broadband and working from home, and feeling safe (work of the CSP).
- Working with Adult Skills and Library Service and the Health and Social Care Academy to encourage uptake through networking and signposting. Member of the CPCA Committee on Skills. **Outcome:** increasing awareness of opportunities for those requiring courses to acquire Level 1 and 2 qualifications in Maths, English and Social Care. Creating a pathway for those on benefits to working and developing a career in the care sector
- Networking with business organisations including retail on business to business

support especially during and post Covid. **Outcome:** Signposting and aligning partner and community engagement to areas of support and advice and where possible, additional funding.

Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

- Supporting District and City activities and action plans through networking with local Eco-Groups and the business initiative to shop locally which will be launched soon (postponed because of Covid). **Outcome:** Encouraging more involvement and awareness as decisions are made

Sustainability of initiatives and activities

- Many of the projects identified in the 2017-2018 Annual Report are still on-going and there is regular involvement. **Outcome:** Working to ensure sustainability and embedding of structures through the involvement of the relevant stakeholders going forward. This will only succeed as a result of collaboration, facilitation, partnership alignment and community engagement, strengthening local partnerships and developing community assets. It is an on-going approach to embedding the Think Communities approach to achieve community sustainability and resilience. We must build on the successful approaches that communities have had to supporting their residents through these challenging times and grow, value and train our volunteers. They must be bottom up and not top down models.

Community Champion:	Councillor Adela Costello
Place:	Huntingdonshire
Date:	August 2019 – July 2020

Collated Activity

The project 'Essentials by Sue' was successfully launched in Sawtry in November. Caresco, the local library, youth club and school are all involved in receiving donations and delivering them with a confidential approach. This project is now available in the towns of Huntingdon, St. Ives, Ramsey, Yaxley and Farset. It was hoped to launch in St. Neots in March of this year after suitable locations had been arranged but had to be postponed due to the restrictions of lockdown. We will get there as soon as possible now that schools, libraries and some public buildings have re-opened. Discussions are now taking place to extend the project by including 'Winter Warmers', scarves, hats, gloves and blankets. The W.I. and some knitting/crocheting groups are interested in becoming involved.

Following a meeting with the Community Development Worker for Huntingdonshire in September last year, I was very keen to establish Dementia Friendly Communities throughout the District. Dementia is now the biggest killer of our senior citizens and all demographic evidence indicates a continuous rise in numbers of our elderly population. St. Ives has already areas/shops which are Dementia Friendly, for instance, Morrison's provide a quiet time slot on a Saturday morning. I arranged for Town Councillors and small businesses in Ramsey to receive dementia awareness training. I met with the Manager of the libraries in St. Ives, Ramsey and Warboys to promote the idea of a quiet time slot during opening hours which would not only benefit the elderly but people with

autism/learning disabilities or mental health difficulties. I also put forward the idea of dementia friendly clocks in our public building and this was well received by the Friends of Ramsey Library. In January St. Neots Town Councillors also took part in dementia awareness training but then everything came to a halt. Recently I have virtually joined a group in St. Neots called DAD standing for Dementia, Autism and Disability who are keen to establish a Dementia Friendly Community and make the town accessible to all.

I arrange local parish/town forums inviting Councillors and Clerks to attend. A very successful one took place in October 2019 with over 8 parishes being represented. One issue raised was planning and housing development so at the next meeting in January, a Planning Officer from HDC attended and members were able to express their concerns and receive advice. Another subject high on the agenda is local public transport. There is in place an ongoing review by the Mayor of the Combined Authority. Equally at a meeting I attended with the Speak Out Council, access to suitable transport including public and private was of concern to adults with learning disabilities, some of whom are high dependency wheelchair users requiring specialist vehicles to enable them to leave their homes and visit friends/shops/family. I am working with the Speak Out Council and others to try and address this problem.

I have supported various local organisations throughout the District with their applications to the Community Capital Fund. Only one of them proved successful and that was Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust in association with Ramsey Cricket Club who wanted to develop their building into a Community Hub for access to all local groups.

During the lockdown measures put in place at the end of March, I supported many local groups and organisations to access funding and resources, notably community halls and registered charities such as the local Gauntlet Project that teaches young people to maintain and ride bikes safely. I was also involved with Hamerton Zoo, which had different needs due to the care and feeding of the animals. Fortunately, the government stepped in with some funding. I also assisted in the formation of the Ramsey Covid-19 group who were providing supplies to those who were safeguarded. I forwarded all appropriate news items to my social media contacts so that the public had access to all necessary and vital information, including the continued need for foster carers. I also kept in contact with officers and members of HDC and CCC about my projects. I am pleased to be a member of the Improving Social Mobility Working Group as I continue to work with disadvantaged people.