

CABINET

17TH JANUARY 2023

**COUNCILLOR SUE CARTER
DEMOCRACY, STRATEGY & PARTNERSHIPS
PORTFOLIO HOLDER
REPORT NO ACE2301**

KEY DECISION: NO

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES REFRESH

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report proposes a refresh of the Supporting Communities Strategy (SCS) & Action Plan approved by the Council in January 2021. The plan is a collaborative approach to addressing the challenges facing local communities and is focused around four priority areas:

- Economic Hardship
- Young People – (Resilience and Aspirations)
- Physical and Mental Health
- Connecting Communities

The purpose of the refresh is to review progress and achievements and ensure the plan and its priorities are relevant.

The Supporting Communities Working group has agreed that the four priorities remain the most prevalent but recognise the need to include the rising cost of living as a key area to address. Furthermore, there will be an increased emphasis on health and wellbeing in recognition of the wider impact this has on supporting communities to be resilient and strong.

The Cabinet is recommended to:

Approve The Supporting Communities Strategy and Action Plan refresh for 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Report outlines the Council's proposals for the Supporting Communities Strategy and Action plan refresh – a strategy for tackling inequality and deprivation in the Borough.
- 1.2. The purpose of the refresh is to ensure that the plan is adaptable, and the priorities remain relevant, reflecting any changes in data or local context. The plan reflects the need to be agile and responsive to community needs

such as we have seen with the vaccination programme and work to support asylum seekers.

- 1.3. There is a clear desire from the Supporting Communities working group to continue to harness the energy created in the past two years, to respond to changing demand and challenges in the future.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Strategy and Action Plan was approved in January 2021. It is the Council's overarching strategic document to tackle inequalities and deprivation in the borough.
- 2.2. The Plan identified four priority areas: Economic Hardship, Young people (resilience and aspirations), Physical and Mental Health and Connecting Communities.
- 2.3. A range of opportunities and projects have been developed by the Council and partners in support of the four priorities. These projects range in size and many are delivered by partners. Further details on the projects and achievements so far can be viewed in the appendix.
- 2.4. The community and voluntary sector play a vital role in supporting or delivering some of the projects identified. The sector has demonstrated, through the Covid-19 pandemic especially, the ability to respond flexibly to provide longer term support to people in need.
- 2.5. The Council has good relationships with the sector and together we have delivered, or facilitated, some key projects from the Supporting Communities Plan. Discussions are in place to strengthen continued collaborative working through new service level agreements but this is sensitive given the review of grants taking place.
- 2.6. The Covid-19 pandemic, while having a significant impact on individuals and the community and voluntary sector, also highlighted the strengths that exist within communities, and the value of enabling people to quickly come together to respond to local need. A strong, resilient, and resourceful community and voluntary sector is critical to ensuring our communities are well placed to respond to any challenges ahead.
- 2.7. The pandemic also highlighted the need to continue close collaboration with the health sector, who increasingly recognise the role the Council and our communities play to improve health and well-being and reduce health inequalities.
- 2.8. Until recently, Frimley Integrated Care System has been working to bring NHS, social care, local authority and other sectors together to work more closely with each other for the benefit of the communities they serve. For Rushmoor, this has meant working as part of North East Hampshire & Farnham CCG.

- 2.9. Since the approval of the SCS in 2021, the Health and Care Act has been passed. The Act made Integrated Care Systems statutory organisations, further empowering them to better join up health, to improve population health and reduce inequalities. This has led to the creation of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) who has inherited all of the statutory duties and functions previously discharged by NHS Frimley CCG, and the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP). The ICB will have a critical role to facilitate joint action to improve health and care outcomes and influence the wider determinants of health.
- 2.10. The Frimley System will continue to work across the five geographies, and Rushmoor remains part of North East Hampshire & Farnham Place. Closer working with health partners at place level should provide an improvement for local people in accessing and benefiting from health and well being.

3. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL

General

- 3.1. As a refresh, the plan is largely unchanged and the four priority areas remain. However, based on data and feedback from the Supporting Communities Working group, there are two main amendments:
- 3.2. (1) Recognition of the cost-of-living crisis - in particular the rising cost of inflation and utility bills. The cost of living continues to impact many residents and presents additional financial, health and wellbeing challenges.
- 3.3. The Council and partners are already providing ongoing help for households, but the crisis may increasingly affect more people and there may be a disproportionate impact on equalities groups and those already disadvantaged.
- 3.4. On 28th April 2022, Council agreed an overarching motion to consider the impact of the current cost of living pressure on local residents. Furthermore, Council recommended that the matter be referred for consideration via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to its existing Council Tax Support Working Group. The Group has recently met to plan its' work with a view to making recommendations to Cabinet both in respect of Rushmoor's own Council Tax Support Scheme and broader options. The Group have considered a wide range of data and evidence from both the Council and local partners and recommend that the Council continue to work with partners to co-ordinate and promote activity, and available support, and ensure sustainable solutions to assist cost of living measures. Any work undertaken will link to the Supporting Communities Strategy where appropriate.
- 3.5. (2) Greater emphasis to develop projects to support Physical and Mental Health. This is a pre-existing priority but its potential to impact and influence across all the priority areas and wider preventative health in general is

widely recognised. Given the current economic climate, recovery from the Pandemic, and local data on high levels of obesity and inactivity it is imperative that there is an increased emphasis on physical and mental health in the borough.

- 3.6. Changes to NHS Frimley and the introduction of the Frimley Integrated Care Board recognises the role Rushmoor and partners can have in supporting health and wellbeing at place level. The creation of the North East Hampshire & Farnham 'place working groups' has identified three priorities
 - The prevention, detection and management of high blood pressure
 - Whole system approach to obesity
 - Mental health
- 3.7. Physical activity plays a significant role in supporting all three priorities areas and a specific working group to complement place-based system action is being developed and will be chaired by the Council.
- 3.8. The SCS complements the health approach and is already supporting the work around hypertensions and mental health. Furthermore, the SCS aligns with the priorities identified in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan – to address health in areas of deprivation, facilitate physical activity and access to green space.
- 3.9. The two amendments outlined above should not detract from the importance of the existing priorities of the plan. All the priorities are cross cutting and young people are at the heart of them all. It should be noted that there is significant work taking place to sustain longer term engagement with young people to give them a greater voice on local issues and action.
- 3.10. The Supporting Communities Deprivation Monies, allocated by the Council, will support some of the projects identified in the action plan. It is expected that external funding will also be secured. Furthermore, Councillors have been encouraged to consider the priorities of the SCS when supporting local ward grants for some of the smaller projects.

Consultation

- 3.11. The refresh has been prepared following regular meetings with the Supporting Communities Working group and wider partners. This includes reviews of evidence and updates on issues and concerns from Partners. Individual update meetings have also taken place during the summer months of 2022 to review achievements and discuss new and upcoming projects.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Risks

- 4.1. Projects identified have been costed and/or are subject to project and performance management arrangements. The key activities are also subject to a range of future monitoring. There are no risks identified.

Legal Implications

- 4.2. No legal implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.3. The Community & Partnerships Team lead the coordination and delivery of the Supporting Communities Strategy and action plan. The team is also responsible for managing the Service Level Agreements with key local partners which may include commissioned work to deliver projects relating to the Supporting Communities Plan.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 4.4. The Supporting Communities Plan focuses on supporting more vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community. As individual projects, activities will be subject to their own equality impact assessment and measures where appropriate.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. The refreshed plan reflects the ambitions set out in the Supporting Communities Strategy & Action Plan. It identifies key projects and action to be delivered over the next 12- 18 months.
- 5.2. The Plan has the full support of the wider Supporting Communities Working group.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Key Projects & Achievements. Appendix One

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APPENDIX 1

Supporting Communities Action Plan – Summary of Projects and Achievements 2021/22

Physical and Mental Health	
Project	Achievement
Talk Mental Walk and talk mental health group for men	Support to establish and expand a resident-led project delivering mental health support to men.
Delivery of local Health Checks	<p>Council and partners working with PCNs to establish initiatives to provide health checks for local residents, particularly with those at risk or showing the symptoms of hypertension.</p> <p>PEBL wellbeing day – 150 health checks completed with 18 health checks of which were Prospect Estate residents</p> <p>Garrison health fairs – RBC supported alongside health partners</p> <p>Know Your Numbers Week – Health checks by partners across Aldershot venues.</p>
Be Healthy Be You Weight & Activity Programme	6-month programme supporting people, some who have health conditions, to manage their weight, become more confident in themselves and be more motivated to participate in activity. Group and one-to-one support offered.
ORCA Befriending	Befriending Co-ordinator and volunteers recruited at RVS, incorporating buddy support.

Healthy Walks	Practitioner wellness walks for 3 months. The free weekly walks for local people aimed to increase physical activity, focus on well-being and reduce social isolation. The group became friends and continue to be in touch/walk since the official walks ended.
Funded by HCC Get Going Again Grant	A comprehensive list of local walks has been collated and shared with local PCN's/social prescribers for wider use. Including Aldershot and Farnborough Heritage Trails.
Rushmoor Accessibility Action Group	Group created to bring together people with varied abilities and organisations supporting those with differing abilities, to support access to services, identifying and addressing issues locally. Future meetings to look at transport accessibility and polling stations.
Ward grants supporting physical and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community gardens/planters • Crafty Culture and the Mandala Project at the West End Centre • Men's Shed in Farnborough • Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park conservation work • Resources hub to help autistic young people • Learn to ride sessions in two schools and a wellbeing ride course for adults • Aldershot Heritage trails • Training and supervision for project addressing addictions of army veterans • Sports equipment • Community defibrillator

Economic Hardship

Project	Achievement
The Community Grub Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved full independence in October 2022. Reaches one year since opening in December. • Current membership stands at 877, made up of roughly 53% households without children and 47% with. Average number of visits per week is 124. • Since opening 58 tonnes of food, household and personal hygiene items have been redistributed. • Community Wardrobe remains popular with approx. 35% of visitors accessing it each week.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding from the Connect4Communities Community Grant has helped purchase and distribute slow cookers to 107 residents concerned about fuel and food costs. Further funding will support the provision of warmth items heading into winter. • Partnership with CA has developed further with the start of a CA Advisor on-site fortnightly, funded by an Aviva crowdfunding campaign. Partnership working between the CGH and CA continues to ensure fuel support grants are widely distributed. • Further partnerships developing/on-going – Aldershot Social Prescribers, Fleet & Aldershot Lions (IT support) and Energise Me/Public Health colleagues.
RBC Virtual Job Club	<p>Virtual Job club was established to offer support during lockdown and supported 61 residents with 80% moving into known work or training courses.</p> <p>In September 2021 it was agreed to end the service, with physical job clubs now reopened and offering a hybrid service it was felt it no longer represented value money.</p>
Ward grants supporting economic hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community larder • Christmas hampers for families with children and perishables for Vine Dining Covid meals
Connecting Communities	
Project	Achievement
Keep Well & Stay Connected	Digital Inclusion Project for older vulnerable people.
Delivered by RVS and funded NHS/Captain Tom money	32 people digitally connected through the programme – accessing local groups and information via their TV sets. Project helped to connect individuals socially, improve physical and mental health and provided bespoke health related support.
Integration	Working with agencies to support integration and improving aspirations of minority groups, including asylum seekers. Regular liaison and enabling support with local hotel, contractor and local partners.
Ukraine support	

	<p>Support for Ukraine - Partnership event with HCC's Family Support Service delivered in December 2022 to inform support in place in 2023.</p> <p>Event to acknowledge hosts' contributions delivered in December 2022</p> <p>Information on RVS website for guests, hosts and community supporters.</p>
Men's Shed	Men's shed established in Farnborough
Supported through ward grants	
Nepali Community Champions	Recruit, train and support Nepali champions to identify those experiencing hardship, provide interventions. This project aligned closely with the Reaching People Together Hampshire project.
Ward grants supporting connecting communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorial benches/trees and seating around the borough • Play equipment for toddler group • Community noticeboard • Community gardens/planters • Men's Shed in Farnborough • Facilities improvements for sports clubs used by other users of the clubs
Repair café	Officially opened in December 2022 – West End Centre. Encouraging people to bring in broken items for repair and not to throw away.
Young People – Aspirations	
Project	Achievement
Climate Change Schools Project	Engaged 70 young people in a schools climate change project involving every school in the borough including Private schools.

North Hampshire Youth Hub	<p>Working with and providing support for young people to improve their employability skills via bespoke Employability resource website.</p> <p>The hub was only able to open once a fortnight due to funding. The young people that engaged found the service helpful, but many were exhibiting mental health and confidence issues that needed addressing before employment could be considered. Surrey Boards mental health team and Richmond fellowship attend to deal with the complex issues</p> <p>Homepage North Hants Employment Skills Zone (esznorthhants.org.uk)</p>
Supporting Families Programme	<p>Coordination of joined-up support by children and family professionals for vulnerable families.</p> <p>Hart & Rushmoor is the best performing Hampshire district for significant and sustainable progress by families nominated to the programme (evidenced in 65% of families, next best was 54%).</p>
Hart & Rushmoor Local Children's Partnership	<p>Parent support & Back 2 Basics programme roll out / CYPP 2022-25 / Community pantries / Holiday Activities and food programme.</p> <p>30K of HCC grant support (+30K pending) for partnership plan activities</p>
Kickstart RBC/CA	<p>Supported 20 young people into employment via the Kickstart programme</p> <p>RBC committed to two rounds of kickstart with placements in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x Economy 4 x Maintenance 1 x Community 1 x Licencing <p>Out of the 7 – 1 staying in the Maintenance team till the new year, and 4 moved straight into employment.</p>
<p>Shine project</p> <p>Delivered by the Vine and funded by National Lottery</p>	<p>Delivered a range of targeted projects supporting young people: including Barista Training, cooking courses, media workshops and arts and social projects</p>

My Space Delivered by the Vine, funded by RBC	Digital support project for Young People. The Project helped young people to identify skills, write CVs, using Universal Job Match, apply for jobs online and practise interview skills. Free access to computer and internet access in a dedicated site IT area and a social space to support young people generally.
Friday Night Youth Club	Providing a safe and welcoming place for young people with access to youth workers who support, engage and supervise weekly (term time only). Work done around bullying as this has been highlighted as an issue at school by many of the young people. Average of 15-20 young people attending each week. Christmas present provided to all young people by BMW.
Rushmoor Youth Influence	Forum created to engage with young people. First forum took place on 16 th November. 19 young people attended with the theme of mental health. Presentation and support provided by Fortify and Ahmadiyya Muslim Association. Next session planned for Feb
Schools	60 students from Alderwood visited Gulfstream for an aspirational visit Support provided to Cove and Fernhill careers days 5,629 students across Hampshire attended Pioneers of Tomorrow
Ward grants supporting young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities improvements at Scouts/Pre-school/sensory room • Equipment/banners for schools and sports clubs • Learn to ride sessions in two schools • Resources hub to help autistic young people

Supporting Communities Action Plan – Summary of Projects to be delivered/continued (by Council and/or Partners) in 2023

Physical and Mental Health	
Talk Mental	Continue to support delivery and development of Talk Mental. Identify local premises for drop-in sessions and provide connections to mental health partners to support targeted workshops for attendees.
Aldershot Health inequalities project	(Primary Care Trust) led project focused on local survey about health needs and wants in Aldershot and Heart of Aldershot engagement and signposting pilot based on measurement and monitoring of hypertension
Whole system approach to obesity	Continue working with public health to support the reduction of obesity levels in Rushmoor – stakeholder workshops been held for interested partners.
Increasing Physical Activity Priority group with NHS	Develop Physical Activity group, identify objectives and outcomes for the group. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing physical activity in schools • Increase use of green space • Empower communities by encouraging them to take an active approach in their health and wellbeing • Healthy Walks programmes
Increasing Physical Activity	Seek to establish a sports kit 'bank' to support families in reducing costs of clothing, footwear and sports equipment.
Cycling & Walking	Increase awareness of safe cycling routes for residents to ride their bikes for pleasure and walking routes including heritage trails. Support Balance, Glide and Ride with funding/engagement – Working with RVS and Public Health to seek funding for a walks co-ordinator post

Green spaces	Improvement to green spaces – (SPF projects)
Ward grants supporting physical & mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCP 'Stitch it, don't ditch it' classes • Memorial bench • Family therapy • Social outing for older people's group • Special education needs training • TBC Cosy Hub • Military Christmas Fair • Early Years outdoor provision improvements
Economic Hardship	
The Grub Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply to the winter C4C grant to fund additional support to visitors over the winter. • Develop the project board more formally to increase skill and number. • Continue to develop connections to partners who can add value to CGH visitors. • Continue to deliver food support and community wardrobe • Maintain and secure delivery of the CGH longer-term, with particular focus on new venue and potential project development this might enable.
Connect for Communities	To provide support to most vulnerable families with food, energy and water bills, food vouchers and holiday playschemes.
Cost of Living Crisis (CA)	Research project on the cost of living crisis - understanding the impact on local residents (to be concluded by Feb 2023).
Cost Of Living – Winter Campaign	<p>Get Ready for Winter Campaign/Support - Work with partners to be as prepared for increasing winter pressures as possible and provide information to people.</p> <p>Focus on signposting residents to the range of existing resources around welfare, housing, finances and wellbeing including:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying and promoting a network of welcoming spaces/venues where people can access warmth but also get a social connection and interaction. Use social media/arena to promote support and advice available Projects to align with the work/findings of the Council Tax Support group.
Ward grants supporting economic hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TVC Cosy Hub Family therapy
Connecting Communities	
Rushmoor Community website	Creation of a community website to access all community/partner events and activities for use by professionals and community.
Rushmoor Repair Café Funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust.	Repair café opened 17th December 2022 at the West End Centre. This is a volunteer led project with CIO status. First session proved very popular. 2023 will see the continued development of the cafe RBC, RVS, Aldershot Town Football Club and Stoll Housing all supporting the project.
Integration	Continued involvement in regular liaison meetings with local hotel, contractor and partners to ensure appropriate support is proved to asylum seekers.
Ukraine support	Continued involvement with HCC's Family Support Service to support Ukrainians and their host families.
Gardening Clubs	Develop local gardening clubs to encourage social interaction and physical activity
PEBL wellbeing day	Develop PEBL wellbeing day - linking in with health partners/PCN's

Ward grants supporting connecting communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCP 'Stitch it, don't ditch it' classes • Family therapy • 'Disability confident' job fair • TBC Cosy Hub • Military Christmas Fair
Young People	
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue engaging with Young People through the Youth Forum group (Led by Rushmoor Youth Influence & including young people from the climate change event) • Next meeting date is Feb - Young People setting their own agenda • Creation of the Youth Charter • Develop Youth Forum with youth partners
Ward grants supporting young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Disability confident' job fair • Social outing for older people's group • TBC Cosy Hub • Military Christmas Fair