



To: Community and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

Date: 17th September 2014

Subject: Asset Based Working in Coventry

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To consult on emerging plans to develop asset based working in Coventry with Scrutiny Board (4) to inform the development of a strategy and work programme for this work.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Community and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) is asked to note the contents of this paper and to make recommendations for how this work should be developed further, in particular the role that elected members can play in this work.

3 Information/ Background

- 3.1 The Council wants Coventry to be ambitious for itself and its citizens. It is committed, through the Council Plan, to making the city a globally connected city that is attractive to businesses and investors – but also locally committed to improving the quality of life for all our residents. It is also committed to make sure that economic growth and investment in the city benefits local people. The Council recognises that the best way for this to happen is to enable and empower residents, communities and groups to use and develop their own skills and potential to take control over their own lives. This is especially true at a time when the Council's resources are being significantly reduced.
- 3.2 The Council Plan approved by Cabinet in January 2014 sets out the Council's ambition to have new conversations with residents, communities and partners, enabling them to do more for themselves by encouraging residents to become active citizens; engaging with communities to involve them; and working with partner agencies in the voluntary, public and private sectors.
- 3.3 As part of this, the Council is committed to engaging with communities to involve them in uncovering and using their own skills, talents and resources to achieve their ambitions; shaping and improving local services and designing and implementing solutions that meet local need. This is an opportunity to have fresh conversations with residents, communities and partners to explore different ways of getting things done.
- 3.4 'Asset based working' is an approach which is being used across the country to enable local people to do more for themselves. Asset based working sees people as citizens and co-producers with something to offer rather than clients and service users. It helps people

take control of their lives rather than treating people as passive and 'done to'. It supports people to develop their potential rather than 'fixing people'. This is increasingly important as funding across the public sector declines.

- 3.5 In 2014 the Council Telephone Survey asked 1000 local people if they would like to get more involved in their local community. 2 in 3 people agreed that the Council could ask local people to do more for themselves. 1 in 4 gave the Council their contact details to find out more about how they could get more involved. 1 in 3 people said that they thought local people could do more to help older or vulnerable people or to help keep streets clean and safe. This suggests that there is an appetite locally for people living in Coventry to do more for themselves.

4 The economic benefits of asset based working

- 4.1 National research shows that asset based working can achieve significant cost-savings. Basildon's Connected Care scheme, funded by Essex County Council and the local NHS, worked with local people to identify improvements to local health and social care services. This has claimed impacts of over £1,000 per client, and a total of over £500,000 in savings across the town. In another case, peer-led support schemes for people with mental health problems saved were £80 cheaper per day than usual care. However, making these savings requires organisations to radically change the way they provide services. And in some cases, the savings may not go back to the organisation making the investment.

5 Working with partners across the City

- 5.1 Asset based working is not something that the City Council can or should deliver on its own. Much of the innovative work that has going on to promote and develop asset based working locally has been led by voluntary organisations, including Grapevine, Coventry Law Centre and smaller organisations and community groups such as PeoplePoint and WEETC. Coventry University has also been leading a number of initiatives to empower local communities through its City Initiative. This includes a number of projects including its Neighbourhood University scheme which is being piloted in Hillfields to work with local people to identify what skills and training they would like, to be able to get jobs or higher-level training.

6 Asset based working in practice

- 6.1 Asset based working is not new in Coventry and there are a number of programmes and services which use this approach:
- 6.2 The Council's Community Development Service, which was established in 2013, works with local communities to improve their capability to do more for themselves through a range of approaches. This has included working with two GP surgeries in Coventry to link older people with complex health and social care needs into community activities as part of a local pilot to integrate health and social care services for older people.
- 6.3 The Council has also been working closely with NHS partners to support the development of asset based working. This has included the RIPPLE project at University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire which supports patients with long-term respiratory conditions to develop social networks and reduce social isolation.
- 6.4 A number of Council services have been developed through co-creation with service users. Two examples of this are the POD, which supports adults with severe and enduring mental ill health takes a highly innovative approach to working with adults with mental health

problems so that they are able to identify the best pathway to recovery for them. The Acting Early 0-5 programme, which is being piloted in Tile Hill and Hillfields, brings together teams of staff from across the city who support parents in the early years. The service has been co-designed with parents and the voluntary sector from the start.

- 6.5 A training programme has been put in place, starting on the 8th September, which will skill up 30 staff from the council, NHS, Police and voluntary and community groups in the techniques and skills which will help them to embed asset based working in what they do. The programme consists of two learning groups: one which is based in Willenhall and one which brings together people in the council, NHS and voluntary sector who provide services to support older people and early years care.
- 6.6 Two small grant schemes have been run in 2013/14 to build community capacity. The Community Well-being Scheme is run by Valley House to develop small projects which build community capacity and improve mental well-being. The Innovation and Development Fund, run by Voluntary Action Coventry with funding from Coventry City Council and Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group, supports schemes to encourage community groups to develop their own health programmes. The aim with both these schemes is to encourage programmes which are self-sustaining and there are a number of examples of programmes, such the Coventry Men's Shed which have gone on to generate further income from other funding bodies.

7 Next steps for Asset based working in Coventry

- 7.1 A detailed strategy and action plan for Coventry is being developed with a wide range of local partners, including Voluntary Action Coventry, City Council, Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group, Coventry University, Coventry Law Centre, Grapevine, and West Midlands Police. This work is being coordinated by the City Council and will to be presented to the Cabinet Members for Community Development, Cooperatives and Social Enterprise and Health and Adult Services in November 2014.
- 7.2 The programme of work will be built around four key areas:
- 7.2.1 Co-designing services with local people
- 7.2.2 Expansion of training and development of staff, linking to the Council's Kickstart programme.
- 7.2.3 Working with local statutory and voluntary sector partners to access external funding to develop asset based working.
- 7.2.4 Continued development of the Community Development Service to grow asset based working in local communities.
- 7.3 The discussion at Scrutiny Board (4) will be used to help develop this strategy and action plan.

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