
Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)
Cabinet Member – Community Development, Co-operatives
and Social Enterprise

4th November 2015

20th November 2015

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise - Cllr Abbott

Director Approving Submission of the Report:

Executive Director for People

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Community Development Service - Impact and Priorities

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

The Community Development Service (CDS) was established in 2014, following a consultation on the future of neighbourhood working in the City in 2013. As a result of this process £820k was saved. Since its creation a further 3 posts have been deleted as a contribution towards Council savings requirements.

The team works with communities to support the delivery of Council priorities in terms of people doing more for themselves and improving general health and wellbeing in neighbourhoods. They focus on community empowerment by facilitating individuals and groups to build local capacity, get involved and be influential in their local areas.

The team consists of two Team Managers, nine Community Development Officers, one Business Development Officer and one Business Administrator apprentice. The current budget is £547k.

The team works across the City, in all wards in Coventry. Although officers spend more time in deprived areas, they respond to requests for help from all parts of the City and often engage with all communities e.g. to populate the Community Activity Directory.

One element of the work of the CDS has been to develop a Community Activity Directory (CAD) and following approval from the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise on 10th December 2014, this was implemented on the City Council website in April 2015. The CAD was formally launched on 3rd July 2015 at a “Creative Communities” event for local community groups.

Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) requested an update on the impact of the work of the CDS at their work programme discussion meeting in June 2015. Furthermore, the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise requested an update on implementation of the CAD, six months after implementation.

As the CAD is a core part of CDS activity, updates on performance and impact have been brought together into this single report.

Recommendations:

Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) is asked to:

- (i) Consider the report and submit any comments to Cabinet Member for their consideration on the content of the report
- (ii) Support the recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise

Cabinet Member is recommended to:

- (i) Consider comments from the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

and approve;

- (ii) The renewed focus of the Community Development Service to reflect the Council’s budget position, planned transformation programmes such as City Centre First and aspirations to treat local communities as partners in the delivery of services.
- (iii) That the remaining Community Development Service resources being used to target support to areas of most need or where communities require encouragement to explore how they can actively contribute to their own success.
- (iv) The priorities identified for the Community Development Service for the next 12 months, as proposed in section 8.
- (v) The exploration of the development of a resource directory for Coventry to enable and encourage communities to create and maintain their own information and networks, and to syndicate information from other information sources such as NHS Choices.

List of Appendices included:

None

Background Documents

None

Other useful documents:

Cabinet Report, "Neighbourhood Working", 9th July 2013

Cabinet Member (Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise) Report,
"Community Directory/Single Point of access", 23rd July 2014

Cabinet Member (Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise) Report,
"Developing a Community Activity Directory", 10th December 2014

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Yes - Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) on 4th November 2015

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

1 Background

- 1.1 On 9th July 2013, Cabinet approved a number of recommendations for officers and the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities relating to the development and implementation of the Community Development Service. Following staff consultation and a recruitment process, the new service was established in March 2014 with recruitment complete in July 2014. The team currently consists of two Team Managers, nine Community Development Officers, one Business Development Officer and one Business Administrator Apprentice.
- 1.2 The City Council is committed to asset based working where communities and individuals make full use of the assets available to them and reduce the need for City Council services.
- 1.3 On 10th December 2014, the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise approved the implementation and launch of a “Community Activity Directory”. The Directory was implemented in April 2015 and provides information about community activities that take place across the City.
- 1.4 On 17th December 2014, the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Services and the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise endorsed the policy direction of the emerging “Active Citizens, Strong Communities” asset –based working strategy and initial implementation plan. The strategy and plan are now live and agreed actions are being progressed.
- 1.5 The strategy and plan focus on enabling and empowering local people, communities and groups to use and develop their own skills and potential. The strategy recognises the need for different conversations with local communities, at a time of significant pressure on Council resources.
- 1.6 The overall aim of the Strategy is “We want to encourage, enable and empower residents to be active citizens, building strong, involved communities and be partners in reducing demand and improving services. We will work with local communities and local people to intervene before problems reach a crisis and to find solutions that reflect and build on local people’s skills, experience and capability”.
- 1.7 The CDS plays a key role in the delivery of each of the five pillars of the “Active Citizens, Strong Communities” Strategy, specifically focusing on “Building Capacity”.

2 Community Development Service

- 2.1 The Community Development Service has been operational since March 2014. Since that time, the Service has been responsible for a range of work including the following:

3 Implementation and launch of a “Community Activity Directory”

- 3.1 The Care Act (2014) placed a duty on Local Authorities to “establish and maintain a service for providing people in its area with information and advice relating to care and support for adults and support for carers”. The Community Activity Directory, implemented on the City Council website in April 2015, helps the Council to meet this statutory duty.

- 3.2 The CAD provides a directory of resources available within the community and, in turn, this forms a component of the overall information and advice offer as well as supporting the delivery of the Council's "Active Citizens, Strong Communities" Strategy.
- 3.3 The CAD offers information about approximately 700 different activities that take place across the city with direct public access. People are able to search for activities using various keywords including local area searches by postcode or by activity type e.g. dance.
- 3.4 The focus of the Directory is on enabling people to easily find out about what is available in their local communities without needing to contact the City Council, or specifically Social Care services. In turn, this should reduce pressure on front-line services.
- 3.5 A range of user testing was completed prior to making the CAD accessible to the public and formal launch. Feedback on early versions of the CAD was received from Councillors, the Disabled Employee Network (DEN), Age UK Coventry, Social Care Direct, Healthwatch, Coventry Cares Learning Network and the Adult Social Care brokerage. This feedback was used to inform changes and improvements to the Directory, although comments were mostly positive.
- 3.6 The CAD was then formally launched on 3rd July 2015 at a "Creative Communities" event, attended by 82 people from 44 different local community groups. The event also celebrated the impact of the Community Grant funding process, referred to later in this report. A Communication Plan was developed to ensure that the CAD was widely promoted through partner organisations and social media.
- 3.7 Since April, the number of (internal and external) users of the CAD has steadily increased, with a specific peak following the launch event in July. The number of pages being viewed by people is also increasing, suggesting an increase in searches for different groups and activities.

The table below provides a breakdown of usage over a 5 month period:

Month	Visits	Page Views	Returning Visitors	Unique Visitors
April	495	1419	389	196
May	692	1652	293	609
June	896	2239	348	757
July	1476	3916	561	1304
August	1147	2807	414	1010

- 3.8 The CAD is now one of the best used pages within the Health and Social Care section of the City Council website. Since April 2015, the CAD has consistently appeared in the top twenty most used pages within this section of the website, with people being diverted there when looking for support from the City Council. The CAD also appears in other areas of the City Council website including the libraries and sports sections.
- 3.9 The Community Development Service continues to monitor usage of the Directory, taking account of how it is accessed, who is using it and entry/exit routes.
- 3.10 In November 2015, a review of CAD content will be completed. This will involve contact with each group/activity listed to confirm the accuracy of information held and updates being completed as necessary.

- 3.11 As with all preventative work, it is difficult to properly assess the impact of the CAD but people do now have better access to information about the availability of community activities in Coventry. This enables people to make informed choices that have a positive impact on their ability to remain independent and socially active.
- 3.12 Ongoing development of a resource directory for Coventry will be a component of the future transformation of Adult Social Care. The opportunity to utilise technology to enable and encourage communities to create and maintain their own information and networks, and to syndicate information from other information sources such as NHS Choices, will be explored.

4 Community Grant

- 4.1 The Community Development Service manages the Community Grant Fund of £100k per annum. In 2014/15, a total of 177 applications were received during two funding rounds and 70 awards were made to the value of £97,602.00.
- 4.2 The Community Grant is a valuable resource for local community and voluntary sector groups, providing important funding to a number of community organisations to enable their work to continue.
- 4.3 The CDS completes an evaluation process of all applications received and decisions on allocation of the Community Grant Fund are then made by the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities based on Council Officer recommendations.
- 4.4 In addition, the CDS supports all Community Grant applicants regardless of their application success. This is to ensure that anticipated outcomes are realised where a grant has been awarded or to further explore the viability of project proposals and seek other potential funding streams where an application has been unsuccessful.
- 4.5 A range of positive impacts have been realised through the grant award process, including work with people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, refugees, new and migrant communities, isolated older people and people with disabilities. Funding awarded to Knitting Needles, a group of older people meeting to chat, promote social interaction and reduce isolation is one example of this. The group were awarded £920, which they used to fund a more stable venue to meet in and plan future events such as a Christmas Fair and group knitting for local charities. They have since been nominated for a Queens Award for Voluntary Service (see Section 7.2) and are working with another local group to produce poppies to raise money for the British Legion.
- 4.6 Willenhall Wanderers are a further example of a group who have benefited from a Community Grant payment alongside support from the CDS. The football team has a contract with each of their players that if they commit any crime or anti-social behaviour in the area, a match ban and fine is imposed.
- 4.7 Willenhall Wanderers were awarded £640 in Round 1, 2014/15. This was not sufficient though for them to continue running as a football team, due to player's subscriptions not covering rising costs. A Community Development Officer worked with the group to identify alternative funding options and eventually identified Galliford Try; currently responsible for significant redevelopment projects across the City. As a result of support from the CDS, Willenhall Wanderers have now been offered support from Galliford Try in the form of purchasing new kit and equipment to the value of £1570, the offer of apprenticeship for unemployed members of the team, and they are currently looking to support the running costs for the 2015/16 season in the way of pitch fees, league fees and insurance.

5 External funding applications

- 5.1 The Community Development Service works with community groups to apply for and access external funding for use in their local community, to run local events targeting hard to reach communities and support the work of volunteers. Between June 2014 and June 2015, the CDS supported groups to apply for more than £600k from a range of external funds that included, Reaching Communities, Heart of England Community Foundation, Council of Europe and the Roma Migrant Fund. To date approximately £90k has been awarded and just over £500k worth of applications are awaiting decisions.
- 5.2 One example of a community group that has been supported to apply for external funding is Ekta Unity. The group is based in Foleshill and run by volunteers, with up to 60 women accessing the sessions on health, exercise and socialising on a daily basis. The group are tackling issues of mental health and well-being and focus on preventing mental health crisis in South Asian women in Foleshill. The Group has been supported by the CDS to apply for £200k funding from the Big Lottery, which would enable the Group to ensure that people who use the services are supported and they could recruit a co-ordinator and fund-raiser.
- 5.3 A further example is Community Empowerment and Voices of Hope (CEVOH). As a result of the external funding that they were awarded, CEVOH have put together a neighbourhood plan that focuses on supporting residents from BAME communities. They have also been introduced to the Willenhall forum, who is working on their own neighbourhood plan, enabling both groups to share ideas and resources.

6 Integrated Neighbourhood Team pilot

- 6.1 The Community Development Service played a key role in the pilot and future scoping of the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INT). INT's are made up of a team of professionals from across Health and Social Care in Coventry. They bring people together across organisational boundaries to ensure that the right help and care is available for older people who need support. While the CDS will not be directly involved in INT delivery as it is rolled out across the City, their contribution throughout the 12 month pilot enhanced partner organisation's understanding of community and voluntary groups and the role that a local community can play in improving people's health and wellbeing.

7 Local Community Support

- 7.1 The Community Development Service actively supports local communities to start new groups, run events, encourage the use of volunteering and generally take more control over what happens in their neighbourhood or community of interest. Recently, specific work has been undertaken:
 - i) In Willenhall, where focus groups and an appreciative enquiry event were used to widen participation in developing the neighbourhood plan, which the Willenhall Community Forum is producing.
 - ii) In Cheylesmore, two events were held; the first involved residents in mapping out what community activities are already taking place and setting out future aspirations for their area. The second event was planned and organised by active citizens and involved community groups in a participatory budgeting event, which resulted in section 106 monies being allocated for a range of local projects.
 - iii) In Foleshill, supporting a £800k bid which will help provide a purpose built community building where new and emerging communities can meet and share ideas and visions for the local community. The focus will be on building a strong stakeholders group where

residents and partners can unite and be involved in shaping services for the future in Foleshill.

iv) In Tile Hill local interested people were supported through an appreciative inquiry event to asset map the local area. This has led to 10 people signing up to a leadership course offered by Warwick University

v) Further work is planned for Hillfields where stakeholders are planning a community event to be held later this year. The harder to reach communities will be encouraged to come together to celebrate the diverse community of Hillfields. This will be an opportunity to promote the best of Hillfields, to talk about what services people most use, what people would like more of and more importantly how they wish to influence future activities and services where they live and work.

vi) The CDS is identifying community “gems”. These are local residents who want to do more in their local communities but are unsure how to get started. The Service has recently supported local people who use The Old Crown in Alderman’s Green to form a community group. The group operates from the premises and will support local charities, run local activities and is considering running a luncheon club for the more isolated residents living in the area. They are also running family activities throughout school breaks that concentrate on healthy eating and having fun.

7.2 In recognition of the work of voluntary and community groups and to raise the profile of the important work that they do, the CDS has worked with groups to make nominations for the Queens Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS). This is the highest award given to volunteer groups across the UK. A total of 13 nominations were made for Coventry groups, with the CDS directly facilitating 4 of these.

8 Future priorities

8.1 The Community Development Service will play a key role in the Council’s aim to increase the participation of communities across Coventry and supporting the delivery of public sector transformation. This might include the use of a range of techniques and approaches such as participatory budgeting and appreciative enquiry.

8.2 The Council’s financial position and aspirations to build effective relationships with local communities mean that the CDS will need to focus on preparing local communities to be in the position to take an increased role in the delivery of services.

8.3 A number of activities and services provided by the voluntary and community sector will also help to mitigate the impact of Council Service reductions. Further development of these existing groups must be a priority.

8.4 The focus of the CDS will therefore be on encouraging local communities to do more for themselves and developing groups that will help to mitigate the impact of reductions in public sector spending. In doing this, the service will take account of other community support that is available, to ensure effective use of the totality of resources.

9 Options considered and recommended proposal

9.1 The Community Development Service has made a positive impact since it was established in 2014, with a range of support being provided to Community and Voluntary sector groups and organisations across Coventry. The service now has a clear identity within the city with positive relationships with active citizens, groups and partners. This provides a good platform for delivery of those priorities outlined above.

- 9.2 The Council's budget position, planned transformation programmes such as City Centre First and aspirations to treat local communities as partners in the delivery of services mean that a renewed focus is required for the CDS.
- 9.3 The service has reduced in capacity since implementation. Remaining resources must be used to target support to areas of most need or where communities require encouragement to explore how they can actively contribute to their own success.
- 9.4 The Community Activity Directory is a positive step forwards in the Council fulfilling its role, under the Care Act 2014, to focus on people's health and wellbeing and share information that will help this. Options to develop a sustainable model of delivery and maintenance for a resource directory in Coventry should be explored.

10 Results of consultation undertaken

- 10.1 Feedback on the Community Activity Directory, to inform the final version was sought from a range of groups and organisations as described in Section 3.5. People were asked to complete a brief questionnaire to share their views or could feed back more informally via e-mail or telephone.
- 10.2 The "Creative Communities" event in July 2015 provided a further opportunity for people to ask questions, provide feedback and make suggestions for how the Directory might be improved.
- 10.3 During this event, feedback was sought on the type of support that groups find most useful in helping them to develop. Responses will be used to inform the Community Development Service work programme.

11 Timetable for implementing this decision

- 11.1 A review and update of data contained within the Community Activity Directory will be completed in November 2015.
- 11.2 The Community Development Service is already working towards achievement of the priorities described in Section 8.1 to 8.4 above. The impact of this work will be measured in line with the delivery timescales associated with transformation and engagement programmes.

12 Comments from Executive Director, Resources

- 12.1 Financial implications
There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.
- 12.2 Legal implications
There are no specific legal implications.

13 Other implications

- 13.1 **How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

The work of the Community Development Service will make a positive contribution to the council's priorities, particularly in relation to: a prosperous Coventry; citizens living longer, healthier, independent lives; making Coventry an attractive and enjoyable place to be; ensuring that children and young people are safe, achieve and make a positive

contribution; encouraging a creative, active and vibrant city; developing a more equal city with cohesive communities and neighbourhoods.

13.2 How is risk being managed?

Risk will be managed through risk management processes and frameworks where required. Specific risk assessments will be completed for individual programmes of work. The Community Development Service undertakes monitoring activity to ensure that they are able to measure the impact of the work that they do.

13.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The work of the Community Development Service develops and builds upon existing strengths within communities. It is expected that the work of the Service will result in Coventry's residents being offered alternatives to Council provided services, potentially reducing demand in the future.

13.4 Equalities / EIA

An Equality Consultation Analysis (ECA) has not been completed. However, equalities impact data is now routinely requested from all groups and organisations who are awarded funding from the Community Grant. Information provided to date shows us that applicants who applied for Round 1 2015/16 were reaching whole communities from young people aged under 16 years to those people aged over 75 years, all ethnic groups, were accessible for disabled people and were not religion specific.

13.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

There are no general impacts for, or on, the environment. Some of the individual projects supported by the Community Development Service have a positive impact on the local environment.

13.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The programme of work for the Community Development Service focuses on changing the current relationship that the Council has with local communities in Coventry including the community and voluntary sector.

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