

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Communities

Date of Meeting:	20 July 2015
Report of:	Steph Cordon Head of Communities
Subject/Title:	Community Hubs Update
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Les Gilbert

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council as a Residents First Council is leading a programme of work along with our partners, to develop vibrant and sustainable Community Hubs, which are shaped and developed by local communities, providing the right services in the right place, at the right times. They are a key element of our ambitious programme to empower our communities, providing information and access to help for residents. They are centres that deliver for those in need, with a wide range of outreach early intervention and prevention services, to protect our vulnerable residents. We are also challenging our partners to deliver more through community hubs, providing services more efficiently and effectively and which meet specific local needs.
- 1.2 Our focus is on solving the causes and not just addressing the symptoms. The work in our community hubs will be driven by need and reducing the dependency on public services – our emphasis is on:
- Improving mental and physical wellbeing
 - Increasing independence for our older people
 - No unemployment for those that can work
- 1.3 To achieve this, we will work with our community hubs to enable:
- opportunities for people to skill up, gain confidence and raise aspirations to get jobs
 - physical and mind health opportunities in community settings
 - healthy eating activities and community cafes, luncheon clubs, etc.
- 1.4 This isn't an exhaustive list of activities, as further co-design and delivery of services will follow once we have established the community hubs model. Our community hubs will be our eyes and ears on the ground who will tell us about where we need to respond to our communities to make the most difference.

- 1.5 There are two strands to our approach-
 - implementing an innovative franchise model
 - and community commissioning and co-production.
- 1.6 We have been successful in securing money from Central Government to pilot our approach to community hubs through social franchising. A social franchise in this context is a community business, which re-invests its profit into the community hub, for the benefit of local people.
- 1.7 The main focus of this national pilot is to develop community run health and mental wellbeing services, extending the Children's Centre offer and outreach services across neighbourhoods in Macclesfield through a Community Interest Company (CIC).
- 1.8 We are also trialling an opportunity to become part of the community hub network and be part of a franchise model with those areas that are most in need of investment and are up for the challenge.
- 1.9 The pilot areas that we are working with initially are:
 - Bromley Farm, Congleton
 - Barnies, Crewe
 - Lacey Green & Colshaw Farm, Wilmslow
 - Longridge Estate, Knutsford
 - Moss Rose Estate and South Park Pavilion, Macclesfield
 - The Georges Community Centre, Crewe.
- 1.10 We have ambitious plans for how this would work which will put our communities back in the driving seat. As part of our radical new approach, community commissioning is the way forward. We plan to hand over resource and decision making to our network of community hubs, so that they can decide what needs to be done and who is best placed to do it in their own community. We have already committed to a local first approach which reduces and takes away some of the burdens and processes that slow us down in getting things done and prevent people doing things for us. This is a great example of how we are going to do this.
- 1.11 There is a lot of interest from a wide range of organisations, who are working with us to develop local community hubs and networks. This briefing paper focuses on the franchise pilot sites, and a further paper will be provided in August 2015, which updates on progress across Cheshire East.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member agrees to:
- a) the suggested approach to Community Hubs and the initial sub set of priority areas.
 - b) the social franchise model outlined in 11.2 and how organisations could apply to be community hubs.
 - c) the community commissioning pilot.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 At the Cabinet meeting in April 2014, the principles of Community Hubs were signed up to. This is the first stage of the pilots which will ensure that we tackle the causes and not the symptoms.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Crewe, Macclesfield, Knutsford, Wilmslow and Congleton initially.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Ward Members will be engaged through the development of Community Hubs. An all Member briefing will also be organised to ensure that Members have an opportunity to influence the development of community hubs.

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 This will support the reduction of dependency on public services and also support our commitment as a Residents First Council to the co-production of services.

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 This is the initial phase, focussed on the pilot areas. However, alongside this we are working closely with a number of rural communities to develop their local offer and ensure this is connected into developments in the pilot neighbourhoods.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The resources for initial set up costs for community hubs are included in existing budgets. The resource for community commissioning is included in the Public Health budget.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 There are no legal implications to this approach.

10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 Any potential risks have been considered and mitigated against in this context.

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 Community Hubs and Networks - Where Do They Cover?

11.1.1 Community Hubs share their basic core offer, but their wider offer to the community is evidence led and determined locally. Each centre is part of a network of complementary buildings and facilities, at a neighbourhood, town, locality and borough-wide level, which work together to provide space for all sectors to deliver services and activities from.

11.1.2 Individual community hubs need to keep their unique identities and remain firmly rooted in the communities they serve and close to their frontline. The hub networks support this, whilst also offering a wide range of benefits through peer networking. Community Hub networks in Cheshire East will work at 4 different geographical levels:

1. Individual Community Hub – focussed on needs of local people.
2. Neighbourhood and Town networks, where there is demand and need for several hubs to work together to serve the needs of their neighbourhood/town, to deliver economies of scope. Focussed on the needs of local people and working collaboratively to improve their shared offer.
3. Locality Hubs – networking hubs together at a local level. Focus on community commissioning and peer networking to share knowledge and skills.

The proposal is to align these localities to those agreed by the health and social care transformation programmes, who have agreed 8 areas:

- i. Knutsford
 - ii. Wilmslow
 - iii. Macclesfield
 - iv. Congleton
 - v. SMASH (Sandbach, Middlewich, Alsager and Haslington)
 - vi. Crewe
 - vii. Nantwich.
 - viii. Poynton
4. Cheshire East wide network providing the overarching framework for hub development, training and development opportunities and leading collaborative work to achieve economies of scale e.g. joint procurement.

11.2 Community Hub Franchise - What Does this look like?

11.2.1 The proposal is to develop Community Hubs across Cheshire East using a social franchising model, which is first and foremost about partnership, offers a range of benefits to its members and puts local Residents First.



11.2.2 Organisations applying for the franchise need to deliver the core offer (above), meet Level 1 of the GRIPP quality assurance process and complete an Application to become a franchisee. Applications are considered quarterly by the Portfolio Holder who either approves the application or offers a package of support to help the organisations achieve the criteria.

11.2.3 Further information on the Franchise model is available in Appendix 1.

11.3 Community Commissioning - What will it look like?

11.3.1 Community commissioning is an ambitious form of co-production, where power and responsibility for local public service commissioning is shared with our residents. Arrangements will vary from place to place depending on what makes sense locally, and different funding streams will require different resource allocation and criteria.

11.3.2 Community hub networks are ideally placed to commission local services and the proposal is to pilot this in the 6 pilot neighbourhoods above, using public health funding. It is proposed that where a community hub network is sufficiently developed (i.e. has met the franchise quality standards) and where there is identified need (i.e. the hub serves at least one of the 16 LSOAs in the most deprived quintile nationally) that a representative group of community groups work with local residents, to take on some commissioning responsibility for their community.

11.3.3 Further information on the criteria and package to be offered is in Appendix 2.

11.3.4 The outputs of this activity would be a comprehensive understanding of the current activities in a locality that contribute to good wellbeing and an increase in the range and scale of activities available. A process will be developed that other commissioners could join at an appropriate time, pooling resources and working with the community to develop community commissioning for wellbeing.

12.0 Access to Information

12.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Appendix 1

Cheshire East Community Hubs Framework

The Cheshire East Community Hubs (CECH) franchise provides a framework which ensures Community Hubs:

- Have local and effective governance arrangements in place, with quality assurance provided through a validated self-assessment process.
- Deliver a core offer plus additional services to meet local needs, to high and consistent service standards.
- Deliver social impact based on local need, in line with our Residents First aims.
- Share existing learning in the borough, with local organisations helping each other, making it quicker and easier to start up community hubs.
- Are locally owned and operate flexibly to meet their local context and circumstances.
- Develop a strong network of organisations, but those organisations running hubs remain local and close to their frontline.
- Offer a wide range of local services, achieving economies of scope in service delivery.
- Deliver economies of scale through the network, by accessing joint purchasing, marketing, recruitment, back office functions, bidding, tendering, policy credibility etc.
- Provide financial sustainability for the future of local assets and local service provision.
- Enable sharing which combines social and financial goals.
- Work through genuine and mutually beneficial partnerships, under a common identity.
- Devolve power and control to local communities and encourage innovation.

Our Offer to the Franchise & Franchisees

As the lead partner, Cheshire East Council commits to:

- Develop the CECH Franchise, investing in its infrastructure and dedicating staff time.
- Pilot the model with 6-10 franchisees, to evaluate the impact and success to inform a review / refresh of the model.
- Provide a franchise pack which includes necessary documents (e.g. franchise agreement, policy templates, operating procedures, annual training programme etc.).
- Develop branding for the franchise, including logos, shared manner and style etc.
- Provide initial training and induction to franchisees.
- Facilitate local and Cheshire East wide networks which bring franchisees together offering peer support and to share learning, good practice, develop joint bids etc.

- Provide an annual training programme which supports franchisees to effectively operate and develop community hubs.
- Commission the development and ongoing support to meet the criteria of the quality assurance process (CVS develop GRIPP, validate and offer support to address gaps/issues).
- Support local community groups to carry out consultation and engagement with local residents to identify local community strengths and services/activities required in hubs.
- Provide ongoing Community Engagement Officer support to franchisees.
- Provide support from Community Advisers who can offer expert advice.
- Provide start-up grants (up to £2k per hub) to enable applicants to meet the quality assurance and core offer criteria.
- Deliver outreach services from community hubs, based on local need and evidence. The Council will develop a package of universal and targeted services available at hubs.
- Work with our partners to secure joint funding for the delivery of and their commitment to deliver outreach services from community hubs.
- Work with community hubs to develop a local approach to community/place-based commissioning, giving them training and a budget to commission against agreed outcomes.
- FastTrack opportunities for commissioning – as assurance process has proven they are have good governance arrangements and are fit for purpose.
- A public information hub (e.g. iPad on a stand) which could offer links to information and advice from Council and other partner services (mini version of what's in the TICs)
- To carry out an annual review of the franchise, to continually evaluate its impact and refresh and update as required.

Community Hub Offer to local people - Franchise Criteria

Community Hubs need to apply to be part of the franchise. In order to become a franchisee, they need to meet the criteria for the core offer and the self-assessment quality assurance process.

The criteria for membership are that the Hub provides the core offer below:

- At least 20 hours per week (at centre or through a network arrangement) of access for the public or service users to access information and services (see below)
- Premises available for communities and local organisations to book for group activities 7 days/evenings per week.
- Promotion of all local community services and activities, including a timetable of those available at the venue (and within network).
- Signposting and links to a range of public information and services.
- On-line access and support/training.
- IT available for residents and for professionals to hot-desk.

In addition, organisations running hubs need to:

- Be active members of the local and Cheshire East Community Hub network and commit to attend meetings and training.
- Meet GRIPPP self-assessment assurance process, which is externally validated to demonstrate that the organisation has good governance in place including:
 - Governance – look after the direction, development and legal responsibilities
 - Resources – in place to enable them to get work done
 - Information – on local area and how to get things done
 - Projects – deliver tasks and activities
 - People – connect, network and involve local community
 - Premises – additional requirement for hubs to ensure premises run effectively.

Application Process

Stage 1

The organisation managing the Community Hub meets Level 1 of the GRIPP process and completes an Application to become a franchisee. The application is considered by the Portfolio Holder who either:

1. Approves the application and progression to stage 3 - OR
2. Offers one-off start up grant and package of support (including templates etc.) needed to fulfil the criteria for approval within a specified time (maximum of 12 months). Local Engagement Officer provides support, the Hub joins their local network for peer support, CVS offer support to achieve Level 2 of the GRIPP assurance process, the organisations can access training package but are not awarded franchise at this stage.

Stage 2

Organisation resubmits application for approval to the Portfolio Holder within the specified timescale.

The application is reconsidered by the Portfolio Holder who either:

1. Approves the application and progression to stage 3 - OR
2. Declines application with reasons – and organisation can decide to apply again, but future applications do not qualify for start-up grant.

Portfolio Holder Decisions are made every 3 months and dates of meetings are advertised on an annual basis.

Stage 3 - Award franchise if appropriate - full package offered.

Review – If an applicant is not happy with the outcome, they can submit a review of the process, which will be considered by a Panel of 2 Portfolio Holders and a representative from CECVS.

Community commissioning is an ambitious form of co-production, which can develop innovative new ways to deliver public services, in a way which delivers better services for less money.

Community arrangements will vary from place to place depending on what makes sense locally but key elements have been evidenced as: devolving or sharing commissioning power and responsibility with communities; building community capacity to commission; strong local leadership and partnership working; locally set service priorities and outcomes; aligning or pooling resources; establishing robust governance and accountability.

Co-production is a service that is offered, produced or provided, by the service users themselves. For people to get involved, they need to see the value of the service and feel capable and motivated to do what is required. If people feel that this is their service, they designed it, they are more likely to remain involved with it. It can help reduce unnecessary demand on services, by turning consumers into producers.

As part of the development of community hubs and the franchise model, community commissioning could act as a key incentive for organisations in an area to come together in a network. Network members would receive training, enabling them to take some commissioning responsibility. In the first instance, a proportion of the public health resources could be aligned to pilot geographical areas based on need, to commission services to improve mental health and wellbeing. For Public health funding, the network will need to service at least one of the 16 LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas) in the most deprived quintile nationally.

Community Network would be:

- provided with needs data for their area;
- be invited to identify their communities strengths and assets;
- be invited to identify gaps in opportunities for their community to engage in the five ways to wellbeing;
- provided with the evidence base of 'what works?' in addressing different need;
- supported to develop a commissioning process; and
- supported with prioritisation tools to aid decision making.

The outputs of the pilots would be a comprehensive understanding of the current activities in a locality that contribute to good wellbeing and an increase in the range and scale of activities available.

Learning would be used to develop a process with other commissioners, pooling resources and working with the community to develop community-based commissioning for wellbeing. The long-term aim would be to develop a framework of all relevant outcomes for a locality, enabling communities to commission a wide range of services to meet their needs.