

Cheshire East Council

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	7 th November 2017
Report of:	Fiona Reynolds, Director of Public Health
Subject/Title:	Connected Communities - Connected to Decision-Making
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Liz Wardlaw, Health

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. On 6th December 2016, Cabinet agreed to a new approach to how we engage with communities through our Connected Communities Strategy.
- 1.2. Connected to Decision Making looks at how we can develop opportunities for local people to influence policy and decision making. Cheshire East Council are committed to working with our communities, and this report demonstrates a range of ways we can do this and how we aim to develop this area of work going forward so that we continue to co-produce local services with our residents.
- 1.3. The purpose of this report is to set out a work plan on how Cheshire East Council can apply the principles of Participatory Budgeting in the mainstream commissioning cycle when appropriate, which allows communities to be better informed and part of the decision making process. By doing this we can better inform wider residents and key stakeholders about what we spend public money on through the commissioning of services.
- 1.4. By doing this we will be truly coproducing community based solutions with stakeholders based on local need, empowering communities to make decisions, whilst making the most of public money.

2. Recommendations

This report is to inform Cabinet:

How the principles of Participatory Budgeting can be used to inform mainstream commissioning and to ask Cabinet:

- 2.1. To endorse the existing Open Data and Transparency agenda, including formally launching the website and committing existing resources (staff) to achieve this. We will also launch collaboration with residents, to help

prioritise the publication of Open Data items, similar to the award winning Back Hacked.

- 2.2. To acknowledge the range of community partnerships and networks that have been established across the borough in towns and areas of deprivation
- 2.3. To recognise the importance of Community Development work to support and establish resident led initiatives. Also recognising that this work is supported and needs intelligence to provide evidence led decisions.
- 2.4. To note that we need new community led approaches to develop community based solutions that will support the Council to overcome challenges (such as the increasing demand on services such as Adult Social Care), which will result enhanced community empowerment.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. In 2016 during the development of the Public Health Lifestyles Commissioning programme, Public Health and Communities worked in collaboration to trial Participatory Budgeting across Cheshire East to achieve Public Health outcomes. The successes of this has resulted in the nomination for a national award and has achieved the following outputs:

- Total number of applications made: 251
- Total numbers of presentations delivered across the areas: 174
- Total number of successful bids across the area: 103
- Total number of voters (members of the community) who attended the events: 929

Further benefits and outcomes included (See 5.3 for further information):

- Improved Public Health outcomes
- Reduced health inequalities
- Increased community empowerment and democracy
- Market Development
- Connecting communities

Using the principles of Participatory Budgeting when commissioning a range of services will allow people to understand the restraints around limited budgets whilst inspiring the market to tackle priority outcomes. Developing our co-production approach to commission services will support Cheshire East Council to get the most out of public money.

- 3.2. The willingness to include residents in decision making is evident in the Coproduction Charter 'How we work together to improve and deliver services' which sets out an initial proposal on how key stakeholders including the range of community partnerships and networks can be involved in the commissioning cycle. This has also highlighted the

willingness to connect communities to decision making. Involving residents in the process highlights the need to be transparent on what Cheshire East Council spend on public services and what outcomes we expect to achieve through that allocation of funds. To publically share the following information (when deemed not commercially sensitive) will better inform residents, providers and other funders about how Cheshire East Council spends money and could include:

- Contract Timescales
- Commissioner and Supplier contact details
- Contract amounts
- KPI's and Contractual Outcomes
- Social Value

3.3. Our wide range of community partnerships and networks are key stakeholders across our communities, and include statutory agencies, faith, community and voluntary services and residents. They have local intelligence and direct access to individuals in our communities including hard to reach residents. Working together they can disperse important information, identify gaps in service provision and work with residents to identify and tackle local priorities. Alongside this each local Partnership has direct decision making in what services are delivered in Cheshire East Council's recently approved Connected Community Centre franchise model. Around 30 Connected Community Centres will be established by 2019, this provides Cheshire East Council with a unique opportunity to ensure services are delivered on resident's doorsteps. By empowering these local Partnerships to make decisions, we will ensure we are making the most of this opportunity and increase the chances of this partnership approach becoming sustainable long term.

3.4. With the success of Delivering Differently in Macclesfield which was highlighted in the Connected to Services Report agreed by Cabinet in March 2017, it is crucial we continue to support local resident led initiatives across the borough. Priorities identified by the local Partnerships can create a locally owned shared vision amongst residents and Cheshire East Council. The Community Development Team have extensive knowledge on forms of engagement to inspire residents to take part in service delivery which can lead to developing the market of existing services, drawing down external funding and creating sustainable services. Understanding that reduced resources and increased demand on traditional services such as Adult Social Care, will increase the need to be more innovative and to look at community based solutions and more cost effective levels of service provision.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1. Making decisions in isolation decreases trust amongst residents. In the 2017 Cheshire East Residents Survey, 13% of the citizens panel stated that they feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area, alongside this only 20% of those people stated that they feel they can trust

Cheshire East Council to spend money wisely. By developing services in isolation we can change public perception and empower local people to work with the Council and partners to overcome some of the challenges that we face.

5. Background

- 5.1. On 6 December 2016, Cabinet agreed to a new approach to how we engage with communities through our Connected Communities Strategy. This approach was how Cheshire East Council intends to work with the voluntary, community and faith sector, and residents to ensure the right services are in the right neighbourhoods by allowing key stakeholders to be part of appropriate decision making processes.
- 5.2. Cheshire East Council along with many other local authorities across the country, is facing unprecedented challenges to meet the demand of its residents alongside having to make large scale savings. Only by involving local residents and key stakeholders in how we face these challenges will we truly achieve the best outcomes for all parties. The Council is committed to developing strong and supportive communities, and this approach clearly demonstrates that commitment by putting our residents at the heart of the decision making process wherever possible.
- 5.3. Examples of what was achieved through the Participatory Budgeting process in 2016/17 can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 5.4. Connecting key stakeholders and local residents to decision making will support Cheshire East Council to overcome some of the local challenges and will aim to achieve the following:
 - Transparency - the true costs of all projects can be made known and the names and roles of all those responsible for the commissioning or delivering of a service will be published (this will be assessed on a case by case basis by the Compliance & Customer Relations Team, in discussion with the relevant managers and in accordance with the ICO guidance on requests for public authority employee data). This allows a range of contractual information to be published using the open data portal to better inform local residents, providers and external funders which organisations are being funded and what outcomes they are expected to achieve by Cheshire East Council.
 - Deliberation - the Participatory Budgeting and Coproduction process can take residents beyond personal choice and involve real deliberation around budget decisions. It ensures they have all the information they need and receive it in a way that meets their needs so that they can make an informed decision about where money is spent. By recognising key stakeholders to work with Cheshire East Council to identify local priorities based on community intelligence alongside statistical data. These local priorities can then lead to where and on what budgets are allocated, which encourages local

debate and shared responsibility, so that we commission the right services in the right places.

- Empowerment - to promote empowerment of individuals and communities based on the principle that active citizenship will create better public services. To agree that empowering local people to be involved in decision making and service delivery will lead the way in asset based community development.
- Shared responsibility - to have clarity and transparency in the aims of Connecting People to decision making and as far as practicable involve all key and interested stakeholders in this. This will inform local people to have a greater understanding of the challenges and difficult decisions that need to be made in times of austerity.

5.5. As part of the Delivering Differently initiative highlighted in the Connected to Services Report agreed by Cabinet in March 2017 having Neighbourhood Partnerships to inspire residents to be involved in service delivery, by setting up 7 resident led initiatives achieved an estimated cost savings of £200,000. This cost avoidance model using New Economy's Cost Benefit Analysis tool (which is being used by Greater Manchester Combined Authority and is endorsed by the Civil Service) can be developed to look how local initiatives can find alternative solutions to relieve some of the pressures on Adult Social Care and other demand areas within the council. This could result in short, medium and long term real cashable savings to the local authority putting community development in the heart of a future referral and commissioning process. This will encourage local people to identify gaps in service provision and be directly involved in appropriate levels of service delivery.

5.6. How the process would look?

Connecting Communities to Decision Making



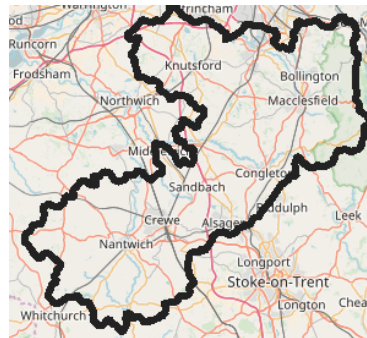
Wider providers using the Livewell site and local need gathered from wider residents will inform the community partnerships of the gaps in service in that locality. Using this place based approach the Communities Team can work with local people to develop resident led initiatives to impact on need

and/or inform commissioners to develop the market to provide place based services.

5.7. Where the local intelligence be located?

An interactive map could be accessible through the Open Data Portal and can inform commissioners, residents, providers and other funders of the following:

- The Area
- The Partnership associated with the area
- The priorities identified
- Actions being undertaken to impact on those priorities



6. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

6.1. All Wards

7. Implications of Recommendation

7.1. Policy Implications

7.1.1. Procurement policies will be adhered too in relation to any commissioning processes.

7.2. Legal Implications

7.2.1. The Council is a public body and when making decisions must satisfy its public law duties. In essence this means that in making a decision the Council must have taken into account only relevant considerations, followed procedural requirements, acted for proper motives and not acted unreasonably. The Council must also make decisions in accordance with the Constitution which sets out the decision making principles the Council will follow.

7.2.2. When the Council decides to apply specific criteria in making decisions it is essential that the Council does so consistently so that it can defend any challenge to its decision making process. It must also meet its Equality Duties.

7.2.3. Any decisions which involve awarding grants or purchasing goods or services must be made in accordance with the Council's Constitution and

in doing so follow the Council's Finance and Contract Procedure Rules and EU and public procurement rules (where applicable).

7.3. Financial Implications

7.3.1. The financial implications of using these principles relate to existing budget levels, meaning no additional resources are required

7.4. Equality Implications

7.4.1. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out where appropriate.

7.5. Rural Community Implications

7.5.1. Rural communities may feel isolated in a place based approach that is emphasised on towns and areas of deprivation but this approach will be about being inclusive and ensuring priorities from rural areas are also acknowledged.

7.6. Human Resources Implications

7.6.1. There are no specific HR implications

7.7. Health and Wellbeing Implications

7.7.1. The new services established should result on improved access to services and improved Health and Wellbeing for Cheshire East residents.

7.8. Implications for Children and Young People

7.8.1. This work to date has primarily focussed on adults health and wellbeing but introducing these principles to focus on children and young people can only enhance the offer of service provision in Cheshire East.

7.9. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Implications

7.9.1. The work streams that come out of this report, if agreed, should undergo the appropriate levels of scrutiny and it is suggested that the priorities identified by the partnerships and the new resident led initiatives that are developed that will be taken to communities scrutiny every six months.

7.10. Other Implications (Please Specify)

7.10.1. No other further implications have been identified to date.

8. Risk Management

- 8.1. There will be a risk of public scrutiny in showing contractual information as transparency encourages but only by sharing this information will ensure we achieve best practice.
- 8.2. Supporting residents to be involved in service delivery will carry a level of risk but supporting residents to upskill where appropriate and ensuring they have the right level of governance in place will mitigate these potential risks.
- 8.3. All risks will be identified through the Partnerships and Communities Business Planning process and are logged, reviewed and monitored.

9. Access to Information

- 9.1. Participatory Budgeting Youtube Clip for the Macclesfield event
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxr1IJpwRCA>

10. Contact Information

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