

## **Health and Adult Social Care and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:** 10 October 2019

**Report Title:** Connected Communities Centres

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Mick Warren - Communities

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### **1. Introduction and Policy Context**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress to date on the Council's Connected Communities Centres (CCC).

### **2. Background**

- 2.1. The Cabinet Member for Communities approved a pilot social franchise model for Community Hubs on the 20th July 2015. A model was adopted and monitored for development.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2. Cabinet agreed to a set of changes based on learning from the pilot franchise model in the Connected to Services report on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.3. Detailed amendments to the franchise model were then approved by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Communities on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017 which outlined the expectations and criteria for being awarded the social franchise status<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.4. The revised social franchise model, based on consultation with local stakeholders included the following:

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<sup>1</sup> Decision: That approval be given to the suggested approach to Community Hubs  
<http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1669>

<sup>2</sup> Connected to Services report on 14th March 2017.

<http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=241&MId=6109&Ver=4>

<sup>3</sup> Franchise model amendments

<http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1975>

- To display CCC signage
- To be provided with a secured tablet that will have access to a local directory of services (Livewell website)
- To award grant funding of up to £5,000 for a period of two years to reserve the use of the facilities (equivalent to 5 hours of room hire per week based on £10 per hour) for the delivery of early intervention and prevention services which will be decided by their local network/neighbourhood partnership
- An open day (show case of services) will be arranged from awarded franchisee building to inform the community what services could be delivered
- An invitation to a biannual conference to allow networking between franchisees
- Long term aim will be for the CCC to become the flagship venue for service delivery in the footprint it is located within, we will be working with commissioners and providers to support this.
- To be located in the CCC identified priority locations including our towns and neighbourhoods within the top 25% areas nationally for overall deprivation
- Each venue will continue to be quality assured through the completion of a Community and Voluntary Sector quality mark known as GRIPPP.

2.5. The initial proposal was for an allocated sum to support the set up and development of 30 CCC in the Borough in towns and areas of deprivation acting as a single point of access for a range of Community Wellbeing and Early Intervention and Prevention type services.

2.6. The CCC are an essential part of the Connected Communities Strategy which highlights the importance of physical community assets, partnership working and empowering local residents to connect with their own communities<sup>4</sup>.

### 3. Briefing Information

- 3.1. **Connected Communities Centres: The building as a community asset:**  
To date 27 CCC franchise offers have been awarded, across 40 facilities (some facilities are sharing the offer or not receiving any financial gain,

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<sup>4</sup> Connected Communities Strategy  
<https://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/documents/s51805/Connected%20Communities%20-%20appendix.pdf>

such as the Cheshire East libraries) with 28 of those facilities open as CCC and details accessible via the Open Data Portal<sup>5</sup> and lists below.

<b>Grant recieved</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
Pilot £2,000	1	Audlem Public Hall	Audlem	Open
Pilot £2,000	2	Bridgend Centre	Bollington	Open
£5,000	3	St Barnabas Church	Crewe Central	Open
£5,000	4	The Welcome Café	Knutsford, Longridge	Open
£5,000	5	Jubilee House	Crewe Central	Open
£5,000	6	St Johns Church	Macclesfield, Weston and Ivy	Open
£5,000	7	Beechmere Extracare Village	Crewe North and St Barnabas	Open
£5,000	8	The Georges Community Centre	Crewe North and St Barnabas	Open
£5,000	9	St Andrews Parish Hall	Crewe South	Open
£5,000	10	Belong	Crewe South	Open
£5,000	11	Poynton Civic Hall	Poynton	Open
£5,000	12	Church of the Resurrection	Broken Cross and Upton Priory	Open
£5,000	13	Green in the Corner Community Café	Macclesfield, Hurdsfield	Open
£5,000	14	St Barnabas Church	Macclesfield South	Open
£5,000	15	United Reformed Church	Wilmslow West & Chorley	Open
£5,000	16	United Reformed Church	Macclesfield Central	Open
£5,000	17	Oakmere Extra Care Housing	Handforth	Open
Library £0	18	Holmes Chapel Library	Holmes Chapel	Open
Split Holmes Chapel offer of £5,000 across 2 venues	19	Everybody Leisure Community Centre	Dane Valley	Open
	20	Goostrey Village Hall	Dane Valley	Open
Split Bromley farm offer of £5,000 across 2 venues	21	Bromley Farm Wellbeing Hub	Congleton East	Open
	22	Bromley Farm Community Development Trust	Congleton East	Open
Split Congleton town offer of £5,000 across 2 venues	23	Ruby's Fund	Congleton East	Open
	24	The Old Saw Mill	Congleton West	Open
£5,000	25	Booth Lane Methodist Church	Middlewich, Cledford	Open
£5,000	26	Victoria Hall	Middlewich Town	Open

<sup>5</sup> Open Data Portal mapping Connected Communities Centres [https://opendata-cheshireeast.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/a3eb58fae7cf4d5089d4023484cef2b8\\_0/data?page=3](https://opendata-cheshireeast.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/a3eb58fae7cf4d5089d4023484cef2b8_0/data?page=3)

£5,000	27	Changing Lives Community Centre	Crewe East	Open
£5,000	28	Stapley Village Hall	Nantwich North & Stapley	Open
Library £0	29	Nantwich Library	Nantwich	Awaiting Open Day
Library £0	30	Sandbach Library	Sandbach	Awaiting Open Day
£5,000	31	Lighthouse Centre	Crewe West	Awaiting Open Day
£5,000	32	Sherbourne Bungalows	Crewe East	Awaiting Open Day
£5,000	33	Open Arms	Wilmslow Dean Row	Awaiting Open Day
Library £0	34	Alsager Library	Alsager	Awaiting Open Day
Library £0	35	Middlewich Library	Middlewich	Awaiting Open Day
Split Sandbach offer of £5,000 across 3 venues	36	Ettiley Heath Methodist Church	Sandbach Ettiley Heath and Wheelock	Awaiting Open Day
	37	Sandbach Methodist Church	Sandbach Town	Awaiting Open Day
	38	Union Street Community Centre	Sandbach Heath and East	Awaiting Open Day
£5,000	39	Knutsford Community Hospital, Knutsford	Knutsford Community Hospital, Knutsford	Awaiting Open Day
Library £0	40	Wilmslow Library	Wilmslow East	Awaiting Open Day

3.1.1. To date the Connected Communities Centres have housed between 60-70 different external providers (most of which now deliver from more than one Centre) to outreach or permanently base from the CCC; this is to place the right services where people can get greatest access to them whilst promoting collaboration between providers whilst they are co-located. Examples of some of these service providers/projects are as follows:

- Employment Support (inc DWP)
- Mental Health Services
- Youth provision
- Parental Classes
- Nutrition and Health Classes (inc falls prevention)
- Flu Clinics
- Social Isolation Provision
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Police Drop in Services
- Conversational English Classes

Using a range of available data and local intelligence from key stakeholders and local residents the CCC work with existing services to ensure what services are required for the population surrounding the centre and to maximise the outcomes in the areas of most need.

Case study of a re-housed project in a CCC in Wilmslow:

*CCC United Reformed Church in Wilmslow is supporting 'CISFA - 'Chronic Illness Support For All' by subsidising room hire for a peer-led support group for adults and teens living with chronic illnesses. This provides an opportunity for socialisation and formation of new friendships with people who truly understand how it feels to live with chronic illness. Mrs J who runs the group said 'We moved our support group into The Undercroft from a public coffee shop 3 weeks ago and the difference it has made both in terms of activities we can offer and the calming affect it has on our members is incredible. From a busy loud coffee shop to a big spacious room all to ourselves has enabled us to provide both relaxation and distraction activities such as water colour painting, mindfulness colouring and meditation. All our members have chronic illness and this relaxed friendly home from home space is just perfect for us'.*

3.1.2. On average around 250 people come through the CCC to access these services per week (each venue varies). Each CCC is unique and has a look and feel dependant on the community it serves and the provision of services it houses<sup>6</sup>. This approach contributes towards strategic outcome number 5 that people live well and for longer accessing early intervention and prevention services which focus on the physical and mental wellbeing of our Cheshire East residents.

3.1.3. Using the CCC as service delivery points Cheshire East Council commissioned contracts now advise services to be delivered from the centres where appropriate. Providers are asked to considering how they can provide any early intervention and prevention service across the Borough not just from limited locations but making the service more accessible in the areas required. To date we have had four Commissioned areas of work that have incorporated this within the specification, they are as follows:

- Integrated Carers Hub
- Substance Misuse Service
- Social Isolation (Pathfinder CiC) Contract

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<sup>6</sup> The Welcome Café monthly update <https://us20.campaign-archive.com/?u=c119948016096aa079a751e66&id=d9e3d10244>

- Universal Information and Advice Contract

### 3.2. **Neighbourhood Partnerships: The network as a community asset:**

Each CCC has an associated neighbourhood partnership made up of local stakeholders from the area linked to it. The role of the partnership is to identify local priorities, support the relocating of services to the CCC to support local delivery, develop local partnership projects, inspire local people to develop initiatives to be delivered from the CCC and promote the CCC as the single point of access in the community for Community Wellbeing. Some partnerships made the decision to share the allocated budget for 1 CCC across more than one facility hence why we have a number of split sites, this decision has been made due to the local intelligence gained around the dynamics of the area. To date we have 15 Neighbourhood Partnerships across the borough within in excess of 200 different partners/agencies dedicated to this work this network of Neighbourhood Partnerships<sup>7</sup>

Each Neighbourhood Partnership has a working action plan see Appendix 1 “2019/2020 Nantwich Neighbourhood Partnership Action Plan” for an example on how the work locally is being captured.

#### Case study of a partnership project developed locally in Crewe:

*Working in partnership with Connected Community Centre (Belong Extra-care) and Cheshire College, CEC Community Development Officer facilitated a work experience placement for Performing Arts students. This collaborative project offered community cohesion to Belong customers by benefiting from person centred music therapy, live music sessions and bespoke playlists created for Belong customers by Cheshire College students, helping to combat loneliness and isolation caused by Dementia. The project provided an intergenerational connection between college students and elderly Belong residents, resulting in increased awareness for college students regarding the challenges face by the older generation and provided them with valuable employment skills and improve future employment prospects.*

### 3.3. **Local people delivering local projects: The resident as a community**

**asset:** Using an asset based community development approach the CCC are acting as single points of access in the community for residents to set up local initiatives. To date we have set up between 30-40 different local projects that are being owned by the community. Examples of some of these services are as follows:

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<sup>7</sup> Neighbourhood Partnerships names and locations

[https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/connected-communities/connected-communities.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/connected-communities/connected-communities.aspx).

- Mental Health Peer Support Group
- Dementia Cafe
- Community Choir
- Youth Groups
- After School Homework Clubs
- Art Clubs
- Healthy Food Projects
- Parkrun
- Community Discos
- Street Pastors
- Health Walks

This approach contributes towards strategic outcome number 1 that our local communities are strong and supportive promoting individuals and families to become self-reliant and outcome 5 “people live will for longer”.

#### Case Study 1 – Volunteering in Knutsford – Sarah’s Story

*Sarah’s smile is one of the first things you notice about this young mum from Knutsford – but step back five years and you would see a very different Sarah. Suffering with depression, extreme anxiety and feeling trapped inside her home, Sarah was struggling to look after a new baby and deal with a relationship breakdown. She felt as though her life was in a downward spiral. Thankfully, with our support she managed to take that vital first step towards getting help and is now inspiring and helping everyone in her local community through her role as volunteer coordinator and support worker at the Welcome Community Centre, on the Longridge Estate in Knutsford. Sarah said: “Depression isn’t simply a case of mind over matter and it’s fine to ask for help if you’re struggling. That first step is the scariest but it’s the best thing you can do to get support and start to change things for the better. “Looking after yourself has to be a priority and it’s not selfish to give yourself that help – you have to be ‘self-full’. If you’re feeling good and happy, you’re able to support your family, friends and community – but it has to start with you.” There are community services, groups and support available in the borough, such as connected communities centres, children’s centres and libraries where you can speak to a friendly face, get information and meet people with similar interests or challenges. In many centres, there are community cafés like the Welcome Café, where you can get a bacon butty and a cup of tea – there really is something for everyone. Sarah adds: “I am telling my story in the hope that it reaches that one person who might be sat like I was, hair in a mess, wearing pyjamas all day and trying to cope with a screaming baby. Life doesn’t have to be that way, so please find that ounce of energy to walk through the door of a local community centre, pick up the phone or go*



*online and find someone to help you. The biggest discovery for me was that I wasn't the only one to be feeling this way. It was a huge relief to share experiences with others." Sarah is going from strength to strength with many achievements, including raising a happy and healthy family, leading a 'stronger women' course, speaking in support of her local children's centre at a public meeting, working towards getting on a degree course in social work and a new job<sup>8</sup>.*

#### Case Study 2 – Social isolation activity in Macclesfield

*The Moss Rose partnership identified a gap in provision for socially isolated adults and engagement with local people to mobilise a group of volunteers to re-invent 'Coffee Plus' (a much-loved coffee afternoon which fizzled away a number of years ago). The provision is held at the CCC (St Barnabas Church) has 20+ attendees per week and is sustained through donations and volunteer support. To build on this, digital inclusion activity is being added to the initiative.*

#### Case Study 3 – Social isolation document in Wilmslow

*The Bollin Partnership acknowledged that although there was enough activity going on locally to tackle social isolation, those in need were not getting the relevant information. The partnership making connections through the Patient Participation Group found a local resident (Mrs R) who had a drive to create a local social isolation booklet "Connect"<sup>9</sup> of activities to get out to every resident of Handforth Wilmslow. Having spent around 250 hours of her own time and receiving a small grant from a number of partners to help with the printing 10,000 have now being printed and are in all of the GP practices and CCC for people to collect. The drive and passion behind this local resident has recently seen her be nominated as chairperson for the Bollin Neighbourhood Partnership.*

#### Case Study 4 – Community Café in Macclesfield

*The Green in the Corner GITC is a community interest company formed in 2016 by a group of residents, stakeholders and local business owners in Hurdsfield, Macclesfield. With support from Hurdsfield Partnership GITC were able to secure premises and set up a community cafe. The aim of the cafe was to provide healthy, affordable food and a safe, social space for residents of Hurdsfield. The Directors also wanted the cafe to be dementia friendly. Initially the day-to-day running of the cafe was solely voluntary, however thanks to increased revenue and a being supported to apply for a number of small grants, the cafe now employs a manager who works 10*

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<sup>8</sup> See Sarah's story via Cheshire East Councils Youtube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdbY6LwRJGk>

<sup>9</sup> Connect Booklet <https://handforthppgconnect.wixsite.com/connect>



*hours per week. In 2018 GITC was chosen by the Hurdfield Neighbourhood Partnership to become a CCC and they currently host a range of community activities including singing groups, art and craft groups, tea and chat groups and homework clubs. In addition, the cafe is signed up to Fareshare so they can provide free food to the residents who need it most. One volunteer of the GITC is now in long term employment and has credited his experience and confidence gained working in the cafe with helping to achieve his position<sup>10</sup>.*

#### 3.4. Future developments:

- **Care Communities:** The Connected Communities initiative which builds on local assets is now working alongside the Care Communities initiative (alignment of health and social care activity) where we are seeing projects develop between health and social care professionals in local areas, with local partners involving local people. This work was acknowledged by the Health and Wellbeing Board in April 2019.
- **Get Safe Online:** Drawing down external funding 16 CCC are currently being installed with hardware equipment to allow them to use different forms of technology to communicate key messages as well as educating local residents on how to keep people safe online. This work will enhance other digital work streams across the Council.
- **Booking system:** Future considerations are how we can improve how people can book on to the activities taking place from each CCC from a centralised point, we are currently exploring technology as a way of developing this. This work will look to be developed in 2020.
- **Asset Based Community Development Grants:** On the 10<sup>th</sup> September, Cabinet agreed the changes to the Early Help Grants which has introduced an element where local people can apply for up to £250 for ideas that can positively impact in their community therefore promoting social innovation. Using the CCC as a single point of access for local people to get support to apply for this fund will ensure that the type of projects people are applying for, meet local need in the area and build on existing local assets rather than duplicate provision. As from 2020 a process for decision making on these small £250 grants will be made at a local level made up of Neighbourhood Partnership and CCC representatives. Appendix 2 – “Early Help and Asset Based Community Development Grants”.

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<sup>10</sup> See the Green in the Corner directors clip via facebook <https://en-gb.facebook.com/TheGreenintheCorner/>

- **Social Value:** Using the network of providers, CCC and the local intelligence they provide, we are exploring ways of how we can maximise the social value consideration in public sector contracts meets local need in relation to early intervention and prevention. This will also include how we work with business and industry in channelling corporate social responsibility to meet local needs.

## 4. Implications

### 4.1. Legal Implications

4.1.1 A social franchise and associated grant funding is being awarded following an application process and against set criteria. By entering into a formal grant agreement with the Council the organisations can be monitored and required to report back to the Council upon their compliance with the franchise requirements and expenditure of the grant. The decision making process was delegated to the Portfolio Holder in order to ensure that decisions can be made expeditiously and at the appropriate level.

4.1.2 Grant funding to organisations based on the application of the Council's published scheme satisfies the Council's public law duties.

### 4.2. Financial Implications

4.2.1. The remaining payments will be funded from the Public Health grant. This is recorded on the Public Health Team Plan. The expenditure prior to 2019/20 was £60k which was funded through Communities Earmarked reserves, the £98k committed for 2019/20 onwards will be funded via the Public Health Grant

#### 4.2.2. Further information

There is a commitment to pay 27, £5,000 start up grants:

Approved List of facilities	40	As per List in section 3.2
Less - Pilot Centres	-2	<i>Processed in full during 2017/18</i>
Less - Library Centres	-6	<i>No start up grant required</i>
Less - Split Site CCCs	-5	<i>There are 4 split site centres</i>
<b>Number of Grant Commitments</b>	<b>27</b>	

The grant allocations are processed in 4 instalments. The first payment is made shortly after the opening day, and then subsequent payments are made at 6 month intervals during the first 2 years of operation. The final

payments will be processed in September 2021, provided the remaining centres open as planned by September 2019.

This table summarises the financial commitment to date:

	<b>Commitment (£)</b>	<b>2017/18 &amp; 2018/19 Spend (£)</b>	<b>Outstanding 2019/20 onwards (£)</b>
Pilot Scheme - Processed in 2017/18	4,300	4,300	-
Grant Payments (£5000 per centre)	135,000	39,920	95,080
Open Day (£150 per site, excluding CEC owned sites)	4,800	1,950	2,850
ICT Hardware Costs	12,276	12,276	-
Other Costs (Printing Etc...)	2,500	1,230	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158,876</b>	<b>59,676</b>	<b>97,930</b>