

**REPORT TO:** Grants Advisory Committee

27/09/2019

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER:** Cllr John Williams

**LEAD OFFICER:** Lesley McFarlane / Gemma Barron

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## District-wide coverage of Mobile Warden Schemes

### Executive Summary

1. There have been Mobile Warden Schemes within some parishes of South Cambridgeshire for over 20 years. The schemes have historically been community led and this has resulted in inequitable cover across the district with large geographical areas including some of our most isolated parishes, or parishes with greater numbers of older people, without a scheme.
2. The schemes serve a number of purposes, namely they enable older people to remain living at home independently for longer; avoid earlier transfer into care; avoid unnecessary hospital admission; enable more expedient hospital discharge and provide daily contact to people who would otherwise live in isolation and/or away from their families.
3. Enabling older and / or vulnerable people to have greater access to a local scheme is a key priority of the Council's Business Plan 2019-2024. This is aligned to the predicted high growth in the over 65 year old population over the next 20 years and in recognition that with age comes increased risk of deteriorating health, loneliness and feelings of isolation.
4. This will likely be a key decision for cabinet should additional unbudgeted finance be required.

### Recommendations

5. It is recommended that the Grants Advisory Committee considers the options for district-wide cover of Mobile Warden Schemes in order to provide more equitable cover across the District and recommends to Cabinet the most appropriate option.

### Reasons for Recommendations

6. According to Age UK, isolation and loneliness is more prevalent in people who are aged 65+, living alone, and/or have a chronic health condition. Feeling lonely and isolated can be very harmful to health. Research shows that lacking social connections is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (Holt-Lunstad, 2015). Academic research is clear that preventing and alleviating loneliness is vital to enabling older people to remain as independent for as long as possible.

7. Life expectancy in South Cambridgeshire is higher than the national and county averages, however, we now live in a society that is living longer, but with fewer years of life lived healthily.
8. The older population across South Cambridgeshire is set to rise over the period 2017-2035 by 49%. Over the same period the over 90's will increase by 137%.
9. According to the most recent health data released by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for South Cambridgeshire 2019 the following conditions are set to increase as follows:
  - a. Moderate physical disability: 19.4%
  - b. Serious physical disability: 20.6%
  - c. Mod/Serious personal care disability: 19.8%
  - d. Common mental disorder: 17.8%
  - e. A fall: 65.4%
  - f. Dementia: 93.4%
10. These will create demand for specialist housing as well as health and social care services.
11. An increasingly socially mobile society together with the high cost of housing in South Cambridgeshire is leading to fewer families remaining in the villages in which they grew up leading to greater dislocation of families and leaving older people more exposed to loneliness and distant family connections.

## Details

12. There are 14 schemes covering a total of 31 parishes (see map at appendix D). Many of the community led schemes have been in existence for over 20 years, developed in recognition that there was a need to provide a service to support and take care of older, more vulnerable members.
13. The schemes employ a range of approaches in order to support their clients including home visits and telephone calls; thus also creating opportunities within their communities for local volunteering. This creates a vital service for people to:
  - a) Know someone cares
  - b) Keep in touch with the outside world,
  - c) Receive medication, newspapers and food and
  - d) Remain living independently for as long as possible where they may otherwise be transferred into care or hospital.
  - e) Expedite hospital discharge
14. The schemes are available long-term, or on a short term basis following illness or hospital discharge to help get people back on their feet who are thereafter able to live independently at home, but who otherwise might not regain their health and independence.

### **Linking with other services**

15. The wardens link with other services and provide a signposting role to the client, opening doors and opportunities to access other services which help to support them to live independently, this includes helping clients apply for additional finance if eligible for example pension credit and disability living allowance or housing benefits. Some schemes also have good relationships with the GP practice and can liaise with practice staff if a client is poorly; responding to letters to ensure bills are paid or appointments are not missed. The main aim of the service however, is to check-in with vulnerable people to make sure they're well, to have a chat and show they care with people who may not otherwise have any human contact on a day to day basis.

### **Referrals**

16. Referrals come from a range of sources: Many self refer following word of mouth, other schemes receive referrals from the police, the voluntary sector (e.g. Care Network), GP surgery, parish newsletters and ministers. A number of the schemes would like closer ties with the local GPs and practice nurses and believe that this relationship has become more distant over time, given the many changes to how primary care services have been delivered over the duration of some of the schemes. However, this presents an opportunity for the service to be part of the wider community health and social care offering.

### **Self employed/parish employed warden salaries**

17. All schemes employ wardens on a part-time basis with circa 20 hour/week contracts, and each warden will look after approximately 10-20 clients in their patch. There is no set warden salary, each scheme sets its own budget for salaries. The wardens are also supported by volunteers to provide holiday cover and any periods of sickness absence. At Harston for example, this cover is provided by the Board of Trustees.

### **Client Fees**

18. Every scheme has a different client fee, the scale ranges from £5 per week up to £12 per week. The majority of schemes charge fees of approximately £6-7/week. To improve sustainability the Council recommended to schemes that a minimum fee should be set at £6.50/week.

### **Ongoing training and support for Wardens**

19. Due to the nature of the role of mobile warden, many in this post work in isolation. Speaking to the schemes, there was genuine interest from wardens to link with each other for peer support. Due to the changing nature of the health and social care system, some felt they would benefit from ongoing support and training in their roles together with more formal ongoing training in safeguarding, deprivation of liberty and first aid. It was proposed that the council create a forum which provides opportunities for wardens to meet, share information, peer support and create opportunities for ongoing learning and professional development.

### **Growing existing schemes**

20. Each of the community led schemes (with the exception of Melbourn) had no interest in extending their scheme beyond the parish boundary but has indicated they are more than happy to support other schemes to set up.

### **Sustainability of Existing Schemes**

21. All schemes rely on external funding to sustain them. The schemes want to keep the client fees as affordable as possible and are reluctant to increase fees on this basis.

22. Earlier this year, parishes without an existing scheme were contacted to gauge interest in setting up a scheme. 16 parishes responded with a request for further information. (See appendix B).

### Working in closer collaboration with health partners

23. Some wardens report missed opportunities to work more collaboratively with GP practices. Opportunities to support residents who needed extra support following illness, or discharge from hospital were welcomed.

### Existing Schemes

24. Of the 14 existing schemes, 7 are run by Age UK on behalf of the parish with investment from the Parish, District and County Councils (see table 2 below). The other 7 are community schemes set up and managed by a board of trustees (with the exception of Milton, which is run by the Parish Council). They bring in funding from various sources, and are supported by such organisations as Care Network with training and guidance. (see table 1 below).
25. This disparate, largely community led model has resulted in inconsistent cover across the district which creates inequalities and inequity in service and a priority for the Council is to provide greater coverage across the District to address this.
26. The challenge for the District Council is to encourage Parish Councils to set up a scheme, be it independently or through the Age UK model. Both require investment from the parish.

### Table 1 : Funding for Community-led Schemes 2019/2020

This table illustrates how the community led schemes are currently funded. Each model differs in how it seeks funding, administers its scheme and pays its employees. Income from service users is included in blue, where known.

| Village          | Max people benefitting last year | Funding Sources 2019/20 | Funding Sum 2019/20 (£) |
|------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Cottenham</b> | 22                               | SCDC                    | 1,800.00                |
|                  |                                  | Parish Council          | 1,150.00                |
|                  |                                  | CCF (Not confirmed)     | 2,499.00                |
|                  |                                  | Rotary (TBA)            | 0.00                    |
|                  |                                  | Subtotal                | 5,449.00                |
|                  |                                  | Service users           | 4,000.00                |
|                  |                                  | <b>Total</b>            | <b>9,949.00</b>         |
|                  |                                  |                         |                         |
| <b>Harston</b>   | 15                               | SCDC                    | 1,250.00                |
|                  |                                  | Parish Council          | 2,750.00                |
|                  |                                  | Covenanted Gifts        | 2,000.00                |
|                  |                                  | HMRC Gift Aid           | 1,000.00                |

|   |    |                     |                  |
|---|----|---------------------|------------------|
|   |    | Subtotal            | 7,000.00         |
|   |    | Service Users       | 4,200.00         |
|   |    | <b>Total</b>        | <b>11,200.00</b> |
| <b>Haslingfield</b>                     | 20 | SCDC                | 250.00           |
|   |    | Parish Council      | 3,000.00         |
|   |    | Subtotal            | 3,250.00         |
|   |    | Service Users       | 7,802.00         |
|   |    | <b>Total</b>        | <b>11,052.00</b> |
|   |    |                     |                  |
| <b>Melbourn</b>                         | 47 | SCDC                | 2,200.00         |
|   |    | CCC                 | 7,721.00         |
|   |    | Melbourne PC        | 6,500.00         |
|   |    | Meldreth PC         | 1,500.00         |
|   |    | Shepreth PC         | 600.00           |
|   |    | Subtotal            | 18,521.00        |
|   |    | Service users       | 11,626.00        |
|   |    | <b>Total</b>        | <b>30,147.00</b> |
|   |    |                     |                  |
| <b>Milton</b>                           | 20 | SCDC                | 2,155.00         |
|   |    | Milton PC           | 16,385.00        |
|   |    | Milton Charities    | 2,000.00         |
|   |    | Subtotal            | 20,540.00        |
|   |    | Service Users       | 7,000.00         |
|   |    | <b>Total</b>        | <b>27,540.00</b> |
|   |    |                     |                  |
| <b>The Mordens &amp; Litlington MWS</b> | 25 | SCDC                | 2,155.00         |
|   |    | 3 x Parish Councils | 1,800.00         |
|   |    | Grants other        | 300.00           |
|   |    | Other               | 160.00           |
|   |    | Subtotal            | 4,415.00         |
|   |    | Service users       | 5,895.00         |
|   |    | <b>Total</b>        | <b>10,310.00</b> |
|   |    |                     |                  |
| <b>Great Shelford</b>                   | 36 | SCDC                | 1,000.00         |
|   |    | Great Shelford PC   | 2,500.00         |
|   |    | Shelford Feast      | 1,000.00         |
|   |    | Subtotal            | 4,500.00         |
|   |    | Service users       | 4794.00          |

|  |  |                                     |                   |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
|  |  |                                     |                   |
|  |  | <b>Total</b>                        | <b>9,294.00</b>   |
|  |  |                                     |                   |
|  |  | <b>Total excl Service User Fees</b> | <b>63,675.00</b>  |
|  |  | <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>                  | <b>109,942.00</b> |

Table 2: Age UK Schemes

| Village   | Max no people benefitting last year | Funding sources 2019/20 | Funding sum 2019/20 (£) |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>The Small Villages Scheme:</b><br>Weston Colville, West Wratting, Balsham, Linton, West Wickham, Horseheath, Shudy Camps and Castle Camps. Individual parish schemes in Swavesey, Histon, Girton, Impington, Waterbeach, Teversham, Stapleford | 129 across all schemes              | SCDC                    | 13,200.00               |
|   |                                     | CCC                     | 12,132.00               |
|   |                                     | Parishes                | 18,975.00               |
|   |                                     | Donations               | 3,500.00                |
|   |                                     | Subtotal                | 47,807.00               |
|   |                                     | Service User Income     | 23,671.00               |
|   |                                     | <b>TOTAL</b>            | <b>71,478.00</b>        |

### Parishes without schemes

27. There are 71 parishes without a Mobile Warden Scheme. To provide complete cover across the District would require setting up additional schemes.

In order to assess the cost to the District of expanding coverage, officers have identified a number of priority “strategic locations” or parishes. The following parishes have been identified as strategic:

- Papworth / Elsworth
- Sawston
- Thriplow
- Gamlingay
- Willingham
- Whittlesford
- 6 villages along the A428 / A1198 corridor (Hardwick, Caldecote, Comberton, Wimpole, Bourn, Toft)

28. These parishes are identified as strategic because:

- a. They are geographically rural areas with no existing cover (A428/A1198 corridor)
- b. They are Parishes with a higher population of older residents according to the local CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) profiles and data from the Cambridgeshire Insight, Parish Profiles tool.

29. Age UK has provided an estimate (appendix A) for setting up schemes in the strategic parishes above. If prioritised, these parishes could be part 1 of a staged approach to the District's approach to improving coverage of mobile warden schemes across the district. Part 2 of a staged approach might include the remaining parishes at point 22 above who expressed an interest in knowing more, (16 additional parishes). This would lead to a further 43 parishes still requiring cover, the cost of which is still being established.

## Options

There are a number of different options for how to proceed with improving Mobile Warden Scheme coverage across the District of South Cambridgeshire, which could all be implemented in 2 phases. These options are as follows:

### 30. Option 1

Create a separate grant fund, distinct from the existing Mobile Warden Scheme grant fund, dedicated to setting up new or expanded schemes only. This would be open to parishes, community groups and established charitable organisations for the creation of new schemes and the expansion of existing schemes. This would provide choice to the Parishes in which approach to take e.g. bring in an external provider or encourage a community-led scheme.

Members are asked to consider whether such a grant fund would fully fund new and expanded schemes or make a contribution to running costs (as per the existing Mobile Warden Scheme grant fund).

### 31. Option 2

Provide full funding for e.g. the first two years for new schemes, with prior agreement that Parishes will then apply for grant funding in the normal way in subsequent years.

### 32. Option 3:

In order to introduce schemes into the 71 parishes without a scheme, the fastest approach would be to fully fund an external provider to give full and continuous cover. The cost of this option is still being calculated.

33. All options 1-3 could be achieved by implementing a phased approach. Members are asked to consider the following:

- a. Phase 1: prioritise those strategic parishes outlined in point 27 above as well as the parishes that have come forward showing an interest (appendix B). There is some overlap between these groups. This first phase in options 2 and 3 would require an annual budget of circa £200,000 in the first two years where schemes would be fully funded.  
In option 2 from year 3 onwards phase 1 would require an increase of circa £28,000 per annum in the grant funding available to Mobile Warden Schemes. (This is based on the average grant funding award to existing schemes multiplied by the parishes identified as strategic and showing interest n=28 ). Such an increase would need to be introduced in such a way as to only be available to those new schemes set up as part of this initiative and would not be available to schemes in existence now. In option 3, from year 3 onwards the figures are still being calculated.
- b. Phase 2: run a second round of grant funding or look to procure an external provider to deliver a warden service in the remaining 43 parishes, which would result in district-wide cover. Members are asked to be aware that an external provider is likely to look to be fully funded and therefore costs would be higher (and are still being calculated).

#### **34. Option 4**

Maintain the status quo.

## **Implications**

35. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

## **Financial**

36. In seeking an external provider to deliver all the schemes across the district within the two year deadline, the contract value would be in excess of £200,000 which exceeds the procurement threshold of £181,000 for EU procurement and therefore the full weight of regulations will apply. This will involve advertising in the official journal of the European Union, competitively tendering and awarding to the highest scoring bidder.

## **Risks/Opportunities**

#### **37. Option 1**

Only parishes who are interested in setting up a new scheme or wishing to extend an existing scheme may apply. It is unlikely that this option would provide full district cover within the 2 year time frame.

This option risks some schemes already in receipt of funding requesting an uplift to match the proposed contribution to new schemes. Members should also be aware that parishes choosing to bring in an external provider are likely to request more than the £1000 average contribution as costs will be higher. This option could be resource intensive with regard to officer time in liaising with parishes and administering the application process.



Based on an average grant award to schemes from the existing fund, the additional funding required for new / expanded schemes would be circa £1000 x 71 = £71,000.

### **38. Option 2**

The risk to option 2 is that there would be no guarantee that the parishes would wish to contribute to the scheme following year two and thus schemes may collapse after full funding expires. There would also be a disparity of funding approach; new schemes would be funded in full for 2 years whereas existing schemes receive only a contribution from SCDC towards the total running costs.

### **39. Option 3**

This option would ensure district wide coverage but result in disparity in the way the mobile warden schemes are funded by SCDC. New schemes would be funded in full whereas existing schemes receive only a contribution from SCDC towards the total running costs. The risk to this approach would be that existing schemes request grant funding in full. While work is ongoing to calculate this total cost, we anticipate it could increase the annual funding requirement by £600,000.00 (the cost of funding new schemes plus any uplift requested).

40. In 2019/20, the amount of Council grant funding applied for was £31,359.00. The amount awarded was £20,110.00. Schemes sought additional funding to the value of £71,227.00 from other sources.

41. In all instances, if an external provider sets up schemes, costs are higher but district-wide coverage is more likely to be achieved within the next 2 years. This would create an equitable service for all residents wishing to access a scheme. The sums concerned are high enough that if this were not treated as grant funding, the value of any contract would meet the threshold for EU procurement (>£180,000) and this could delay the implementation of districtwide coverage within two years (see financial chapter below).

42. The existing schemes are not sustainable without grant contributions and other sources of funding and the amount of SCDC grant funding has remained static for many years.

## **Equality and Diversity**

43. Any decisions arising from this report will be subject to an equality and diversity report.

## **Consultation responses**

44. Each parish without a scheme has been consulted by telephone or email to gauge their interest in setting up a scheme. A meeting or telephone call has taken place with each of the existing schemes in order to complete background information for this report.

## **Effect on Council Priority Areas**

## **A modern and caring Council**

This piece of work helps to deliver the provision of grants to community and voluntary groups to help them carry out projects to benefit local people including the development of a business case for increasing the coverage of mobile warden schemes across the district

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Report Author:**

Lesley McFarlane  
Development Officer, Health Specialist  
Telephone: 01954 713443