

**REPORT TO:** Cabinet

18 January 2021

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER:** Cllr Bill Handley

**LEAD OFFICER:** Jeff Membery

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## Health & Wellbeing Strategy Update

### 1. Executive Summary

2. Following Cabinet approval of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy in June 2020, this paper aims to update Cabinet Members on the progress of activities to date, including the impacts of Covid on delivery of some key activities.
3. The Health & Wellbeing Strategy was written largely prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and approved whilst the Country was in Lockdown 1.
4. The activities outlined in the strategy focused on a delivery model based on the working environment prior to social-distancing rules which has negatively impacted many of the planned works schemes.

### 5. Key Decision

6. No

This report seeks to update Lead Members and is for information only.

### 7. Recommendations

8. Cabinet are asked to note the contents of the report and consider the impacts of Covid on the delivery of activities and services which promote physical and mental health and wellbeing.

## 9. Reasons for Recommendations

**10. It was agreed by Cabinet in June 2020, that the strategy would be an active working document to be reviewed at 6 months and 3 yearly thereafter.**

## 11. Details

12. The Health & Wellbeing Strategy was written prior to the Covid-19 pandemic with a service delivery model based largely on social and group interaction without reference to social distancing measures. Covid-19 continues to have a significant impact on the health and social care system, the economy and delivery of some of our planned programmes.

13. An action plan was developed with the strategy to track progress (see appendix A). Below provides a summary of what has been progressed/delayed over the past 6 months.

## Successes

14. There have been a number of successes despite the trying circumstances brought about by the covid-19 pandemic, as follows:

15. **Covid Community Groups and patch leads.** This relationship has enabled local voluntary groups to work autonomously and sustainably to meet the needs of their communities, supported by District Council patch-based leads who provide support, information, and regular updates. This model has worked very well, and the approach has been appreciated by the volunteer leads in each community.

16. **Mobile Warden Schemes – expansion.** Delivery of 7 new Mobile Warden Schemes resulting in access to this valued service for an additional 20 villages across the District. Almost 50% of all communities can now access a scheme from December 2020.

17. Grants Advisory Committee agreed to **increase the grant funding available to existing Mobile Warden schemes by ~100%**, using the underspend from the procurement exercise over the summer, and to extend contracts from 12 months to 3 years. This will give surety to users of ongoing provision and to employees of continued employment in uncertain times. It will also enable existing schemes to extend their reach within their communities and to plan longer term.

18. **Wild Minds** - The pilot scheme “Wild Minds” was launched in September 2020 in collaboration with Cambridge Sports Lake Trust; an early mental health intervention aimed at young people aged 14-17 showing early signs of mental health decline. The 6-week course is delivered outdoors at Milton Country Park providing therapeutic support with the aim of preventing an escalation in mental health needs. A second cohort is underway, (not affected by current Covid guidelines); early evaluation of results from the first cohort appear positive, with a full evaluation to follow completion of the pilot this year.

19. **Healthy You, Tier 1 Lifestyle Service.** The council has been working closely with the other Districts to develop the new Healthy You, Tier 1 Lifestyle service which replaces Let's Get Moving. The new collaboration between Districts is planned to create a more cost-effective delivery, with improved linkages to GP and other health providers, via the health service's database, SystemOne, allowing for streamlined referrals. The team have been working hard to move as many services on-line including the delivery of nutrition education in schools. This new contract commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020.
20. **Exercise on Referral scheme;** whilst it has not been possible to deliver this scheme as a result of restrictions imposed by government, officers have taken the opportunity to review the offer and adapt it to include opportunities for outdoor activity, to build peer support and ongoing sustainability of behaviour change for participants. We are piloting this new delivery model with Centres and plan to restart these activities in Spring 2021.
21. **Mental Health training for Covid Volunteer Community groups** has been commissioned from CPSL Mind; phase 1 was offered to all volunteers in December 2020 with opportunities for extended on-line workshops to dedicated parish-based volunteers from January 2021.
22. **Hot meals delivery** - 103 hot meals/week have been distributed to vulnerable people from the Over Day Centre via grant funding since June 2020. A second distribution hub has been identified in Foxton to extend its reach across the district to the South of the City. It is planned for this hub to be active from January 2021.
23. **Food Vouchers** - Links with the children's centres, retailers and Healthy Start food vouchers was introduced as an action to immediately address inequalities and give every parent the option to access vital food vouchers regardless of where they lived and size of the convenience store. This has been achieved with the help of the "opening the high street officers".

#### **Impacts of Covid and effects on service delivery:**

24. Many of our **sports-based activities** were put on hold in compliance with Government guidelines. This has led to the temporary cessation of our Exercise on Referral Scheme "Active and Healthy4Life" which offers regular physical activity sessions to older people with pre-existing medical conditions (and at higher risk of serious outcomes of Covid) and the temporary cessation of strength and balance classes, reducing capacity to address frailty and increased risk of falls. This has provided the opportunity to re-evaluate the activities to address Covid-19 and develop a more sustainable programme.
25. **Holiday sports camps**, and the disability athletics events for schools were all cancelled to support schools in preventing children mixing with those from other schools. We are exploring how these can be reintroduced safely in spring/summer of this year.
26. Our **community leisure facilities** continue to be adversely affected. Access to community sports facility provision across South Cambridgeshire is delivered via use of shared facilities with Educational Trusts within school grounds. These centres have suffered significantly due to their enforced closure throughout lockdown and poor take

up when centres re-opened briefly. The impacts have been further compounded as these dual-use centres have previously been ineligible for government financial rescue packages as they neither fall within education nor the standard models for the leisure industry. Margins are normally typically very low and they are largely reliant on user generated revenue. Whilst these centres have in some instances been able to furlough staff whilst closed it should be highlighted that they have continued to incur running costs, causing them to be financially adversely affected by the ongoing pandemic.

27. **Temporary closure of community facilities** (e.g. village halls) for group social events and physical activity: A member-led task and finish group has been organised to review accessibility of community facilities and best practice in the face of Covid-19 to help mitigate where possible the exacerbation of social isolation over the winter months.
28. Changes to **lifestyle behavioural choices** during lockdown are being surveyed by County Council at present and findings will help to determine how we position health and wellbeing initiatives for our residents in the future. Anecdotally we understand that people in general have gained weight, exercised less (there has been a marked drop-off since the initial increased uptake at the beginning of lockdown 1) and consumed more alcohol as a means of coping with extended pressures of isolation, fear and anxiety for the future, job uncertainty or job loss and home-schooling.
29. Recipients of our **third sector grant funding** have all reported increased demand for services, particularly the advice services such as CAB for example. However, all have adapted their services to increase capacity and meet demand. Care Network have developed a new service specifically to address anxiety resulting from Covid19 and the fear of going outside, offering one to one support to residents in need of emotional support to do so. Community transport has suffered, however, with low user demand and loss of volunteer drivers.
30. Employment of an **in-house mental health worker** seconded from the NHS has been delayed due to Covid and pressures on their own service to meet increased demand. This is under review and alternative options are being explored.
31. Demand for mental health and advice services is anticipated to soar over the coming months/years, resulting from economic hardship, uncertainty for the future, relationship/family breakdown, anxiety and depression. Careful consideration needs to be given as to how we support communities and existing 'expert' organisations in mitigating the impacts of poor mental health.

## 32. Implications

## 33. Financial

There are no anticipated financial implications as any financial resource would be drawn from existing budgets.

34. In the writing of this report, taking into account, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:- None.

### **35. Alignment with Council Priority Areas**

#### **A modern and caring Council**

B) Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in –  
Under this priority area in the actions grid we commit as a council to focussing on the health and wellbeing of our communities through everything we do.

D) A modern and caring Council

We commit to expanding Mobile Warden Schemes and to providing grants to community and voluntary groups to help them carry out projects to benefit local people and the environment.

### **36. Appendices**

A. Health & Wellbeing Action Plan Update

#### **References and further reading**

1. [Impacts of Covid-19 in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Needs Assessment](#)
2. [Wider Impacts of Covid-19: Health Needs Assessment Intelligent pack for Local Health Partners](#)
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-surveillance-report/2-important-findings-so-far>

### **37. Report Author:**

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