



ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 JUNE 2016

DRAFT COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2016-20

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to invite members of the Committee to comment on the outcome of the public and stakeholder consultation that took place between 8 February 2016 and 2 May 2016 on the draft Strategy 'Providing less: Supporting more – Our vision and strategy for communities and wellbeing 2016-2020' (attached as Appendix A).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Strategy takes into account a range of legislation, national standards, local strategies and plans as well as nationally published strategic reports. Further details of these are set out in Appendices B and C.
3. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2014/15–2017/18 approved by the County Council on 19 February 2014 included reductions to budgets across the Communities and Wellbeing Service.
4. On 19 September 2014, following consultation, the Cabinet approved a remodelling of the library service. Progress is continuously reported to this Committee as well as the Cabinet.
5. On 12 January 2016, the Cabinet approved a period of consultation on a draft Strategy for the Communities and Wellbeing Service (see paragraphs 19-31).
6. On 17 February 2016, the Council approved the MTFS which included £1.9 million savings for the Communities and Wellbeing Service to be delivered by 2018/19.

Background

7. The Communities and Wellbeing Service (the Service) is part of the Adults and Communities Department and comprises of a range of cultural, educational and support services including:-
 - Libraries;
 - Museums and Heritage sites;
 - Record Office of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR);

- Care Online;
 - Leicestershire Adult Learning Service (LALS);
 - Creative Leicestershire;
 - Creative Learning Services.
8. These services are delivered across a range of venues including 16 market town and shopping centre libraries, the Record Office, Museums in Charnwood (Loughborough), Melton Mowbray and Market Harborough, Bosworth Battlefield, Donington le Heath Manor House and the Century Theatre, Snibston.
9. LALS delivers an accredited and non-accredited learning offer across over 130 community venues. However, as the majority of LALS funding is received through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), a separate strategy for this service is being developed.

Legal and Policy Context

10. The legal and policy context surrounding the services has been summarised in the Cabinet report dated 12 January 2016. Of note is the obligation for the local authority to deliver a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service which it determines according to local need and analysis, and the statutory regulation around the provision of an archive and record service.

Strategic and Financial Context

11. Communities and Wellbeing provide services that can be mapped as making a contribution to a range of current local strategies. These include:-
- (i). Leicestershire County Council MTFS 2016-2020;
 - (ii). Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2014-2018 (Leading Leicestershire: Transforming Public Services);
 - (iii). Leicestershire Communities Strategy 2014;
 - (iv). Better Care Together Five Year Strategic Plan 2014-2019;
 - (v). The Adult Social Care Strategy 'Promoting Independence, Supporting Communities' 2016-2020;
 - (vi). Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Leicestershire 2013-16.
12. The outcomes of this contribution can be summarised as:-
- (i). Enhancing Leicestershire's cultural environment;
 - (ii). Promoting local tourism;
 - (iii). Investing in people through supporting employment and skills;

- (iv). Building the resilience and capacity of communities to support themselves and vulnerable individuals and families, reducing demand on public services;
 - (v). Supporting community groups to take over relevant services and to work alongside the Council to design and deliver services;
 - (vi). Supporting initiatives to build social capital;
 - (vii). Promoting and facilitating access to universal services;
 - (viii). Improving access to information and advice;
 - (ix). Contributing to the prevention and reduction agendas of public health and social care.
13. In addition, there have been a number of strategic reports published nationally which impact on the sector which have been considered when developing the draft Strategy for the service. A summary of these are attached as Appendix C of this report.
14. In February 2016, the Council approved £1.9 million savings target for the Service. This means that by 2018 the Service's budget will be reduced to approximately £3.9 million which is a decrease of over 30% of its current level.
15. With this additional challenge, it was recognised that in order to deliver the savings target a revised service strategy was needed; one that aimed to move away from the direct provision of services and instead supported communities to manage their own delivery and access.
16. Therefore, a Strategy has been developed which considers:-
- The volume and type of services that are delivered;
 - The locations from which services can be accessed;
 - Increased efficiency in the use of all available resources and new ways of generating income to support services.

Strategic Approach to Service Delivery

17. The approach proposed for the draft Strategy has been outlined in the Cabinet report dated 12 January 2016. It explained how it is intended for the Service to develop and enable access to leisure, heritage, learning and creative services in the future. It also outlines the ways in which it aims to contribute to the Council's key strategies relating to children and families, adult social care, health, the economy, digital access, tourism and skills by working in partnership with other organisations and local communities.
18. The approach proposed focuses around three strategic areas which informed the consultation process:-
- Enabling and supporting communities – the Service will provide support to communities to empower them to become self-sufficient by participating in the co-design and co-development of future service provision. It will shift the emphasis of the Service to providing less, supporting more.

- Access to Services - the network of Service venues will need to be reviewed and possibly reduced. Virtual and digital services will be developed to increase self-service and improve choice of access. The exploration of opportunities to generate income in more areas of the service was also proposed.
- Supporting Key Strategies in Preventing and Reducing Need - the Service will work with strategic partners to identify and evidence key commissioning areas and consult with communities about the services offered. It will not be able to continue to solely deliver some targeted services.

Consultation

Consultation and Engagement Overview

19. A formal 12 week consultation on the draft Strategy was held between 8 February and 2 May 2016.
20. The consultation targeted a range of stakeholders and sought to gather their views in a variety of ways. These included:-
 - (i). A survey questionnaire available online via the Council's website, or in a paper format;
 - (ii). A series of five stakeholder events, including specific events for volunteers in the Service and organisations responsible for the management of community libraries;
 - (iii). A public stakeholder event;
 - (iv). Meetings between senior managers from the Service and other, relevant stakeholder groups and their representatives;
 - (v). A series of staff workshops that informed staff of the background to the Strategy and invited comments.
21. The draft Strategy was considered by this Committee on the 26 February 2016 as part of the consultation process. The relevant minute extract is attached as Appendix D.
22. Throughout the consultation, considerable efforts were made to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage participation. The consultation was publicised in the media, on the Council's website, in Communities and Wellbeing venues, via social media, e-blasts, Leicestershire Matters and a CIS article for Council internal stakeholders. In addition, information was sent directly by post and email to stakeholders.
23. The outcomes of the consultation have been used to shape the final version of the Communities and Wellbeing Strategy (see paragraphs 27-32 below). They will also be used in the continued development of the full business case and associated implementation plan for the Strategy.

24. A total of 797 responses were received of which the majority were from Leicestershire residents (76%). In addition, 38 people, representing a variety of local groups and organisations attended the stakeholder events outlined in paragraph 28.
25. The consultation questionnaire sought stakeholder views on the various aspects of the Strategy. Questions sought responses around the following areas:-
- The use and value attributed to the different elements of the Communities and Wellbeing Service;
 - The design principles adopted by the Strategy;
 - The strategic approach proposed by the Strategy.
26. In response to the feedback from the consultation the text “*Supporting Key Strategies in Preventing and Reducing Need*” has been amended to “*Targeted Services*” to clarify that this relates to the range of services that the Service provides to specific groups in order to achieve particular outcomes.

Consultation Responses (Questionnaire)

27. A detailed analysis report of the outcomes of the consultation questionnaires are contained in Appendix E. Key findings include:-
- (i). People place a high value on the different services provided by the Service. Libraries, Museums and Heritage Services were valued (a great deal or to some extent) by 96% and 80% of respondents respectively;
 - (ii). Despite low levels of reported usage Care Online, Creative Learning Service and Creative Leicestershire were valued by 48-58% of respondents;
 - (iii). The majority of respondents (63%) agreed with the key design principles of the strategy;
 - (iv). 46% of respondents agreed with the strategic approach outlined in paragraph 18 with 36% disagreeing. The main areas of concern were associated with the capacity of communities to take a leading role in the design and delivery of services and the impact of the shift in focus from employed staff;
 - (v). Respondents from stakeholder groups felt that the need for continued professional support from the County Council was important to help local groups become more confident and continue to develop;
 - (vi). Appropriate use of technology was seen as a way of developing services, but it was recognised that this may present barriers to some people in accessing services;
 - (vii). Partnership working with other services and organisations was recognised as being important (57%) if services were to be sustained;
 - (viii). There were low levels of support (less than 25%) for reducing the network of venues and opening hours;

- (ix). Supporting children's learning, supporting vulnerable people and promoting the value of reading were identified as key areas of targeted activity. Whilst developing digital services and contributing to the local economy were identified as the least important. In addition, the need to undertake further work to clearly define how services might be targeted and to whom was commented on;
- (x). There was some acceptance that some services may need to be charged for.

Consultation Responses (Stakeholder Events)

- 28. During the consultation period stakeholder events were held at ROLLR in Wigston, Melton Museum and Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Site. There were also events specifically for volunteers in the Service, representatives from community managed libraries and the general public held at the County Hall. These events gave attendees an opportunity to discuss the contents of the Strategy in more detail and to consider alternative approaches. Notes of the stakeholder events are contained in Appendix F.
- 29. The comments and feedback from these events were broadly consistent with the responses to the questionnaire detailed above (concerns relating to volunteers, digitisation, reductions in venues and opening hours, and a need to prioritise services for children and vulnerable people).
- 30. Suggestions were also made about alternative approaches to deliver the Strategy. These included:-
 - (i). Investigating alternative revenue streams including corporate giving, "suggested" donations scheme, enhanced catering facilities, room/venue rental;
 - (ii). Developing relationships with business to share "lessons learned" and good practice.

Consultation Responses (Other)

- 31. Individual responses were also received from other stakeholders (see Appendix G). These responses highlight:-
 - (i). The contribution made by the Service to a range of other agendas including prevention, social isolation, employability, advice and information;
 - (ii). The need to base any decisions regarding changes to services on sound evidence;
 - (iii). Concerns about the potential impacts of digitisation of services;
 - (iv). The value of libraries, museums and heritage venues to partner organisations including borough, district and parish councils.
- 32. In addition, officers and members of this Committee have recently visited the library service in Peterborough run by an Vivacity an independent not for profit organisation, in order to view self-service access to library venues that may be explored across the 16 County Council funded libraries. A briefing note of this visit is attached as Appendix H.

Implementation of the Strategy

33. The delivery of the Strategy will be particularly challenging within the financial envelope available. This is because of the scale of reduction and the work that will be involved in the preparation of an implementation plan.
34. The consultation responses gave officers a benchmark in identifying and investigating options when developing the Strategy's implementation plan. The potential workstreams have been identified and these will inform the development of an implementation plan that will be reported to Cabinet later in the year. The workstream areas identified are outlined below:-
- (i). A review of digital and online operations, including radio frequency identification technology, self-service access libraries, e loans, digital access to cultural resources and the digital support offer to service customers;
 - (ii). A review of all venue operations, including making efficient use of all available resources and the development of supporting business plans where appropriate;
 - (iii). A review of targeted services, including the assessment against clearly defined criteria. Where appropriate this would include the development of eligibility criteria and processes for future service commissioning;
 - (iv). Communities and Wellbeing Service redesign/restructure to support the delivery of the remodelled service, this would include an associated workforce strategy.
35. It should be noted that it is expected that some of these areas, if pursued, would require investment to realise a longer term saving. Therefore, to determine the viability of these options it will be necessary to complete individual business cases, which will be evaluated by the Design Authority and monitored by the Departmental Transformation Delivery Board, in accordance with Council processes.
36. Implementation will take place over the MTFS term. The development of the implementation plan will be overseen by the Departmental Transformation Delivery Board. Delivery of the plan will be overseen by the Communities and Wellbeing Strategy Steering Group, which will govern the agreed workstreams and any associated business activities.

Resources Implications

37. The Service's net budget for 2016/17 is £5.2 million. In line with the Council's MTFS this is will reduce to approximately £3.9 million per annum from 2018/19. Given the scale of these savings service delivery will have to change significantly. The Strategy provides the basis upon which these changes will be delivered. Members will be aware of the ongoing financial challenge that lies ahead and as a result further savings may need to be achieved.
38. LALS is principally funded through the SFA, although referenced within the Strategy, it is recognised that a separate strategic document for LALS will need to be developed. Work to complete this is currently in progress.

39. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

40. The outcome of the consultation, together with the comments received from the Committee, will be reported to the Cabinet on 18 July 2016. A further report on the assessment of an associated implementation plan will be reported to the Cabinet and this Committee when completed.

Conclusions

41. Approval of the Strategy will enable the new model for the delivery of services to be implemented over MTFS period. The draft Communities and Wellbeing Strategy has been developed to:-
- (i). Fulfil statutory duties;
 - (ii). Meet the budgetary requirements and efficiency targets detailed in the County Council's MTFS;
 - (iii). Provide a basis for the planning, commissioning and delivery of services over this MTFS period;
 - (iv). Use the views of customers and stakeholders to inform the revised Strategy and to develop the detailed plan for its implementation.
42. The Committee is asked to submit its comments concerning the draft Strategy 2016-2020, as well as the consultation process outlined in this report. The Committee members are also invited to give their views on the potential workstreams associated with developing of the Strategy implementation plan.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet, 5 March 2014 - Consultation on Proposals for Changes in the Delivery of Community Library Services <http://ow.ly/JmQOC>

Report to the Cabinet, 19 November 2014 – Future Strategy for the Delivery of Library Services <http://ow.ly/JmQwT>

Report to the Cabinet, 6 February 2015 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/16 – 2018/19 <http://ow.ly/WM8Y300Sob2>

Report of the Cabinet to County Council, 18 February 2015 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/16 – 2018/19 <http://ow.ly/SbldW>

Report to the Cabinet, 12 January 2016 – Draft Communities and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-20 <http://ow.ly/qyaA300SofC>

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Appendices

Appendix A – Providing Less: Supporting More – Our Vision and Strategy for Communities and Wellbeing 2016-2020.

Appendix B – Legal Context Summary for Libraries, Museums, Archives and Learning Sector.

Appendix C - National Strategic Context Summary for Libraries, Museums, Archives and Learning Sector.

Appendix D – Minute Extract from Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 26 February 2016.

Appendix E - Community and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-20 Consultation Analysis Report.

Appendix F – Notes of Consultation Stakeholder Events.

Appendix G – Individual Stakeholder Responses to Consultation.

Appendix H – Briefing note on visit to Peterborough Library Service.

Appendix I – Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Questionnaire.

Relevant Impact Assessments

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

43. The Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment screening questionnaire is attached as Appendix I. The Equalities and Human Rights impacts of the Strategy and its subsequent implementation will be further informed by the outcomes of the consultation and necessary assessments conducted, which will be reported to the Cabinet alongside consultation findings.
44. The screening document identifies the potential needs of a number of protected groups such as young people, older people and people with disabilities and the impact of the Strategy on these groups will need to be considered should the draft Strategy progress further together with any steps that may be required to mitigate any adverse impact.

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