

Communities Strategy:
Review of Progress and Lessons Learned
September 2016



Delivery against the three Communities Strategy Priorities.
Summary Document-

Priority 1

Unlock capacity of communities to support themselves, vulnerable individuals and families

<i>What we have done and achieved?</i>	<i>How well have we done it/impact?</i>	<i>Lessons Learned? What would we do/did we do differently?</i>	<i>Is it still relevant?</i>
Managing the Signposting and Community Support service (Leicestershire Welfare Provision-as was)	The Service continues to be delivered well by an effective partnership.	The Service has changed to be more targeted, serving more people and at lower cost. These changes are ongoing.	Yes – resources secured until 18/19
Managing an Innovation Fund to support innovative pilots with an emphasis on prevention	Adult social care project completed 10 projects completed	Sustainability of projects questioned	No Funding ended. SHIRE grants covering similar aims
Funding the Leicestershire and Charnwood Citizens Advice Bureaux to support vulnerable people through advice (including money advice) and advocacy services	Working well and continuing.		Yes Demand still there - exploring opportunities for additional funding through lottery
Running the 'First	Done well	Developed into	Yes-Public Health

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Contact scheme – a multi-agency approach to making sure that vulnerable people receive the right support		'First Contact Plus – better integrated and more accessible.	responsibility
Supporting initiatives such as Dementia Friendly Communities and Keep Safe Places	Keep Safe Places running well. Dementia Friendly Communities was an initiative under Stronger Communities.	Effective development of the keep safe partnership with districts and police.	Yes. Keep Safe Places. important Dementia and Autism Friendly Communities retain as an Action.
Local Area Co-ordinators will be in place at eight learning sites across four Districts from September 2014.	Yes has been established. Initial evaluation undertaken.	See separate evaluation reports	Yes Currently exploring plans to expand the scheme-cross reference Early Help Prevention Review (EHAP)
Community resilience built through Community Capacity Building (CCB) Contract using asset based approach	Development work on the ground is critical in this priming stage with communities if we want them to later be able to work in partnership with us to achieve Priority 2	Maybe too early to report, worked well for Phase 2 CMLs, attracted key community groups. Need to understand how it worked, what LCC/others provided to make it happen, was it good IAG	Yes Work area is still relevant but need to explore delivering it in a different way. Proposal to reduce the budget, which links into recommendations from EHAP

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• A Vulnerability Toolkit and Training package to ensure wide understanding of vulnerability and the needs of vulnerable people in Leicestershire, including 'how to' guidance and case studies. This includes: • How to Write A Good Bid Guidance, which addresses how communities could address vulnerability in their bids to our grant funds, to be completed in January • A series of workshops in January and February which will help produce more specific support and insight from communities about working with specific vulnerable groups.	Workshops and discussions around the concept have occurred.	Toolkit approach was found to be not suitable. Case by case basis found to be the best approach. eg. Now working with Leicestershire Equalities Challenge group in early stages of policy development	No We no longer have an ambition to develop toolkit This is still a relevant area of work/demand remains, but it is approached in a different way. We need to raise awareness of vulnerability (those most in need) in communities and show them how to be more inclusive cross reference with Keep Safe Places
	Prevention Review recommendations covered this. Remit of the Unified Prevention Board Lots of successful individual projects but not sure how these are co-ordinated in practice into a single package.	Could take learning from SLF approach?	Yes-but scope has changed EHAP remit Including IAG

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First Contact scheme, which will manage the public interface for elements of public health and the redesigned Leicestershire Welfare Provision service. This will be available to residents by April 2015.			
Encourage an Asset Based Community Development approach in the implementation of the Communities Strategy. Develop and embed asset based approaches across all departments within LCC.	This work is progressing well; Initial training and workshops have been held and well received. Initial links to partner organisations with similar aims have been made. e.g. links to Leicestershire Partnership Trust	The approach needs to be embedded across all departments in a more consistent way. Not just limited to 'front line' service delivery.	Yes - The approach is being developed but more work is needed to embed this as a 'culture change' Retain as an Action
A communication campaign to highlight what communities and individuals can do to support vulnerable people/families and help to reduce future vulnerability.	Ongoing area of work	This needs to be built in to Business as Usual approach. Need practical examples. Positive approach – "you can do this too" Eg good neighbours schemes.	Yes Need to explore how to work with wider campaigns to co-ordinate this. Action as part of the Engagement Plan
Support communities to communicate their needs and priorities to LCC	This needs to be explored and considered further	Use existing mechanisms (e.g. via Parish Councils, via the VCS, and via other local forums.	Yes – we need to find simple and achievable ways of enabling communities to

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			communicate directly with us- Engagement Plan
Support the Neighbourhood Planning process	Working very well. LCC is a vanguard in Neighbourhood planning. Number of plans more than doubled in last 12 months. Success with engaging with some LCC departments.	Engagement with process working well and with external partners but need more resource to take to next level. Co-ordination processes in place. There is a need to embed Neighbourhood Planning as a tool to use when departments are looking at their priority areas. Raise profile more creating lateral thinking and more input to the process.	Yes Important mechanism for communities to be able to have control over their own neighbourhoods. Potentially important for delaying and reducing future demand on LCC services. Communities Board to take ownership of.
Develop and manage a dedicated Communities website.	Yes New communities website www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk developed to reflect communities strategy priorities in a way that is shaped by communities. Simple 'email us' solution to encourage communities to share their issues with us.	Dedicated content managers needed to maintain site. Using and updating site need to be embedded as part of workload.	Yes Important link with projects communities and groups. Contains SHIRE grant and other information and application processes.

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	Ability for projects or community groups to take ownership of elements of the site.		
Support the development of networks of 'community champions'	This needs to be explored and considered further. An initial list of community activists, volunteers and community leaders has been developed, but has not necessarily been well-used (in terms of being a conduit for sharing key community information).	The list of community champions needs to be reviewed and revised, and used more proactively to (a) share relevant information and (b) bring people together to discuss relevant issues or (c) put people with particular expertise in contact with others who are looking for support around such issues	Yes, but a lower priority due to capacity. Use the Communities Website and existing networks to engage with people, to allow other 'community champions' to come forward and tell us about the work they are doing in their local communities
Deliver and Support consultations	Yes Processes and arrangements in place. Corporate Board in place. Successfully delivered and supported various consultations with departments and cross authority. More planned.	Consultation needs to be considered by departments as part of review process. It needs to be planned and addressed at the right stage of the process.	Yes Important mechanism for future direction and change within LCC and for giving communities a 'voice'. Part of Centre of Excellence
Volunteering is supported in the same way by all departments. This includes how we	Guidance notes and a toolkit, an online training package, specialist training from insurers, a new process for volunteer training, the establishment	Closer ties to VAL built and shared 'back' office functions make this easier	Yes Area for the Communities Board oversight.

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tell people about volunteering opportunities, engage with new groups (including young people and those trying to get back to work/training) and how volunteers are supported by Council officers.	of a cross departmental volunteer managers network and the production of a 'classification guide' on specific types of volunteering and how best to manage these. Re-branding and bespoke recording system that can be rolled out across the authority. Support and expansion of the 'Get Set' programme, (integration into the ESF bids?) working with individual teams and departments for example highways and the national forest and meetings with non-traditional volunteering departments e.g. corporate resources leading to new volunteering placements.	Need to further Explore and promote the need for additional people within the council to properly support volunteering (previous BB Action)	

Priority 2

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Funding Social Enterprise Support and providing small grants to start and grow social enterprises	Social enterprise Grants scheme ended. Social enterprise supported through contract with CASE Not many examples of community /social enterprises interested in delivering public services.	There is a need to continue support function for both emerging and existing social enterprises along-side support for departments looking to devolve services to communities. Need to explore and develop new models e.g. Social enterprise, trust, mutuals.	Yes Contract in place
Supporting market development, particularly in relation to personal budgets for Adult Social Care.	Yes In progress through Adult Social Care Market Development Team	There is a need to develop awareness raising role further. Focus on developing informal market for support services.	Yes To be considered as part of the Commissioning process across LCC

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An agreed approach to supporting social business models, including social enterprises and staff 'spin outs' from the Council, to deliver services previously delivered 'in house'	Success varies depending on service. CASE contract in place. Options have been explored	Continue support function for both emerging and existing social enterprises, alongside support for departments looking to devolve services to communities	On a case by case basis Need to be pro-active in identifying opportunities. An approach needs to be developed. Earlier Options could be re-visited. E.g. in communities and wellbeing
Worked with E&T to build community capacity for Community Bus Partnerships (CBPs), a new approach for the authority Empowered communities to re-design their bus service	Delivered (communities element). Partnerships are going and some working v well and with little resource from us	Required small resource (officer support and small contract with Rural Community Council) to ensure there was point of contact and community wasn't left totally isolated	Yes Model is relevant but not sure about CBPs – unless communities can continue with minimal resource.
A package of 'service devolution' support - including models, a toolkit, templates, examples of good practice and named contacts for information and advice.	Individual packages successfully produced e.g. community managed libraries support package.	In practice a universal package found to be not the best approach. (see also vulnerability point above) Case by case basis found to be better Need investment from early stage to make this happen	Yes. Key area
An agreed approach	Done, signed off by cabinet June 2015		Yes

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to Right to Challenge and Right To Bid			Important to have procedure in place but LCC approach is to work with communities before a Right is evoked. Links to point above – Key area
A new programme of quarterly meetings of Parish Council Clerks	This is in place and running well Led to better understanding from both sides.	More active Clerks with Power of Competence means more meaningful dialogue.	Yes Parish Clerks are an important route to dialogue with Parish Councils
- A clear and co-ordinated approach to engaging communities, Town and Parish Councils and voluntary sector organisations in planning and redesigning services. Examples - The ongoing devolution of libraries to communities	The corporate Consultation and Engagement Group is providing corporate co-ordination of engagement in all service change. Delivered.	Need to replicate Separate evaluation reports per project	Yes – the focus should be to take the learning and replicate successes.
Commissioning from the voluntary sector prioritises LCC transformation	Commissioning toolkit produced	What is commissioned in the VCS across LCC? Resources maintain	Yes Action to explore further.

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priorities, including around early intervention/prevention and service devolution, and delivers added value		database.	Future relationship with outcomes framework. Link to commissioning intentions
Council Departments actively consider different ways of delivering services	Happening in an ad hoc way but needs to be developed more.	More consistency in approach is required to get buy in from all departments	Yes Action to be carried out through the Communities Board. Key area
Equality and Human Rights 'proofing' of all key proposed service changes.	Happening already. Equalities Challenge Group, EHRIA, Consultation and Engagement process group	Used to break down barriers in terms of EHRIA in context of devolved delivery. Lessons learned from community managed libraries	Yes
Our Offer: When services are changing, the Council will provide clear guidance about what support (short and long term) will be available for communities and the voluntary sector (see CIO contract)	This is a happening, e.g community manages libraries, recycling project		Yes Need to ensure this is designed at an early stage and learn from previous experience.

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Provide support for the maintenance, development and establishment of community hubs as physical and virtual venues for delivery and access of services, community meeting and social interaction.	Support is provided by RCC (Community Buildings), CIO and SHIRE grants. Service co-location is promoted including via the community libraries programme. Virtual hubs include Communities and RCC sites. Other departments looking at possibilities around community hubs.	The viability of hubs remains an issue and is the focus of support. Service colocation can support existing hubs and potentially provide more effective delivery than new investment. The value of hubs is highlighted in the Bishops report. Need a consistent approach to looking at this area council wide.	Yes – hubs are vital to provide a venue for activity above to take place. Action for the Communities Board to embed this authority wide in a consistent way to avoid duplication.
Explore ways to reduce concerns about liability amongst volunteers.	Relationships built with relevant legal and insurance departments. Bespoke training sessions planned delivered by Insurers		Yes Part of volunteering programme

Priority 3

Develop voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations as effective providers in a diverse market which supports delivery of our priorities

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Community Capacity Building contract in place from January 2015	Delivered well and in line with LCCs priorities', specifically ASC prevent agenda	Separate review reports completed.	Yes – De-commissioned from Dec 17 –consider capacity building in

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			different ways.
Funding infrastructure support for Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations	Effective service has been delivered well with reduced resources.	A review of the service to inform recommissioning has confirmed the focus of future activity on Communities Strategy priorities and that services are highly valued by the sector and stakeholders.	Yes – the review has confirmed relevance and a future service will be commissioned with CCGs.
Work with the County Infrastructure Organisation (CIO) to develop (and potentially reposition) the VCS in Leicestershire	Yes. Good to continue but how can we <i>build</i> on this. Updated specification for CIO reflects the aspirations for the VCS in the Comms Strategy. Complementary contracts (e.g. Community Buildings) also aligned to Strategic objectives.	Budgets are pooled with key CCG partners with aligned priorities. Relationship between LCC and CCG's will be developed further.	Yes, Ongoing strategic development of infrastructure support with sector and partners.
Including to support communities and the voluntary sector to bid for funding , including tenders and grants	Sustainability is a key issue		Yes.
Ensure that specialist advice to VCS groups is available/ accessible as needed	Yes ongoing. Working with VAL through CIO contract.	General advice to groups around formation, constitution, fundraising, legal	Yes – advice remains central to the support offer – now focused on key issues around commissioning,

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	Social Value Work also ongoing through SHIRE grants, ESF Bids, and RCC for Community Buildings.	etc. is essential. Referall mechanism. The focus of work has shifted slightly to reflect shared objectives of LCC, partners and sector.	volunteering, income generation etc.
Provide opportunities for the two way communication with the VCS enabling them to have their own and representative voices.	This has been achieved successfully via the CIO contract.	Continuing relevance and support for policy and voice work as part of CIO delivery.	Yes a key component of a revised CIO specification.
Continue to make grant funding available for VCS organisations, to deliver projects that support delivery of key Council priorities	Successfully achieved through ongoing SHIRE Community Grants programme, now combined into one overarching large and small grants programme. LCC also now fully funds the Leicestershire Funding Toolkit, a searchable grants database for the VCS.	Ongoing review of grant programme and application process to ensure this is accessible to all types/sizes of VCS groups and aligned to LCC strategic priorities. Also need to consider other innovative ways of administering funding/financial support to VCS groups, e.g. Crowdfunding.	Yes. SHIRE grants are a key component of our direct support for the VCS. However, VCS organisations also need to be supported to think about their wider organisational sustainability and alternative approaches to income generation, not limited to just applying for grant funding.

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Co-ordinate volunteering across Leicestershire by delivering the actions in our Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan	Volunteer Managers network and ABCD network created with links to VAL and other organisations. Volunteer managers Network consulted in review of CIO contract.	Rather than writing a new volunteering strategy at this point it is more important to streamline, co-ordinate and promote a consistent approach.	No Volunteering strategy and action linked to and owned by old Stronger Communities - no longer relevant. Addressed in different ways.

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