

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

From: Councillor Julie Flatman Cabinet Member for Communities	Report Number: CMU12
To: Council	Date of meeting: 23 January 2020

TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES

1. Overview of Portfolio:

The Communities Portfolio includes:

- 1.1 Safe Communities (including community safety, anti-social behaviour, safeguarding and the Community Safety Partnership).
- 1.2 Strong Communities (including grants, external funding, community development and community rights).
- 1.3 Healthy Communities and Policy (including health and wellbeing, Health and Wellbeing Board, health interventions and preventative activity).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Council notes the report.

3. Key Activities/Issues Over the Past Six Months

- 3.1 The grants team has conducted site visits in Mid Suffolk to discuss potential community projects and sources of funding including the following: Rickingham Wheeled Sports Area - to develop a new skateboard/BMX park; Eye Cricket Club - to upgrade pavilion and players changing rooms; Denham Village Hall - wholesale redevelopment of the village hall; Creeting St Mary Village Hall - to replace current heating system; Walsham Le Willows Play Area - a three phase project to replace old playground equipment; and Eye Moors Skatepark and Play Area - to replace and upgrade a children's play area.
- 3.2 Where appropriate joint site visits are conducted with officers from the Public Realm team for play and open space projects to provide potential applicants with advice and guidance on types of equipment and British Safety Standards. The team is also working with the Environmental Management Officer, to provide energy efficiency assessments for village halls and sports pavilions.
- 3.3 Section 106 funding has been provided to support the Thurston gym trail and the Needham Market public toilets project and the Museum of East Anglian Life secured capital funding for equipment to further its community activity.
- 3.4 The External Funding Officer continues to provide support to the Needham Lake Visitor Centre group and the associated Access for All Needham Train Station bid. Support is also being provided for a project focused on future funding for Stowmarket Trees and Lights via a National Lottery Partnership Fund bid.

- 3.5 The External Funding Officer and Communities Officer- Assets of Community Value have been working with the Cross Keys at Redgrave and the Angel Inn at Debenham as part of supporting the networking and sustainability of the community pub sector.
- 3.6 The Community Grants review has commenced, with a Member Task and Finish Group established to guide the work. The first phase will review the capital grants scheme, informed by looking at the recommendations arising from the recent CIL review as both are relevant to the funding of community infrastructure.
- 3.7 Chill Chat and Play: BMSDC have project funded Home Start (Mid and West Suffolk) working in partnership with Suffolk Arts Link to deliver this project in Stowmarket with parents with children under the age of 1 year. This project is gaining momentum with five families now regularly attending the sessions in Stowmarket and 5 families being supported at home. Home Start Staff and Volunteers have received Art Therapy training during November 2019 which they are able to cascade onto new staff and volunteers as well as taking this training into the homes of parents who are not in a position to attend the sessions due to their particular vulnerabilities.
- 3.8 The Active Wellbeing project: This project is supporting older residents to become more physically active and is progressing well. The project has now completed its first 3 months of year 2 of delivery. The Project Officers (Health & Wellbeing) have been working collaboratively with the surgeries and the community via an asset based community development approach and applying the learning from the first year to help make the most out of the 12 months in this location. The impact that health professionals have on identifying those patients most at need is very important for the Active Wellbeing service. The project has seen 40 clients with an average of 61 years and good links are being developed with the Patients Participation Group (PPG). 58% of clients report they feel closer to other people and less lonely than they were before the intervention commenced. The Steering group continues to meet every 2 months with a new Fit Villages yoga project being delivered shortly.
- 3.9 The Active Schools project: Launched in July 2019, this three-year programme is designed to reduce childhood obesity/excess weight amongst primary school age children by providing bespoke support to 20 primary schools across both districts, helping them to better utilise their DfE Pupil Premium Funding for physical activity. Sample Interventions offered as part of the programme include active travel plans, healthy food awareness, extra-curricular clubs, Teacher Continuous Professional Development, Active classrooms and whole school activities such as the Daily Mile.
- 3.10 Regal Theatre Redevelopment Programme: The tender process is nearing completion with building work anticipated to commence in Spring 2020. Stowmarket Town Council and MSDC have submitted an information pack to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government to support the application of borrowing approval between the district and town councils for grant and loan funding and we are currently awaiting the outcome of this.
- 3.11 John Peel Centre, Stowmarket: Architects EDRM and arts consultant Marion Catlin have been appointed to develop a feasibility study and business plan for the future development of the John Peel Centre including the expansion into 11 Market Place (old NatWest Bank). The outcome of this work is expected to be delivered by early 2020.

- 3.12 Social Prescribing across both District areas: Social Prescribing Schemes are now active across the Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG area and are currently being developed across the areas covered by the West Suffolk CCG.
- 3.13 The team have initiated a new approach by applying the Healthy Towns Programme which is an NHS England initiative which sets out the 10 Principles for Healthy Place making. Working in partnership with Public Health Suffolk we have set up a series of lunchtime seminars with BMSDC Planning colleagues to review the evidence from ten demonstrator sites and look at are working on a range of other activities and rather than seeking to cover it all within this report an All Member briefing on all aspects of Health and wellbeing related work to highlight significant contribution the Councils' are making to this agenda.

4. Key Activities Planned for the next 3 months

- 4.1 The External Funding Officer will be supporting funding surgeries in our communities in collaboration with Suffolk County Council. Dates and locations have not yet been finalised but will be communicated to Councillors in due course.
- 4.2 There will be a period of refocusing of the grants service as two new postholders take up post and are tasked with reviewing the current arrangements in the light of the Council's priorities, the Communities Strategy and need to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. The Grants Review Member Working Group will continue to meet.
- 4.3 Reports were provided to Mid Suffolk Cabinet meeting in January, where rolling 3 year funding arrangements for Citizens Advice was agreed.
- 4.4 Working with Suffolk Artlink, Rural Coffee Caravan and Dance East, officers will continue to deliver a project reaching rurally isolated older people to make a positive impact on their lives. The work will focus on delivering a high-quality arts outreach programme, led by artists. It will be co-produced with older people, to ensure that the individual needs of each community are reflected in the work. What we are calling the 'The Make, Do and Friends' project has involved £100k of Arts Council 'Celebrating Age' Funding.
- 4.5 We will continue to work in partnership to contribute to enabling community-level health and wellbeing outcomes, particularly in relation to the development of leisure, physical activity, the arts, sports and natural environment for their health benefits. Highlights have included development of GP exercise on referral schemes, high profile walking, running and cycling initiatives and a range of healthy lifestyle and later life programmes. Other activities have included those linked to the Dementia Action Alliances, as well as providing local support for national events and campaigns that address the related issues of loneliness, social isolation and mental health.
- 4.6 Suffolk Food Plan: This is a very new project, currently in development, aiming to work in partnership with Suffolk Public Health and the Museum of East Anglian Life to deliver a local healthy eating, less food waste programme in Stowmarket. Current ideas are linking with using the Museum's garden and looking at growing vegetables, as well as possible cookery classes.

- 4.7 Work also continues to address anti-social behaviour and other community safety issues and support the work of the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership.
- 4.8 We welcome Vicky Moseley to the team and the organisation as the new Corporate Manager - Communities.