

## MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>TO:</b> Council	<b>REPORT NUMBER:</b> <b>MC/21/13</b>
<b>FROM:</b> Councillor Harry Richardson - Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing	<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b> 23 September 2021
<b>OFFICER:</b> Vicky Moseley, Corporate Manager, Communities & Wellbeing	<b>KEY DECISION REF NO.</b> N/A

### JOINT WELLBEING STRATEGY

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Council's Joint Corporate Plan sets out six strategic priorities, namely Communities, Environment, Economy, Customers, Housing and Wellbeing.
- 1.2 This report seeks approval for the Council's first Wellbeing Strategy to support that priority.

#### 2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 To develop a Wellbeing Strategy or not.
- 2.2 By developing a Wellbeing Strategy the Council is able to set out its strategic vision, approach, outcomes and objectives to support the wellbeing priorities of its local communities, using this to most effectively direct resources, measure impact and change tactics if necessary. Understanding and addressing the wellbeing of our communities has rarely been more important than at present as we live in the shadow of a global pandemic.
- 2.3 Without such a strategy, need may not be well understood and the allocation of resources may not be targeted effectively to support our communities.

#### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

##### It is recommended that:

- 3.1 The Joint Wellbeing Strategy, attached as Appendix 1, be approved.
- 3.2 The Assistant Director for Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing, be given delegated authority to make future minor amendments and updates to the Strategy in response to changing needs.
- 3.3 After the Strategy has been approved, that the Assistant Director for Communities and Wellbeing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing, be given delegated authority to develop and implement a Delivery Plan.
- 3.4 The Delivery Plan and subsequent implementation of the Strategy be supported by the £1m Wellbeing funding agreed by the Council on 18 February 2021.

#### REASON FOR DECISION

That the Council has a clear strategy and delivery plan to ensure that wellbeing within our communities is effectively addressed and supported.

## 4. KEY INFORMATION

### Defining Wellbeing

- 4.1 Wellbeing, put simply, is about 'how we are doing' as individuals, within communities and society and how sustainable that is for the future. This is a holistic view of people's lives, taking in not just health, but our opportunities, engagement and success in other areas of life including social, civic, economic and the built and natural environment.

### Measures of National Wellbeing

- 4.2 The Office for National Statistics collects the [Measures of National Wellbeing](#), which organises nationally surveyed and gathered data into different areas of life affecting wellbeing. We have adopted these 10 areas, set out in the table below, as themes that will provide a framework for our outcomes and objectives.

Theme	Definition
<b>Personal Wellbeing</b>	Personal Wellbeing includes individual's feelings of satisfaction with life, whether they feel the things they do in their life are worthwhile and their positive and negative emotions.
<b>Our Relationships</b>	Positive relationships have one of the biggest impacts on our quality of life and happiness. This theme includes satisfaction with personal relationships and feelings of loneliness.
<b>Health</b>	An individual's health is recognised as an important component of their well-being. This theme contains both subjective and objective measures of physical and mental health.
<b>What we do</b>	How individuals spend their time and whether they find those activities rewarding. Includes work and leisure activities and the balance between them.
<b>Where we live</b>	Reflects an individual's dwelling, their local environment and the type of community in which they live. Measures include having a safe, clean and pleasant environment, access to facilities and being part of a cohesive community.
<b>Personal Finance</b>	An individual's financial circumstances, recognising the role of income in realising other aspects of wellbeing and the pressure caused by financial hardship. Includes household income and wealth, its distribution and stability.
<b>The Economy</b>	Provides context for well-being as economic conditions drive outcomes for work, health, education, and crime. Includes measures of inflation and public sector debt.
<b>Education and Skills</b>	Includes aspects of education and the stock of human capital in the labour market with some more information about levels of educational achievement and skills.
<b>Governance</b>	The sense of empowerment in government and of proper representation is important to individual wellbeing. It reflects a view of societal fairness and personal agency.
<b>The Natural Environment</b>	This theme concerns our engagement with the natural world now and our collective future. It reflects areas such as climate change, the natural environment and the effects our activities have on the global environment.

### The Wellbeing Strategy and its focus

- 4.3 This strategy sets out the vision for the wellbeing of our communities, defines the long and short term outcomes, describes the approaches we will adopt and identifies the strategic objectives that need to be achieved to get the right results. Once the strategy has been agreed, we will build on existing wellbeing programmes and develop a detailed Delivery Plan and measures of success against which progress and impact will be evaluated.
- 4.4 Our priority is to do everything we can to stimulate and enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of our communities. It is well recognised that the broader determinants of health are particularly important in ensuring a healthy and happy population and these are also the types of well-being issues over which Councils have some control and influence; for example, stimulating our local economy, managing our environment, developing and managing our homes or providing leisure facilities. This strategy therefore does not duplicate the wellbeing impacts already contained within our Economy, Housing, Environment and Communities Strategies. These other strategies will however be reviewed to ensure wellbeing outcomes are being optimised through those strategies; and performance in relation to those aspects will be included when we are reporting on our performance in respect of wellbeing.
- 4.5 This Wellbeing Strategy will focus most particularly on **personal wellbeing, relationships, Health, the local communities where we live and what we do with our time**. The outcomes, objectives and actions associated with this strategy will be planned and delivered in partnership with both internal and external stakeholders.

### Strategic Vision for Well-Being

- 4.6 Our vision is that:
- ‘The residents of Babergh and Mid Suffolk will have the best possible conditions for good wellbeing and have lives that are healthy, happy and rewarding.’

### A summary of the key local well-being challenges

- 4.7 In considering **the Approach, Outcomes and Objectives** for this Strategy we have taken into account:
- the feedback from internal and external stakeholders during the workshops and briefings;
  - the findings for Babergh & Mid Suffolk from the ONS Measures of National Well-Being survey and data; and
  - Local information about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our communities.
- 4.8 In summary, we are amongst the least deprived third of Local Authority areas in England, but relative deprivation is rising. Deprivation is made more challenging as it is often hidden, dispersed amongst areas with more affluent households. Housing costs are high, which when combined with low wages and skills levels, and now increased unemployment and significantly more people claiming out of work benefits, leads to financial hardship, ill health and inequality. Homelessness has risen during the pandemic, as has food poverty. We have comparatively high levels of fuel poverty. As an aging demographic, dementia is a growing issue and there is a need to support our growing aging population to remain independent and in good health for as long as possible. Mental health issues have increased during the pandemic for all age groups and referrals to mental health services have risen significantly. Domestic abuse has also increased. Isolation and loneliness has become an even bigger issue over the last year for both young and old. A quarter of the population don't take regular exercise and 1:4 year 6 children are overweight or obese. Anti-Social Behaviour and County lines drug related issues are an issue of concern in some parts of the districts. As

predominantly rural districts, many of our places lack adequate transport provision and sometimes also broadband. Access to green spaces, parks and woodlands involves more travel and has a lower reported rate of use than might be expected. Some residents therefore experience barriers to opportunities and social mobility.

- 4.9 Comments from stakeholders reflected that they had observed the above similar patterns and were keen to see these prioritised in the strategy. They were also keen to see an increase in support for families and young people as they were concerned about lasting social, economic, emotional and educational impacts of the pandemic for these groups. Digital isolation was also an area of concern as there was recognition that increasingly digital isolation can also exacerbate social isolation, having become an important part of community connectivity and communication in addition to in person contact.
- 4.10 Overall, there was recognition of the importance of enabling and supporting individuals at greatest risk, and those experiencing the greatest health inequalities, to be better able take care of themselves and their health. Similarly, there was concern to identify groups and communities who find it more difficult to seek help.
- 4.11 The importance of delivering wellbeing improvements through behavioural change, integrated working and pooling resources and expertise was also recognised.
- 4.12 Stakeholders were keen to build on the unprecedented levels of community volunteering during the pandemic to increase social capital and strengthen civic participation. Similarly, they wanted to see a continuation of the collaborative approaches and innovative ways of working adopted by partners during this period.
- 4.13 The importance of prevention and early intervention was an underpinning theme in many of the discussions.
- 4.14 Finally, our engagement work identified a shared ambition to enable communities to live and stay well, take control of their own mental and physical wellbeing and to be able to do so locally, where they live and work.

#### What does our Well-Being Strategy 2021 – 2027 aim to achieve?

- 4.11 Our long-term outcomes will focus on enabling:
- *Families to lead active, healthy, safe, and independent lives and manage their own health & wellbeing;*
  - *All communities to have sustainable and inclusive places and spaces, which maximise health & wellbeing opportunities and benefits; and*
  - *A reduction in Health inequalities.*
- 4.12 As this strategy spans the period to 2027, our long-term outcomes are supported by a set of shorter-term outcomes that will focus on the next two years and are accompanied by more detailed objectives set out in the strategy at Appendix One of this report.

#### **Current Wellbeing activity**

- 4.15 It's important to note that while we have been developing the Strategy our Wellbeing work has not stood still in two regards.
- 4.16 Firstly, over the last 18 months we have been at the heart of the Covid-19 response to communities, contacting more than 6,000 Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents and making over 25,000 calls to our housing tenants to support their needs during lockdown. We also dealt with over 1,500 calls into the Home But Not Alone Service, with many cases presenting with complex challenges. We provided support and community grants for 130 projects in Mid Suffolk (total value £1m), as well as administering Locality Grants. We are

currently working with partners to support community groups with advice and Restart Grants to enable them to get back up and running since the easing of Covid-19 restrictions.

4.17 In addition, we have been working with partners and local communities on other well-being projects. Examples include:

- The Chill, Chat and Play Programme – we funded Homestart to develop weekly Arts Therapy and mental health support for new parents.
- Stow Dementia Action Alliance has restarted face-to-face activities, such as the bowls club, activity classes and music.
- The Sinfonia Viva virtual music project is working with the Dementia Action Alliances and local care homes.
- Active Well-Being is providing ongoing support for community activity programmes including Fit Village classes that have recently begun in Eye
- The Active Schools programme has delivered in 8 locations in Mid Suffolk. These were Gislingham, Hoxne, Old Newton, St Boltoph's and Abbots Hall, Crawford, Cedars Park and Freeman schools in Stowmarket.
- The extended school holiday programme offered 16 projects in Mid Suffolk including swimming, drama, cookery, dance, football camp, arts activity days and science workshops.
- Free school holiday swimming for children and young people continues at our leisure centres.
- Extension of the partnership with The Mix to fund the continuation of the Together skills project.
- Piloting 'Our Parks' project at the Stowmarket Recreation Ground - developed to target inactivity by providing free activity sessions led by an instructor in outdoor spaces.
- Contributing to community safety campaigns on Anti-Social Behaviour and Domestic Abuse.
- Overhauling Anti-Social Behaviour systems, including Community Trigger process, case management software, improvements to the website and the implementation of our anti-social behaviour action plan.
- Working with the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams on the wider determinants of community health on a variety of projects, most involving social prescribing, whether linked to mental health, aging well, dementia or work with young parents.

## **5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 This Strategy has been developed through discussions and workshops with Councillors, key internal officers and with many of our partner organisations in the public, health and voluntary sector, recognising the additional impact of a collaborative internal and external partnership approach to create the conditions for happy, healthy, vibrant communities. Further engagement will take place during the development of the Delivery Plan.

## 6. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 6.1 Wellbeing is one of the six key priorities in the Joint Corporate Plan and plays a significant role in achieving the Council's overarching vision to build 'great communities with bright and healthy futures that everyone is proud to call home.'
- 6.2 The intention is to ensure that the Council adopts a wellbeing culture in everything it does; that our work is inherently about people's quality of life, sense of place and of identity. The wellbeing strategic priority must therefore affect the way all services and strategies operate and how we can influence others to play their part.
- 6.3 The Wellbeing Delivery Plan will signpost to the other strategies in the Corporate Plan that play a key role in delivering wellbeing outcomes.

## 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. However, the implementation of the strategy will have financial implications. The Council has set aside £1m to support implementation and will be determining the allocation of this shortly after the strategy has been agreed. Separately, where relevant, external funding bids will continue.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## 9. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 The risk in the Significant Risk Register most closely associated with this strategy is Risk 16 – Failure to achieve our vision and strategic priorities and ambitions.

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Failure to achieve our Vision and Strategic priorities and ambitions because:  The Wellbeing Strategy does not reflect the needs of local communities.	2 (Unlikely)	2 (Noticeable / Minor)	The Strategy is deliberately 'High Level' and is informed by a sound evidence base, which will be kept under review. The Delivery Plan will be informed by dialogue with statutory, voluntary and community sector partners, Town & Parish Councils and internal service areas. The Delivery Plan will be monitored continuously and flexed to respond to immediate and changing needs.
Failure to achieve our Vision and Strategic priorities and ambitions because:  The Wellbeing Strategy is not achievable.	2 (Unlikely)	2 (Noticeable / Minor)	Progress and effectiveness will be monitored by the Communities & Wellbeing Programme Board and quarterly progress will be reported to Cabinet. Projects will not be agreed until corresponding resources are identified.  Partners/Stakeholders will be part of the Delivery Plan recognising that the Strategy cannot be delivered by the Council on its own.

Failure to achieve our Vision and Strategic priorities and ambitions because:  We are unable to develop strong partnerships to deliver Wellbeing initiatives	2  (Unlikely)	2  (Noticeable / Minor)	Partners/Stakeholders have been involved in the development of the Strategy and will continue to be involved in the development of the Delivery Plan. There is already substantial engagement at both a strategic and operational level across the partnerships that most closely support well-being, including the Health & Wellbeing Board, the two Alliances and the West Suffolk Community Safety Partnership.
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## 10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from the Wellbeing Strategy at this stage. The Equality Impact Screening Assessment is attached at Appendix Three of this report. When specific projects are identified as part of the Delivery Plan, further screening, and where necessary, full Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out.
- 10.2 It should be noted that reducing health and wellbeing inequalities is a key outcome of this strategy.

## 11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are positive environmental implications associated with this Strategy. Specifically, that our existing Carbon Reduction Management Plan and Bio-Diversity Plan and the emerging wider Environmental Strategy will support the theme of the Natural Environment to enhance the wellbeing of local communities. Our rich and diverse environment is also a significant contributor to people's wellbeing and their association with place.

## APPENDICES

Title	Location
Appendix 1 - Joint Wellbeing Strategy	Attached
Appendix 2 - Wellbeing Case Studies	Attached
Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Screening Assessment	Attached

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.2 Joint Corporate Plan

[Mid Suffolk Cabinet Report - Corporate Plan 2019-2027](#)

Leisure, Sport & Physical Activity Strategy

[Mid Suffolk Cabinet Report - SPLA Refresh 05 July 2021](#)

[Leisure, Sport & Physical Activity Strategy](#)

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