

Subject: Neighbourhoods That Work programme

Report to: ELT – 7 October 2019

Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee – 17 October 2019

Report by: Neil Shaw, Strategic Director & Holly Notcutt, Community Development Manager

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. That following the receipt of the evaluation report, a meeting is arranged by the Strategic Director with the Big Lottery to assess the potential for future external funding streams.**
- 2. To work with Norfolk County Council's newly appointed VCSE Manager over the next 6 months to ascertain the value of community and voluntary sector work in the borough.**
- 3. To bring a further report outlining current provision; identifying any gaps or duplication; with a view to informing the future priorities of the Neighbourhoods & Communities Team from October 2020 onwards.**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. An approach to neighbourhood management for the borough was first established in 2006, with the pilot 'Comeunity' in South and Central Yarmouth. The approach has expanded incrementally over the intervening years. The current focal point for this work is a £3.5m five-year Neighbourhoods That Work programme. This operates alongside the management of three neighbourhoods, including; Neighbourhood Boards and a broad range of projects overseen by three Neighbourhood Managers. The neighbourhood function encompasses a wide range of services and projects either provided directly by the council, in partnership with other organisations/communities, or projects that are overseen by the council but delivered by other agencies.
- 1.2. The Neighbourhoods That Work (NTW) programme has completed year four of a five-year programme. This report focuses on the impact of the programme, analysed through an external evaluation and the future operation of the neighbourhood function after the end of the programme in Autumn 2020.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The 2006 'Comeunity' pilot was established as a result of external funding. At the time the concept was for communities to take the lead in developing a neighbourhood plan and co-ordinating/influencing service delivery to meet locally identified priorities. A dedicated Neighbourhood Manager was appointed by the council. A resident-led board
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was established comprising a multi-agency partnership. Community engagement and capacity building was commissioned and led through the voluntary and community sector.

- 2.2. 2009 saw the roll out of two further neighbourhood management programmes - 'MESH' and 'Make it Happen', located in the borough's other priority urban wards. In 2010 the three neighbourhood management areas was mainstreamed within the council's organisational structure and budget. The council takes the lead on the neighbourhood approach but there is active involvement of a wide range of public and voluntary sector organisations.
- 2.3. In 2015 the council was successful in leading a BIG Lottery partnership bid to establish the 'Neighbourhoods That Work' (NTW) programme. The programme funded 27 additional posts over the five year programme (26 of which are employed through the partner organisations), significantly expanding the neighbourhood management approach. In 2018 this number reduced to 19 posts, due to planned programme tapering.

3. IMPACT OF THE 'NEIGHBOURHOODS THAT WORK' PROGRAMME

- 3.1. The NTW project is delivered in collaboration with seven delivery partners from the voluntary and public sectors: GYROS, Voluntary Norfolk, Future Projects, Business in the Community, DIAL, Great Yarmouth College and MIND. The key aims of the programme, established in 2015 are:

- (1) Social networks, community resilience and well-being
- (2) Multiple and complex needs: defined as issues such as low self-esteem, mental ill-health, debt, drug and alcohol misuse, and homelessness
- (3) Long term unemployment and access to sustainable employment and economy
- (4) Linking 'services to communities' and 'communities to the economy'

- 3.2. The programme has been externally evaluated each year. A summary of the latest evaluation is attached as an appendix. The 2019 evaluation identified the following headline messages from the programme to date:

- 114 long-term unemployed people have been supported into work
 - 500 people have reported improved wellbeing
 - 3,843 people have made new connections within their community
 - 4,001 people have participated in at least one community event
 - 462 people have joined a new group or network
 - 276 residents have reported feeling more active in their community
 - 937 people have been referred onto further support services to meet their needs
 - 675 people have reported an improvement in their skills level following training provided by the programme
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- 103 local employers have been more engaged and involved with their local community
- 3.3. Quantifying the full impact of a programme like NTW is complicated. The programme has a strong community development focus, particularly in meeting the grassroots issues many local people face in the three neighbourhoods upon which it focuses. The quantifiable evidence available demonstrates only a marginal improvement in employment and wellbeing given the scale of the resources input through the programme and no significant improvement to the borough's unemployment or deprivation levels. In hindsight the programme outcomes should have been more sharply defined. Its key strength has been in building stronger social networks for a number of key individuals. The programme has largely concentrated on some of the most marginalised individuals within local communities. Whilst this may have helped to build the confidence of some of those individuals it is hard to evidence the connection to significant numbers of these people entering the job market, being more resilient (and less reliant on public services) or improving their wellbeing.
- 3.4. Partner agencies and in particular the CCG and Police, play a significant role in neighbourhood work. The growing importance of this has been reflected in joint CCG and Norfolk County Council funding in 2015 to bolster the voluntary sector infrastructure and in 2019/20 to continue some community development work that would have been scaled back as the funding for NTW reduced this year. Partner organisations receive a number of benefits from the current neighbourhood approach. This includes, the community development function supporting a number of groups/projects and using the neighbourhood boards as part of their community engagement activities.

4. STRUCTURE OF NEIGHBOURHOODS WORK

'Neighbourhoods That Work' capacity

- 4.1. The council hosts the NTW Project Co-ordinator, responsible for contract liaison and partnership management, data management, staffing coordination, programme development, communications, and budget management.
- 4.2. Two Multi-Disciplinary Workers operate as part of the NTW project (employed and managed by DIAL). The funding for these two posts in 19/20 is £62k (funded from the Lottery). They provide specialist advice and guidance on debt, benefits, housing and wider support needs. The Workers aim to reach those who perhaps would not take the first steps to receiving expert help but who through increased confidence from better developed social networks, have been introduced into specialist support by other connector roles.
- 4.3. The first three years of the programme funded a Business Transformation role to work with local employers to connect them to communities. These posts ended in September 2018. Their focus had been on creating a 'Responsible Business Network' and providing work tasters for those furthest from the labour market.
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- 4.4. Neighbourhoods That Work uses the 'Connector' model to engage with and support local communities on specific topics. This approach was designed from the outset to cover a range of community support needs over the duration of the programme: Life Connector, Skills Connector, Community Connector, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Service Connector, Training Connector and community development worker. All roles are employed by NTW partners and 'matrix' managed by the council's Neighbourhood Managers. Some have been co-located with the neighbourhood teams. The community connector and life connector models have been recognised nationally and adopted by other local authorities. It has shaped the commissioning of integrated health projects across Norfolk with 'Social Prescribing' and 'Loneliness and Social Isolation' programmes which are built upon the connector model. From 2018 the remaining posts include Community Connectors, Life Connectors, Community Development workers, multi-disciplinary workers, and the Service transformation role, funded by the programme.

Council capacity

- 4.5. The borough has three Neighbourhood Management Boards: Comeunity (Central and South Yarmouth), MESH (Gorleston) and Make it Happen (Cobholm and Southtown). Each Board, is made up of key local partners, elected members and residents. Each produce a Neighbourhood Plan with the Board aiming to ensure service delivery is joined up, whilst being in line with locally identified priorities. The core funding for the neighbourhood management approach in 19/20 is £365k and provided by the council. This funds a Community Development Manager, three Neighbourhood Managers and one Apprentice. These are all council funded posts. The funding also includes £99k for the VCSE grants programme.
- 4.6. Across the three neighbourhood plans there are around 20-25 local activities, projects and events. Examples of these include:
- Local workshops themed around emergency planning/flooding
 - Youth activity one evening per week for different age groups
 - Community groups, such as Middlegate Activity Group, delivering half term activities
 - Monitoring enviro-crime hotspots and providing information to residents on safe disposal or collection of unwanted items
 - Supporting Newtown Community Centre through with a Wellbeing Café
 - Norfolk Community College support to people who have been unemployed for greater than one year
 - Use of grant funding to support Furnishaid in offering CV production and IT training for local unemployed people
 - Use of grant funding to support DIAL providing benefits support, money and debt advice

Projects are small-scale, local and diverse. These are valued locally although the collective impact of the projects is impossible to determine. The Community Development Workers are employed by Voluntary Norfolk, funded by NTW. They support community groups in their communities to develop events, activities, projects.

They support residents to form community groups and support them seeking funding for projects

4.7. The Neighbourhoods and Communities Team undertake a number of other functions:

- Managing outdoor play and leisure provision
- Managing and monitoring the community and voluntary sector grants programme
- Garton traveller site liaison
- Emergency planning community resilience lead including Rest Centre Management
- GYBC ESF Inclusion Project
- The Wellesley Feasibility Study
- Selective licencing project
- NCC 'Pushing Ahead Project'

5. THE FUTURE FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS

5.1. The NTW programme will end in October 2020. The council is keen to drive an improvement in the quality of lives and opportunities available to local people. Many existing projects which are underway, or are likely to be underway, within the next two/three years will benefit local people, particularly those who live in (or close to) Yarmouth town centre. This includes, the work on selective licensing and projects which form the proposals for the Future High Street Fund, Towns Fund as well as a number of projects funded by partners such as social prescribing.

5.2. However, the council and partner organisations have not been successful in identifying large-scale external funding to deliver a continuation of the kind of work undertaken by the NTW programme. The council and partner organisations will continue to explore the potential for funding streams such as the National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund and the Lloyds Bank Foundation. However, any future bid will be based on a much smaller, more focused, programme or project based on the feedback already received from large external funding organisations, like the Lottery.

5.3. The external evaluation identified the importance of partner organisations funding of some of this neighbourhood activity. Partners like the CCG and Norfolk County Council already support some roles and projects through their commissioning of services and by funding some community development work and co-funding the Early Help Hub. The council will be keen to work with partners to identify specific projects which from 2020/21 should be funded jointly by partners, not solely by the council. These are likely to be focused on work which will have a direct impact on employment, skills and health improvement. The Early Help Hub already follows this funding model and the council will be keen to identify other areas where this approach might be successful. The scoping work for this has already begun, being facilitated by the Lloyds Bank Foundation. The role of the council's core Neighbourhoods and Communities Team will be examined over the next 12 months as part of this work.

5.4. In 2019 Norfolk County Council has recently appointed a VCSE Manager to lead work to ascertain the value of community and voluntary sector work in the borough and how

advice/support can be more joined up. The outcomes from this work should be reviewed when this work is completed.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1. The council funds £365k of the budget used by the Neighbourhoods and Communities Team. The remainder is derived from external grant funding, of which the Big Lottery fund is the single biggest contributor.

	2019/20 £,000
Staff	244
Grants	58
Early Help Hub	10
Service budget	53
Total	365

The service budget primarily provides funding for the three neighbourhood offices, a proportion of which is funded through NTW.

- 6.2. The NTW funding for the five-year programme is £3.5m. The funding for 2019/20 is £554k. The service also manages services funded by external organisations (£461k) for social prescribing, voluntary sector development and the Great Places Fund.

7. LEGAL

None.

8. RISK

The lack of significant external funding opportunities means the Neighbourhoods That Work programme cannot be sustained in its current form and scale. This risk can be mitigated to some extent by working with partner organisations to identify specific projects which from 2020/21 partners are prepared to fund and, in parallel, developing a future external funding bid based on a more focused programme or project(s).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1. **That following the receipt of the evaluation report, a meeting is arranged by the Strategic Director with the Big Lottery to assess the potential for future external funding streams.**
- 9.2. **To work with Norfolk County Council's newly appointed VCSE Manager over the next 6 months to ascertain the value of community and voluntary sector work in the borough.**
- 9.3. **To bring a further report outlining current provision; identifying any gaps or duplication; with a view to informing the future priorities of the Neighbourhoods & Communities Team from October 2020 onwards.**
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Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Yes
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Yes
Existing Council Policies:	No
Financial Implications:	Yes
Legal Implications (including human rights):	No
Risk Implications:	Yes
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	Yes
Crime & Disorder:	No
Every Child Matters:	No



Neighbourhoods That Work

Year 3 Evaluation Report

Summary - August 2019



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1. HEADLINE IMPACT

About this report

- 1.1 In March 2019 ERS was commissioned by Great Yarmouth Borough Council to evaluate the Neighbourhoods That Work Programme (NTW). This is the Year 3 Evaluation Summary Report that considers the activity undertaken to date, the impact of the investment and opportunities for the future as the NTW Programme progresses into the final 15 months of activity. This summary report is based on a more detailed evaluation report and is intended to draw out the headline messages from the evaluation.

Supporting the Economic Growth Agenda

- 1.2 The investment has directly **evidenced supporting 114 long term unemployed people into employment**. The actual number is likely to be much higher due to the complexity of tracking the impact of community-based support and intervention. More widely, **almost 300 people with complex needs reported improved confidence in competing for jobs** following volunteering or work placement/taster. Almost 700 local people have enhanced their skills as a direct consequence of programme activity. Future monitoring will continue to track their journey, and potential transition into work.
- 1.3 Since October 2018 there has been less direct emphasis upon the employability agenda since the emergence of the complementary Building Better Opportunities programmes and the cessation of NTW roles that previously underpinned employability support activity. However, the NTW programme still contributes to this agenda through community based opportunities. Our research has identified that **more could be achieved by building relationships with local businesses and matching work placement, apprenticeships and job opportunities to residents supported via NTW**. There is also scope for the NTW approach to more effectively support residents into opportunities generated through large capital projects emerging via the GYBC economic growth agenda.

Strengthening Communities, Improving Services and Overall Wellbeing

- 1.4 Around **4000 people have participated in community events** and made new connections within their community. Almost **500 people have progressed to join a new group or network**, reinforcing community infrastructure.
- 1.5 Over **900 people have experienced smooth, seamless referrals into services from single contact points** and in excess of **50 service providers** reported that the investment has improved their reach to most vulnerable residents. Almost **500 people have reported improved well-being** from having issues addressed, half of which were supported to overcome at least one personal challenge.
- 1.6 Over £1.5m of additional funds have been levered into the NTW programme via Community Development and Neighbourhood Management support since 2015.
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The Neighbourhood Approach and Theory of Change

- 1.7 The focus on three geographical areas provides the programme with a clear focus on a cohort of local people who are in significant need. ***The approach of targeting NTW programme activity at the most disadvantaged communities remains appropriate, enabling a real focus of resources on the people in need of support.***
- 1.8 GYBC Neighbourhoods and Communities staff underpin the whole approach and are a lever for improving mainstream/externally funded services (reducing duplication, etc.) whilst also potentially providing the bedrock for any future bespoke community development programme/projects. However, greater commitment and financial support from partner organisations is needed if this work is to be sustained post 2020.
- 1.9 The evaluation has identified the scale of work undertaken and the ‘golden threads’ that link activity and positive outcomes for participants. However, there is limited discernible change in headline indicators for neighbourhoods – the areas benefitting from NTW remain the most disadvantaged across the borough. To some extent this reflects the scale of the problem, especially in relation to wider social changes. For example, welfare reform and the introduction of Universal Credit, in addition to the continuing reduction in services to support the most vulnerable.
- 1.10 We also know that the communities (albeit some more than others) are dynamic in nature. In addition to those already living in the NTW neighbourhoods, new people to the borough, especially those most in need of additional support services, tend to arrive into the three identified neighbourhoods, presenting a continual challenge for those seeking to lead the creation of resilient communities.
- 1.11 The NTW programme is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and for the final year of funding, the amount has tapered. However, additional funding has been sourced and aligned from Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG and NCC, via the integrated commissioning group. This has been utilised to fund the existing Community Development work, as the underpinning function of the success of the NTW Programme. In addition, a part-time post has been established to provide development support to small VCS organisations.

Transforming Services

- 1.12 NTW has had an impact upon the design and delivery of a number of key services:
- The Head of Integrated Commissioning for Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG and Norfolk County Council (NCC) understands the value of the connector-type approach, and in 2016 championed the alignment of VCSE infrastructure development resource with the NTW programme;
 - The NCC Better Together Programme aims to tackle loneliness and isolation via a team of NTW inspired Life Connectors and a complementary Community Development Worker, aligned to NTW delivery;
 - The health led Social Prescribing programme has connector posts, directly modelled on NTW learning and in line with the programme’s theory of change;
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- The East Coast Community Healthcare project is undergoing service redesign, being shaped by NTW partners to develop a model embedded in communities;
 - Mancroft Advice Project drew from the NTW model and utilised it to develop a successful application to the Youth Investment Fund, creating a youth focussed delivery model to operate alongside NTW and link into neighbourhood management teams and projects;
 - DIAL have extended their core delivery to better meet community needs by operating out of hours in evenings and over weekends, based on intelligence gained from working within NTW;
 - Voluntary Norfolk has adopted a more 'systems' approach mindset to how it plans and delivers services. For example the Carers Matter service for young carers has adopted a 'Life Connector' type approach;
 - MIND created a replica volunteer coordinator in Waveney as they found the Great Yarmouth volunteer coordinator post to be a great benefit; and
 - East Coast College directly drew upon the NTW approach and were able to present a convincing and successful bid for ESF BBO Programme funding, including a micro grant scheme directly investing in community based infrastructure.
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2. NEXT STEPS

Programme Funding and Future Planning

- 2.1 The NTW Programme has a high profile across the neighbourhoods it supports and with key services providers/wider stakeholders. Partners understand why it was established, the priorities and core activities. This is a key strength. **There is a need however to more fully articulate and publicise the impact generated.**
- 2.2 There is a requirement to establish a timetable for GYBC to consider the model for future neighbourhood management and community development activity. It is recommended that necessary evidence be collected, options to be appraised and future funding sources identified. The willingness and commitment of partner agencies to support this kind of work in the future needs to be explored as part of this thinking.
- 2.3 As the projected end date moves closer, there is a need for a strategic review to answer the following key questions:
- Have the outcomes and impacts generated been worth the investment made?
 - What outcomes and impacts would we expect to see generated with further investment post October 2020?
 - How has the NTW programme approach contributed to the strategic priorities of GYBC and other partner organisations? And what is the scope from 2020 onwards?
 - What is the mechanism to bring partner agencies together to identify specific outcomes which they can have a strong impact only by working together much more effectively or redesigning services across organisational boundaries?
 - What is the mechanism for securing a dialogue with all public sector partners about co-funding successful elements of the NTW programme from 2020?
- 2.4 There is a need for the NTW to identify a prioritised list of services to be improved, the reasons why this is important, etc. Such an approach, if presented the correct way, is likely to appeal to senior decision makers to deliver stronger outcomes. This could include:
- Housing providers i.e. to better support vulnerable people particularly those with insecure tenancies;
 - Adult and Children's Services i.e. they support a large number of parents and there is scope for family support plans to include access to a wider range of more suitable community-based activities;
 - Environmental Services i.e. to work with communities on environmental issues such as recycling and improving street cleanliness;
 - Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust to develop the recovery centre model further so that it uses community assets as part of building resilience and recovery for residents;
 - Probation Service i.e. to link probationers more effectively into community-based support networks and provision to prevent re-offending;
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- Training and employability support providers to ensure that employability support is more person-centred, flexible and bespoke to the individual and employers;
- Young people's services i.e. for delivery to be more reflective of the preferences of young people; and
- Voluntary sector to make volunteering more creative, dynamic and inclusive.

- 2.5 There is a need for senior management and political leaders to understand the added value of the NTW approach and the added value generated to some of the most vulnerable people and key services.
- 2.6 Whilst the programme can evidence clear positive impact in a number of areas, there is an emphasis during August/September 2019 to scrutinise the programme database to identify the wider impact of community development work, including the importance of social connection, on employability and health outcomes. The next evaluation report due later in 2019 will present a more comprehensive picture of the impact to date.
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