

Title of report: **Community paradigm update**

Meeting: Health and Wellbeing Board

Meeting date: Monday 4 December 2023

Report by: Corporate Director Community Wellbeing and Chief Officer Healthwatch Herefordshire

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To update on the progress being made to develop the community paradigm approach in Herefordshire

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **Health and Wellbeing Board note the progress made to date; and**
- b) **Organisations represented on the Board commit to supporting the further development of the community paradigm in Herefordshire, building on the principles identified at paragraph 9.**

Alternative options

None identified

Key considerations

1. As public services face increasing pressures to meet demand and many people face inequalities in their outcomes, investing in prevention to provide better outcomes for the population and address the long-term sustainability challenge is essential.

2. The community paradigm shift is a pivot in approach from one of a market paradigm where the state commissions the provision largely through the public sector, to a way of working where communities have the power to design the solutions they need and have the resources to deliver as many solutions addressing the root causes as possible, with the state playing an enabling role. This requires a shift in current public service culture, commissioning, and delivery.
3. There are many places in the UK and across the world where community power is beginning to flourish. People are taking responsibility, often working in partnership with public services and local government to build better services and places to live. Herefordshire is well placed to join them.

Background

4. In March 2023, leaders from across the council, NHS, police, fire & rescue, education, businesses, funders, community voluntary and faith sectors came together to explore a collaborative approach to enabling people of Herefordshire to have greater control of their lives, shifting the balance of power and resources to communities to address prevention. The aim of doing so is to improve health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for residents, whilst addressing rising and unsustainable demand on public services.
5. A number of keynote speakers described what it would mean for Herefordshire to start the journey of a paradigm shift in how we work together with communities to create community power and action in Herefordshire. All partners agreed to move to a different way of working, committed to developing Herefordshire's approach to a community paradigm shift.
6. Since the inaugural event, a range of different workshops and discussions with public sector leaders, and with community organisations have taken place. In addition, learning from elsewhere in the country has been sought to shape an approach that will work for Herefordshire.
7. The visual strategy, see appendix 1, is an output of this work, establishing that the community paradigm would be a 10-year long-term way of working with communities, giving the community power and resources to achieve community led approaches which deliver prevention and develop resilient communities. This vision aligns to the Herefordshire Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2023 ambitions

What do we want Herefordshire to be like in 10-years?

Thriving Communities

Our communities will foster wellbeing and resilience, where children and young people feel safe, loved, valued, and grow up with the confidence and skills to be the best that they can be.



Opportunity for all

There will be improved access to quality education and fair employment opportunities, with those who come from disadvantaged groups able to get jobs that pay a living wage, which enables them to improve the standard of living for themselves, their families and their community.



Healthy and Sustainable Places

People will grow, learn, live and work in environments that prioritise health and wellbeing where the healthy choice is the easy choice.



Healthy People

People will be empowered to take control of their health to lead healthy lives by reducing risky behaviours. Everyone will have equitable access to the information, services and preventative support they need, enabling them to access the right service at the right time.



Source: Herefordshire Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2023

Issues and principles

8. Whilst there was overwhelming support for moving forward with the community paradigm, there were a number of 'big issues' that emerged as key obstacles to overcome, or where a radical change in approach would be required, for a community paradigm approach to be successful, which are:
 - Cultural change across the partnerships between sectors.
 - Need to involve communities and the wider workforce.
 - Engagement at a very local level of neighbourhoods.
 - A shared 'community chest' with proportionate governance and some high-level outcomes attached, to deliver community-led prevention.
 - An alternative to traditional commissioning and procurement processes that stimulates community solutions, innovation, and grass roots capacity building.
 - A shared approach to training and learning to embed paradigm vision and principles.
 - A co-produced prevention plan for Herefordshire.
 - Proportionate way to measure impact and outcomes of a community paradigm to demonstrate the 'invest to save' principle of prevention and community led solutions.
9. Reflecting on these issues led to the development of the following principles of the paradigm:
 - Invest to save has to be the fundamental basis of the approach.
 - Brave, bold leadership is needed.

- Focus should be on changing culture and thinking, not developing just another initiative.
- A matrix approach to solutions will need to evolve; small, medium, large, short, medium long-term, innovative, high-risk vs tried and tested evidence-based approaches.
- Community paradigm has to form part of all organisations' long term financial planning.
- The processes for managing the community chest need to be suitably flexible to match the differing levels of financial investment required within the model.
- Dependency on the state is not part of the future, neither is doing **TO** people. We need to be working **WITH** people and have a different relationship with communities.
- There are no ready-made answers – we are developing a pioneering approach together.

Reflections on the journey so far

10. There is no doubt that the statutory organisations and the community sector are genuinely committed to prevention as a concept. What is proving problematic is moving from concept to implementation. It is even more difficult when the focus is on the reality of a current challenging financial climate.
11. The move from concept to implementation is not helped by the wording of “community paradigm”. Essentially, we are working towards a vision of **Herefordshire 2033**. That is the working title and the Board’s views on alternative titles are welcomed.
12. More importantly, there is a need to take people through various steps towards understanding that vision and their role in it. This is very important, and vital to securing long term outcomes and long-term financial sustainability.
13. Having discussed and explored the paradigm shift extensively over the last eight months as a partnership, achieving widespread system support and enthusiasm, this work is now at the point of requiring more dedicated programme support and coordination to drive it forward.
14. Funding has been agreed jointly by the partners of One Herefordshire, which includes, Wye Valley Trust, Herefordshire Council Community Wellbeing, Public Health, Healthwatch, *General Practice* and *Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care Trust*. This will fund a programme management role, hosted by Healthwatch, for a 12 month period.
15. The role will work across local partnerships in the community sector and with public sector leaders, to coordinate the implementation of the community paradigm approach for Herefordshire across the following six workstreams. It is intended to create a sustainable community approach beyond the 12-month period.

Workstreams

Workstream 1: An immersive walk-through training experience
--

Source resources and coproduce an experiential space open over the long term where staff across Herefordshire can spend a half day training to understand the community paradigm vision, including:

- What is community power.
- Examples of an integrated approach to understanding and supporting populations.
- The key components of successful community led solutions.
- Developing alternatives to “doing to people”.

Aim: Understanding the power of a community paradigm and communicating the shared vision for Herefordshire 2033.

Workstream 2: Community led decision making and action, different voices in different places.

Source resources and coproduce a programme of community showcase conversations in each ward to:

- Bring together and connect local people.
- Maximise existing community assets.
- Hear what local people want to offer.
- Hear what local people want to address together.
- Gather story telling examples of community co-design and action.

Aim: Community building, grassroots asset-based development

Workstream 3: Developing the Community Chest

- Work with Herefordshire Community Foundation, businesses, philanthropy, charities, public sector, and crowd sourcing to have a long-term plan to grow investment.
- Develop governance and proportionate processes to manage the chest.
- Further develop the guiding principles we all must share to have effective governance and implementation of our approach to paradigm.

Aim: A thriving community chest to fund and develop community led solutions.

Workstream 4: Creating the enabling conditions for thriving communities

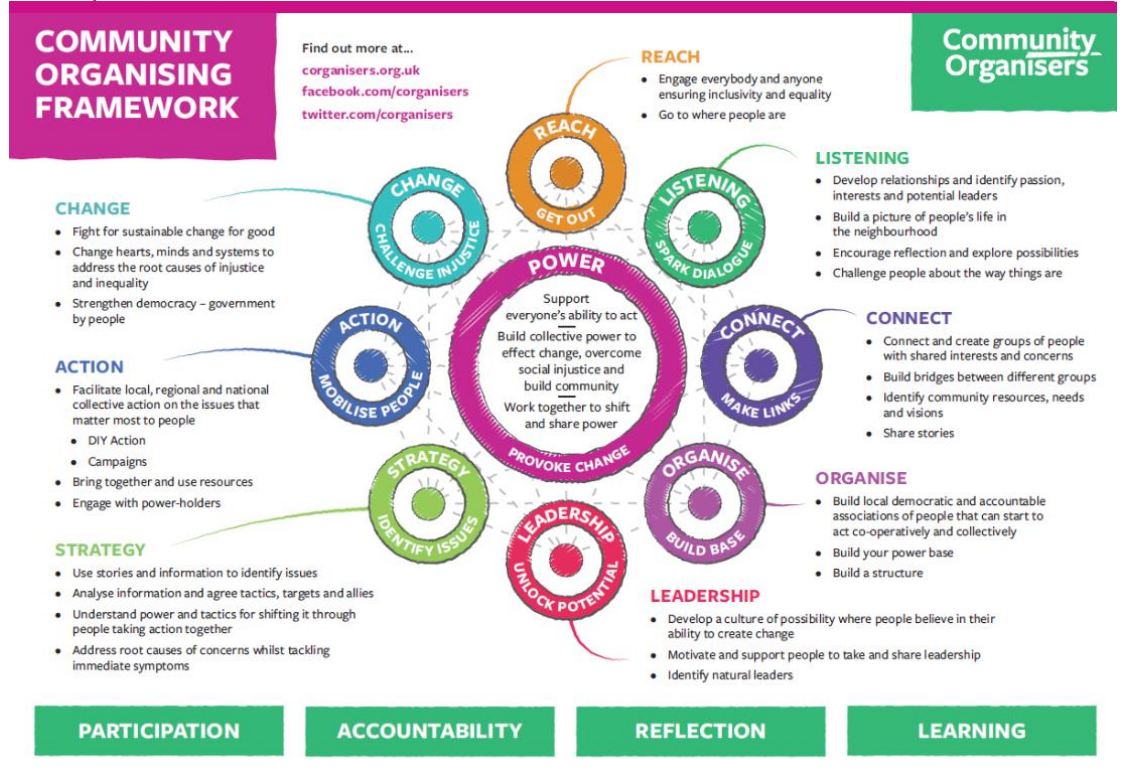
- Develop processes to gather thematic intelligence from communities and community organisations, as a systematic regular process.
- Sharing the needs gaps with communities, to address them collectively.
- Supporting a range of networks and communities of practice
- Connecting the dots so people know what is available and how to get it.
- Supporting people to connect with one another.
- Coproduction frameworks & Charter etc.
- Infrastructure support.

Aim: Community resilience for individuals, and a robust stronger VCSE sector.

Workstream 5: Build a strong Community Alliance that can sustain and drive this.

- Using a [community organizing approach](#)

Example:



Aim: A sustainable vehicle and movement with a community powerbase

Workstream 6: Pilots and initiatives

- Trial the initial community chest investment of £150k for two health & wellbeing priorities through the Herefordshire Community Foundation governance.
- Invite expressions from community groups and organisations that demonstrate that meaningful connections will be made in communities for individuals to improve their wellbeing, e.g., reducing isolation, loneliness, increasing support for children & families through connections.
- Use the learning from this process to inform the principles of our prevention paradigm, shaping future pilots and initiatives with a range of outcomes built into the use of the community chest.

Aim: Increased connections for people to improve individual resilience and wellbeing

16. In relation to workstream 6, the intention is to launch the initial community chest investment by Christmas 2023 through Herefordshire Community Foundation. The Foundation has significant experience in managing grant schemes and has been heavily involved with the community paradigm development work from the outset. This is the proposed flyer advertising the opportunity:

Community Paradigm



Community led solutions

How much funding is available?

£150,000

Grants up to £1000

Grants £1000 - £20,000

When must the funds be distributed by?

End of March 2024

What are the key principles of the funding outcomes?

Evidence of design with communities to meet needs

Outcomes focused

Lasting impact

creativity and innovation

Collaborations or alignment with existing initiatives

Supporting county health & wellbeing strategy priorities:
1. Best start in life (0-5) 2. Good mental wellbeing throughout life.

How will the funds be distributed?

Through The Herefordshire Community Foundation.

What do we want to fund?

Creating lasting meaningful connections for people to improve their emotional wellbeing

Strengthen the reach to families in need

Intergenerational solutions

What are the areas of population that need more focus on community led solutions?

People experiencing disadvantage in areas of deprivation.

Young people not in employment, education or training.

Families with children under 5, experiencing adverse childhood experiences.

People experiencing loneliness and isolation.

People living with dementia

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller people.

Adults off work with long term sickness.

Implications for public sector organisations

17. There are implications of adopting the community paradigm approach for public sector organisations. Whilst there will always remain a need for intensive, sometimes crisis,

support for individuals, driving a more proactive approach of communities supporting themselves through prevention and early intervention is desirable. However, at the moment, much of the funding and focus is on the high end, expensive provision/support and the success of the community paradigm will depend on public sector organisations being able to 'pivot' financial resource into prevention and early intervention.

18. There are also implications for the public sector around commissioning practices. Market commissioning drives a focus on commissioning at scale, with detailed service specifications and a schedule of performance indicators in order to demonstrate value for money and secure efficiencies. Shifting the focus towards more locally developed, relatively small scale initiatives will be challenging. Often described as "glorious messiness", there is more likely to be a wider range of providers, operating in local areas, focused on local needs. Operating on a 'community chest' principle will require a more flexible approach to agreeing outcomes from the financial investment. The role of the public sector will inevitably change to one of facilitation and enabling, seeking to share best practice and learning across the county rather than directly controlling what is done.
19. Moving to a community paradigm approach does not, of itself, preclude large scale commissioning where that makes sense to do so. For example, replicating sexual health services many times at a local level is unlikely to make sense, financially or economically, but the nature of ongoing support for individuals receiving such services may well look different and be delivered differently based on local need.
20. The culture change for all sectors endemic in this approach is significant and should not be understated. Herefordshire is pioneering this approach across all sectors, a real opportunity to build on the richness of the voluntary, community and faith provision in the county, as well as the embedded partnerships across agencies.

Community impact

21. The development of the community paradigm approach will have a significant, positive impact on communities, building on the strong community foundations in the county.

Environmental impact

22. This report is considered to have minimal environmental impact.

Equality duty

23. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:
 24. A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –
 - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
25. The Equality Act 2010 established a positive obligation on local authorities to promote equality and to reduce discrimination in relation to any of the nine 'protected

characteristics' (age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation). In particular, the council must have 'due regard' to the public sector equality duty when taking any decisions on service changes.

26. The development of the community paradigm approach will take full account of the equality duty.

Resource implications

27. There are no resource implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Legal implications

28. This report is for noting the progress of the work on the community paradigm and supporting the ongoing developments. There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report.

Risk management

29. Accepting the recommendations of this report carries no risk for the constituent organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Consultees

30. There has been no direct consultation on the contents of this report. However, there has been ongoing involvement of the Community Partnership and the constituent organisations of the One Herefordshire Partnership in the development of the community paradigm approach.

31. Consultation and engagement will be integral to the roll out of the six workstreams.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Community Paradigm visual

Background Papers

None identified