

## **Cabinet – 20 April 2022**

### **Resilient Communities - Safer Streets**

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Councillor G Perry
<b>Related portfolios:</b>	All
<b>Service:</b>	Resilient Communities
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Forward plan:</b>	Yes

#### **1. Aim**

In October 2021 the Cabinet agreed a Safer Streets programme which was the next step in the Council's approach to supporting residents and communities in participating and building in an assets based approach to key community issues. The Cabinet requested an update on progress to be submitted to the April Cabinet meeting.

#### **2. Summary**

- 2.1 In October 2021, Cabinet requested a report to the April 2022 Cabinet giving an update on the Safer Streets programme agreed at that Cabinet.
- 2.2 The council has placed the Resilient Communities philosophy at the heart of its approach to securing a cleaner, greener, safer and stronger borough. Alongside this, people's feeling of safety and the environment in which they live are key drivers of resident satisfaction, one of the three Proud promises.
- 2.3 Cabinet was asked to consider a Resilient Communities initiative called Safer Streets. It is the next step in the Council's approach to supporting residents and communities in participating and building in an assets based approach to key community issues.
- 2.4 The initiative puts residents and co-design at its heart, and its focus is what is important to an area. It is wide ranging in terms of scope and utilising four levels in responding to challenges, these are:
  - a) Personal responsibility
  - b) Community led solutions
  - c) Integrated services
  - d) Integrated enforcement

2.5 This report gives an update on progress to date and gives an opportunity to question in detail two of the initiatives in Short Heath and Beechdale.

### 3. Recommendations

3.1 That Cabinet notes the progress made with the Safer Streets Programme pilot as part of its commitment to delivering Resilient Communities.

3.2 That Cabinet approves a revenue budget of £50,000 for 2022/23 to support the Safer Streets Programme pilot.

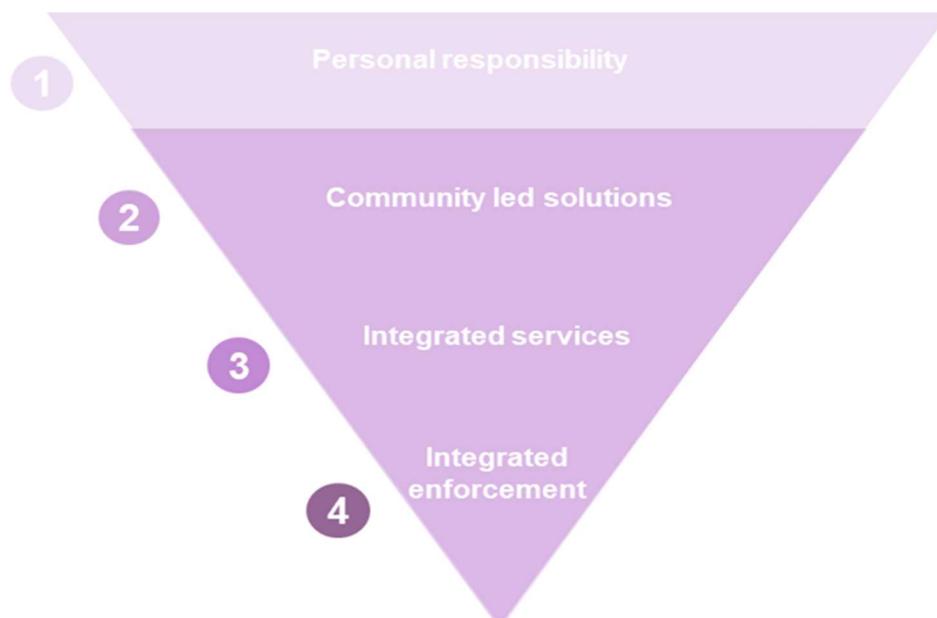
3.3 That Cabinet receives a report in October 2022 on the delivery of the pilot areas.

### 4. Report detail

#### *Context*

4.1 In October 2019, Cabinet approved a paper on Resilient Communities entitled 'Resilient Communities – A New Model of Personal Responsibility, Community Led Solutions, Integrated Community Safety and Community Protection and Enforcement'. This introduced the concept of Resilient Communities, which is a strength-based approach that, where appropriate, utilises individuals and communities to support themselves and underpins that support with integrated services and integrated enforcement.

4.2



4.3 **Personal responsibility** – This aspect of resilient communities focuses on individuals and families. It looks to ensure that people are communicated with effectively and then asks people to act responsibly in their everyday lives. This approach can be used across a whole range of activities from litter to more

complex criminal activity. It seeks for people to understand what they can do for themselves.

- 4.4 **Community Led solutions** - The community response to COVID-19 and the involvement of many of our community organisations was remarkable. The services delivered throughout the pandemic could only be achieved with a strong community sector. The sector provided high quality and adaptable services focused on the needs of our communities. Community organisations have a strong track record of delivery.
- 4.5 **Integrated Services** – The Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) programme and work with MHJ are good examples of integrated services delivering joined up programmes of work with Resilient Communities playing a part in supporting Council activities. Ensuring that teams have a joined up approach for the benefit of residents is key.
- 4.6 **Integrated Enforcement** – We must work effectively with our partners to ensure residents are supported and protected. Walsall is a nice place to live and work and those that want to create issues for residents through fly tipping, ASB or other illegal activities are not welcome. There is and will continue to be better work with partners to ensure residents of Walsall have good partnership responses.
- 4.7 The COVID-19 pandemic-focused attention on the efficiency and effectiveness of local communities and the voluntary sector in tackling issues and taking responsibility for solutions. The strength-based approaches identified have proved a great success. Lessons from this very difficult period include:
- a) Building trust between communities and statutory services is a key design feature of a resilient communities approach. This trust is slow to gain and quick to lose. It requires good honest communication, a listening style and respect for communities.
  - b) Communities are happy to play their part in solutions if they are appropriately supported. The success of local litter pick groups provides good evidence.
  - c) Small investments may build large increases in social capital.
  - d) Residents respond positively to speedy resolution of issues. This can impact the view of council performance in line with our Proud approach.
- 4.8 The approach needs a focus on sound community working alongside efficient and effective council and partner working. The Proud programme and promise brings an opportunity to further align our services with our resilient communities approach.
- 4.9 The Community and personal responsibility of Safer Streets is led by activity to listen to our residents and communities, understanding what is important to them and flexing our services to meet those needs. The projects are now defined and further planning and delivery is underway
- Short Heath – Through Short Heath Lest We Forget we are creating community activity around community building and community safety.
  - Proffitt Street – Community Building and Community Safety activity to support the local community.
  - Alumwell – Community Safety activity in the Alumwell area and the creation of a new community facility for the Alumwell area.

- Paddock – Community Safety activity including six new camera sites (four in place already) and investment in neighbourhood watch activities. A capital investment is being scoped to expand Park Hall Community Association to further meet the needs of the local community.
- Pelsall – Community building and community safety activities.
- Beechdale – Community building activities focused on collaborative approaches to bringing people together.
- Streetly – Development of a community hub, possibly sharing with the Community Library.
- Goscote and Waters Keep – Funding for community projects and to support a friends group for the Lea. There is a project to repair headstones at Goscote cemetery and a Community Safety project focusing on ASB involving CCTV cameras.

4.10 Two groups have been invited to attend this Cabinet to give a more detailed account of their activities

4.11 Short Heath Lest we Forget – Short Heath Lest We Forget are a new organisation formed in September 2020 by residents based in Short Heath who are committed to activity to support their community. The organisation was originally focused on veterans, which still plays a major part in their work. They have, however, expanded to include many other community activities with further plans for expansion. They have supported/delivered the following projects:

- Revamp of Short Heath War memorial including a new memorial and flagpole.
- Support for Lane Head football clubs
- Support for Ingram Dance Academy
- Support for Morrisons fundraising campaign for Birmingham Children's Hospital
- Sponsored walk and Falklands War Evening
- Support for Armed Forces Day
- Support for the Remembrance Day Parade in Short Heath
- Helped on local parking issues
- Community meals supported by Willenhall E-Act Academy
- Support for Short Heath Brownies
- Support for Short Heath Bowls Club and Spindlers Shield competition
- Christmas Activities
- Support for awareness raising of homeless veterans and support for veterans in hardship
- Various social and educational activities
- Litter picking activities

4.12 And the group have further plans to:

- Create a community garden in partnership with Wilenhall E-Act Academy
- Community Safety and advice visits
- Funding for Christmas lights
- Adopt a short length of Canal
- Provide a base for training
- Purchase of a defibrillator, money raised

4.13 The group are spreading their best practice outside of the borough.

Residents R Us Beechdale – Are a long standing group of residents from Beechdale who are committed to supporting their area. They have struggled to find a permanent home but are now utilising the old Library space within Frank F Harrison Community Association and this has allowed them to deliver a growing list of activities designed to support local residents:

4.14 They have delivered:

- A book exchange with a planned expansion to include Large Print Books.
- Breakfast Club and community cafe
- Food Bank
- Charity Shop
- School Uniform Exchange and Support
- Job Club
- Joint Coffee Mornings with other local groups
- Litter picking

4.15 And the group have further plans to deliver:

- Support for victims of Domestic Violence
- Increased food bank provision
- Day trips for elderly residents
- Further challenge loneliness and isolation in their community
- Homework club
- Community Safety hub

4.16 The work that the group does has only been limited by its accommodation. The move to a permanent home has allowed for an expansion of their services and they see this expansion continuing to meet local need.

4.17 As you can see the Safer Streets investment has already seen a return in the social value areas. Along with the Walsall Community Network, Walsall for All, One Walsall and the Making Connections Walsall infrastructure Safer Streets is a key part of the community element of Resilient Communities.

4.18 The small investment created a strong link to our community, which will allow us to take on more projects with the community. Council resources are stretched and this approach will leverage social value into our community work.

4.19 To take this approach forward the Council will not be put any boundary restrictions on its scope. We will select five or six areas to pilot the approach and work with communities to scope the pilots. We will involve partners in our work to ensure we maximise our investment and ensure it is aligned to need and local priorities.

4.20 The Resilient Communities approach has already been well received by residents, it changes the dynamic of the relationship with them and improves the reputation of the Council. The Resilient Communities approach was already in place prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, its true power was magnified during the pandemic. We do not want to lose the momentum so pace is key to the success of our pilot areas.

### ***Council Plan priorities***

- 4.21 The wide nature and scope of the Safer Streets Programme means that it could cut across all the Council Corporate Plan priorities:
- a) ECONOMIC Growth for all people, communities and business. We would want to work with local businesses to build further connections with local communities. There are great relationships in some areas already and great co-working examples.
  - b) PEOPLE have increased independences, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities. Residents are a key part of the Resilient Communities models. Involvement of residents in the Safer Street will increase their wellbeing and allow appropriate signposting and support.
  - c) INTERNAL Focus – All Council services are efficient and effective. A key element of our work is the efficiency and effectiveness of our work. As we work with residents, we will be providing feedback to our internal services.
  - d) CHILDREN have the best possible start, are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well. Our work will include Children within its scope.
  - e) COMMUNITIES are prospering and resilient with all housing needs met in safe and healthy places that build a strong sense of belonging and cohesion. Communities are at the heart of Resilient Communities. The asset-based approach, will enable us to build community confidence and create social value.
- 4.22 As the corporate plan points out, the COVID-19 pandemic has made us rethink how best we can meet our three PROUD promises:
- a) Improved customer experience
  - b) Improved staff satisfaction
  - c) Financial benefit and service efficiency
- 4.23 The Resilient Communities approach has been stress tested throughout the pandemic and has proved successful.

### ***Risk management***

- 4.24 There are no significant risks in relation to Safer Streets, there is a risk register supporting each of the agreed interventions

### ***Financial implications***

- 4.25 There is a requirement for £50,000 per annum to support the Safer Streets programme. Funding for 2022/23 onwards will be found through the reallocation of existing budgets within resilient communities with no overall budget impact.

### ***Legal implications***

- 4.26 There are no legal implications relating to this report.

### ***Procurement Implications/Social Value***

- 4.27 There are no direct procurement implications for this report and any resulting procurement processes must comply with the Council's Contract Rules.

### ***Property implications***

- 4.28 There are no direct property implications of this report

### ***Health and wellbeing implications***

- 4.29 Building confidence in our communities alongside giving residents the opportunity to join in activities for community good will have a positive impact on Health and Wellbeing.
- 4.30 There is strong connectivity between Public Health outcomes and Safer Streets and a partnership approach would be welcomed.

### ***Staffing implications***

- 4.31 There are no staffing issues from this report.

### ***Reducing Inequalities***

- 4.32 The work that will be undertaken as part of Safer Streets, are not directly focused on inequalities. However, issues, including issues relating to crime and ASB often will have an inequalities aspect, as there is a strong connection. Issues that increase social value and kindness will have a positive impact on reducing inequalities.

### ***Consultation***

- 4.33 Our service design and delivery as part of our Safer Streets, will be co-designed with our residents. This work will be consulted on at an appropriate level as part of the implementation of Safer Streets.

## **5. Decide**

This report sets out progress in delivering the Safer Streets Programme Pilot and seeks approval for the allocation of a budget of £50,000 to support the pilot for 2022/23

## 6. Respond

The next steps are to select five or six areas to pilot the approach and work with communities to scope those pilots.

## 7. Review.

A further progress report will be provided to the Cabinet in October 2022.

## Background papers

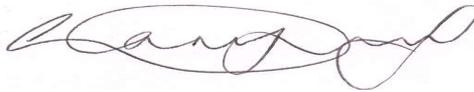
None.

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