

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Slough Wellbeing Board
Date:	20 th September 2022
Subject:	Strong, Healthy & Attractive Neighbourhoods update
Chief Officer:	Richard West – Executive Director Place and Community
Contact Officer:	Liz Jones – Group Manager Localities and Neighbourhoods
Ward(s):	
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	None

1. Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out an update on the work to support the strong, healthy, and attractive neighbourhoods priority.

Recommendations:

Committee is recommended to note the contents of this update.

Commissioner Review

[Sign off from the Commissioner(s) is required for all reports and any comments are to be recorded in the report. Commissioners must have reports one week before agenda publication to sign off. Legal and finance must have signed off reports before being sent to Commissioners.]

2. Report

Introduction

The Wellbeing Board priority to support Strong, Healthy and Attractive Neighbourhoods helps the Council to meet one of the corporate priorities to have *an environment that helps residents live more independent, healthier, and safer lives*.

The corporate plan recognises that disparities in the length of life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between Slough's most deprived areas and the national average are perhaps the most serious impacts of poverty for our residents. We will aim to reduce these inequalities while also improving healthy life expectancy rates for everyone in the town, enabling our residents to live healthy lives and reach their full potential. Our approach will be to support residents to be as independent as possible whilst still ensuring we will be provider of services for the most vulnerable.

Background

Partnership work with, and to support our communities continues despite the financial challenges faced by Slough Borough Council. The strong partnerships forged to respond to the impact of Covid-19 on our neighbourhoods are the foundation for the work currently being delivered. A number of local organisations continue to work together under the #OneSlough umbrella, and this update describes the current priorities being delivered.

This partnership work extends to financially supporting the council officers who manage, deliver and co-ordinate these projects.

Although this work is not providing a statutory service (although the Safer Slough Community Safety Partnership is a statutory partnership), it supports the work of the council to empower and engage with individual residents and community groups. This empowerment and engagement aims to encourage self-help, deliver preventative programmes to reduce the need for acute interventions and develop self-reliance and resilience within Slough's communities to reduce their call on council services.

Strong, Healthy & Attractive Neighbourhood (SHAN) engagement

When the SHAN workstream began it was led by the council's Community Development Team from the community engagement stage through to implementation and delivery of neighbourhood action plans. Over the past year this model has changed, and the Community Development Team identify key neighbourhood stakeholders (for example, Parish Council, existing resident groups etc) to work with to deliver the initial engagement, analyse the results, develop an action plan to address the local priorities and then deliver these actions.

The first two SHAN areas were Chalvey and Colnbrook with Poyle. Both community action plans are now owned and delivered by local stakeholders (Chalvey Community Partnership and Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council).

The Chalvey Community Partnership held a very successful "Chalvey Action Week" in July, which saw planters painted by the local schools and a Family Fun day at the Riverside Centre which included water safety education. The Partnership was awarded £2.5k to continue the allotment project which gives families advice and guidance on what seasonal vegetables and fruit to plant, grow and cook.

In Colnbrook with Poyle the Parish Council have funded the council's Community Youth Work team to work in the ward with groups of young people to reduce fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

The second tranche of SHAN engagement was carried out in Britwell and Baylis & Stoke wards. In Britwell the focus of the engagement was around how residents would like to see the medical centre develop at the community hub. The new Britwell Community Forum met in mid-August to plan how they are going to work on the priorities resident's identified.

In Bayliss & Stoke ward there has been a successful Community Get Together event plus specific activities to encourage women to be physically active, a general introduction to using the Green Gym, 4 Health MOT check-up sessions delivered and a police/resident surgery.

SHAN engagement work with local residents and stakeholders has begun in four areas during 2022. These are Wexham Lea, Central, Cippenham (both Cippenham Green and Cippenham Meadow) and Langley (Foxborough, Langley Kedermister and Langley St

Mary's). This round of engagement work is focussed on social determinants of health inequality (e.g., low income, poor housing, social isolation etc.) to link with the pilot project between Primary Care Networks and Community Development (see below). Engagement responses will be analysed in early October 2022, and these will be used to co-produce action plans in each area.

Over the autumn and winter discussions will take place to identify a lead organisation to take ownership of the delivery of the action plan.

Primary Care Network health inequality reduction

Since April 2022 the council's Community Development Team and Slough's Primary Care Networks have been working together in a pilot scheme to reduce health inequality. This pilot has two workstreams; the first is the Community Development Officers receiving patient referrals from Social Prescribers so individual support and guidance can be offered, and the second is to share information about local support and networks with Social Prescribers.

To date over 20 individual referrals have been made to the Community Development Officers. The officers have been able to signpost and support residents with issues around housing, debt, social care, training & skills, social isolation, and loneliness. Work is progressing to allow the Community Development Officers to co-locate to the main GP surgeries to strengthen their relationship with GPs and Social Prescribers.

The work around sharing understanding of local community-based resources has resulted in the development of a #OneSlough online directory of resources. This is a free resource for residents, community groups, and health providers to access that brings all local support across a range of areas to one place. This is now live at [OneSlough – Slough Directory or Services \(sloughhealth.org\)](https://www.sloughhealth.org) and the Community Development Officers will continue to develop and refine this with input from partner organisations.

This pilot project will end in March 2023 and negotiations have begun to explore continuing this work beyond this date.

Cost of living crisis

#OneSlough recognise that the most immediate and serious cause for concern for most residents is the cost-of-living crisis. A resource pack which brings together information about food, fuel, and financial support available locally will shortly be finalised and will be available on www.slough.gov.uk website. Community Development Officers will update this free resource every 12-weeks to ensure that it is up-to-date with any new initiatives at a local, regional, or national level.

The #OneSlough partnership also recognised that many organisations were offering support and help to alleviate the worst aspects of poverty in Slough. However, this wasn't well co-ordinated and there was an acknowledged risk that gaps in services could develop in addition to some duplication of effort. To mitigate this risk a new "Poverty Action Group" has been created. This group holds a monthly on-line forum and manages a mailing list of over 100 partner organisations. The forum and regular newsletters co-ordinate and communicate the support and help available to reduce the likelihood of unknown pockets of poverty in the borough with residents not receiving any help with fuel, food, or financial information. In addition, the council's Community Development Officers host a weekly drop-in service for any partner in the Poverty Action Group to either discuss proposals for new work, search out contacts and networks or seek advice about specific cases they are working on.

Examples of how the Action Group has brought about improved collaborative work include a wider appreciation from community groups about the workload of the council's Income and Benefits Team and the realistic timescales for cases to be taken on. Community groups also have better understanding of what support is currently available for residents and how it can be accessed (often this can be done directly without needing to wait for a council team to start the process). There is also improved visibility of the youth engagement work delivered by Aik Saath and other groups (including the small council team) to make sure that young people aren't left behind in receiving support.

The Community Development team have focussed specifically on developing programmes to alleviate food-poverty in the borough. Community Pantries are planned to open at a number of locations across the borough in the coming months. Some will also be offering warm spaces for residents to come and socialise or read the paper. During Covid lockdowns the Community Development team built a good relationship with the "Meals from Marlow" scheme that is able to provide free hot meals to community groups who can then distribute them through their own micro-networks. This scheme is being revitalised in Slough and the Community Development Team are working with their Primary Care Networks to investigate if GPs can refer patients who need emergency help with meals.

Community safety

The Council, in partnership with the Thames Valley office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Aik Saath, and Lime, secured £513,940 in Home Office funding to help improve feelings of safety in public spaces, with a particular focus on women and girls. The Safer Streets project has focused on Chalvey, where statistically there was more of a need. The project worked with residents and community groups to understand fears and concerns and offer tangible solutions. The work focused on the physical environment, education of young people, and community groups as "capable guardians" in the community.

A new footpath was installed in Chalvey Recreation Ground with 16 solar lighting columns. It has created a circular walk linking the park's entrances and main features, which will encourage use of the park for exercise, increasing footfall and informal guardianship to protect women and girls. Vegetation has been cut back in several alleyways to improve light levels and lines of sight which have received very positive feedback from residents. New bins have been installed in three locations along Chalvey Road West where groups of men congregate. The new bins have a pitched lid making them uncomfortable to sit on and prevent anyone from being able to place drinks, food, and litter on top to discourage loitering. Street Guardians continued to work with community groups to set up a community led Street Guardian scheme, including training of community members and volunteers from Langley College, and the Chalvey Community Partnership has now taken over this scheme. Engagement work has also been done with local secondary schools to build behaviour change interventions to counter violence against women and girls.

The Safe Places Scheme was part of the Safer Streets Project and aims to offer vulnerable people a safe place to go when they need help. This includes women and girls, those who have learning disabilities, are elderly, have a physical disability, or have a mental health problem. The Council worked in partnership with the Chalvey Community Partnership, Thames Valley Police, and local community groups to set up the scheme. Local businesses are encouraged to sign up to the scheme and display a Safe Places sticker in their window to show that is a place where a vulnerable person can go in an emergency. Staff at the businesses will be trained on what to do and can offer a temporary safe haven or make a call to a carer or safe contact on the person's behalf. The Curve, Arbour Park and all other council buildings are already part of the Safe Places

Scheme. A full list of businesses that have already signed up is listed on [the council's website](#) and on [Chalvey Community Partnership's](#) social media.

In July, the Safer Slough Partnership met to consider the local crime and disorder challenges in Slough, against a background of significant challenge and change. Following a presentation of the local crime picture, the Partnership has agreed to focus on four priority areas, in addition to ensuring it meets its statutory obligations. The priorities chosen were; Violence (that is not Domestic Abuse), Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse and Anti-Social Behaviour. These were selected on the basis of the significant threat, harm, and risk that each subject presents to Slough. Locally violence levels have increased, and the partnership recognised that with a younger than average population, we must build on our approach to prevention, in order to address future problems.

The partnership recognised that domestic abuse remains under-reported, and that the partnership working with communities can make a significant difference. The partnership recognises that the new 10-year drugs strategy, 'From Harm to Hope', presents a great opportunity to tackle a subject that is intrinsically linked and drives much of the reported and observed crime and disorder in Slough. ASB was selected in recognition that there is a need and opportunity to enhance the partnership approach to personal and environmental ASB (fly-tipping), that blights Slough.

New strategic leads for each priority have been identified, and over the next few months comprehensive partnership plans will be put in place to prevent crime, and tackle those who perpetrate crime.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Financial implications

The project is funded by existing budgets from Community Development and Community Safety amounting to £0.090m and £0.339m respectively.

3.1.1 The costs of the two Community Development officers are currently 100% funded by the £0.090m grant via the Integrated Care Systems (Frimley) for 12 months up to March 2023. There is a risk that should the project continue beyond March 2023 there will be no available funding for these officers.

3.1.2 The Community Safety posts are funded from the Community Safety base budget of £0.339m and the activity of the project is effectively in-kind type of resource related to their core activities.

3.2 *Legal implications*

The partnership work described in the report assists the Local Authority in meeting its duty under s2 of the Care Act 2014 to prevent needs for care and assistance.

The Health and Wellbeing Board's terms of reference include "*to encourage persons who arrange for the provision of health and/or social care services in the area to work in an integrated manner for the purpose of advancing the health and wellbeing of the area.*"

Risk	Mitigation
Reduced staff capacity in SBC results in SHAN project stopping.	<p>Securing funding from PCN and demonstrating how SHAN projects assist in reducing health inequality has meant that a core staff resource has been retained.</p> <p>The SHAN model has been revised so that at the beginning of each piece of work it is explicit that the implementation of the action plan must be led by a local group to reduce dependency on SBC teams to drive the implementation. Local stakeholders are encouraged and supported to take ownership of the SHAN work in their areas. This makes the work more sustainable as it is not reliant on SBC resource.</p>
Community projects to help address issues linked to the cost-of-living crisis are un-coordinated leading to gaps in provision and duplications.	Co-ordination of work is undertaken by #OneSlough. The introduction of the Poverty Action Group, resource guide and weekly Community Development sessions ensures good co-ordination and clear identification of gaps.
Work of Community Development and Social Prescribers over-lap creating duplication and inefficiency.	Work is managed and co-ordinated jointly between SBC and Frimley ICS to ensure there is no duplication. Co-location of Community Development Officers in GP surgeries to work closer with Social Prescribers will reduce risk of duplication further.
Slough Community Safety Partnership does not address the key safety priorities for the borough.	The strategic review of data, intelligence, and analysis in summer 2022 provided an opportunity for all key stakeholders and statutory partners to contribute to setting new priorities for the next 3-years.

3.4 *Environmental implications*

The work to prioritise strong, healthy, attractive communities has a number of environmental implications. Engagement with residents often highlights environmental improvements that can be made. In this particular update projects were delivered to improve the physical environment at specific locations in Chalvey. However, these workstreams have a more general impact of encouraging residents and businesses to be proud of their local areas and to use the facilities on offer in their community – parks, schools, businesses, and health provision – rather than travel to use facilities elsewhere. This will not only reduce car travel but encourage communities to care for their environment.

3.5 *Equality implications*

The Safer Streets project was implemented specifically to address the issue of intimidation, harassment, ASB and fear of crime amongst women and girls. This project was supported by analysis by the Thames Valley OPCC that identified that women and girls were disproportionately affected by street-based intimidation and harassment in Chalvey.

The range of resident engagement activity associated with all of these projects helps build a more informed understanding of communities in terms of protected characteristics. Anonymised equalities information about service users is shared among #OneSlough members to improve general understanding of the make-up of the vulnerable parts of our communities.

The pilot work between PCNs and Community Development is aimed to support residents who face a range of issues that result in them facing health inequalities. An Equality Impact Assessment based on the pilot scheme will be created as part of the planning to continue this work beyond 2022/23.

3.6 *Procurement implications*

There are no procurement implications from this report.

3.7 *Workforce implications*

There are no workforce implications from this report.

3.8 *Property implications*

There are no property implications from this report.

4. **Background Papers**

None