

## Community Services Service Area Plan, (Community Services, Darren Williams)

### Synopsis of report:

This report provides a summary of this year's Community Services Service Area Plan for approval. The full proposed Service Area Plan can be found in Appendix 'A'.

### Recommendation(s) that:

- i) **the 2023/2024 Community Services Service Area Plan be approved; and**
- ii) **Members note any General Fund business cases requiring growth are subject to approval by Corporate Management Committee (or full Council depending on sums).**

### 1. Context and background of report

- 1.1 The annual business planning cycle for 2023/2024 commenced with each Corporate Head of Service submitting any planned activity for the next Financial Year which requires growth.
- 1.2 In addition, in conjunction with the relevant Service Chair and Chair of Member Working Party (MWP), priority areas arising from Corporate Strategies have been agreed for the 2023/2024 MWP work programme. These form the majority of the Service area's planned activity for 2023/2024.
- 1.3 Business cases for growth items have then been prepared either as outline documents (further refinement and more detailed exploratory work is required during 2023/2024 before a full business case can be developed), or final business cases. Final business cases will need to be approved by Corporate Management Committee prior to release of any funds. Therefore, reports will be submitted for approval during 2023/2024 where at this stage, only outline business cases can be provided.
- 1.4 Subsequent to review of growth bids, Service Area Plans have been further developed to include planned activity that does not require growth, a Mission Statement to document a narrative of the service area's current position and its direction of travel over the lifecycle of the Corporate Business Plan, and a summary of each of the teams that form the service area and their business as usual activity and key statistics.
- 1.5 To ensure a 'golden thread' between Service Area Plans and team and individual plans, Corporate Heads of Service will use the planned activity to set team and individual objectives for 2023/2024.
- 1.6 Any projects identified as part of planned activity will be added to the project portfolio for 2023/2024 and progress monitored and reported on a Quarterly basis to Corporate Management Committee as per the project management methodology.

- 1.7 The final non-corporate Service Area Plans go to their relevant service committee for approval first. A final approval is then sought from Corporate Management Committee approving the Corporate Action Plan (which is an amalgamation of all the plans for the year). In addition, Corporate Management Committee is also asked to approve any business cases requiring General Fund growth because growth cannot be approved by a service committee with the exception of HRA expenditure up to £100,000 which can be approved by the Housing Committee. Any growth exceeding £250,000 will require the approval of full Council.

## **2. Report**

- 2.1 The full Community Services Service Area Plan can be found in Appendix 'A'. A summary is provided below.
- 2.2 The Community Services Business Unit provides a range of services that support residents in continuing to live active lives within their local community, as well as being able to live independently within their home. The business unit has a semi-commercial outlook to its services, combined with ensuring services provide a social value to residents and the communities served.
- 2.3 The business unit provides a range of functions that all contribute to supporting residents to live safely at home, or to remain active within their local communities, two of the four priorities of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. All service areas have the ability to positively impact the Wider Determinants of Health within the borough, as well as support other corporate strategies including Climate Change and Empowering Communities.
- 2.4 Community Services has a range of prevention services that support vulnerable residents to live independently at home or access their community. These long-established services include Meals at Home, Community Alarms and Technology Enabled Care, the provision of day centre facilities and Community Transport. These services enable vulnerable residents to live safely and with confidence at home, knowing that support is available via the Council. There is regular interaction with Council representatives and when individual situations change, there are staff available to support and advise. Prevention services are very much seen as enabling residents to live confident, active lives and are highly valued by the residents who receive the services, as well as their next of kin, friends and relatives.
- 2.5 Community Development focuses on working with residents and local voluntary, community and faith organisations to make positive change within communities, from empowering others to develop opportunities that serve local residents, to delivering initiatives and projects themselves, around sport and leisure, arts, young people and other areas. In addition, the distribution of grant funding to voluntary sector partners is also coordinated within this team.
- 2.6 As an extension of Community Development, following in house changes to the way parks and open spaces in the borough are managed, a small Open Space Development team will focus on the development of initiatives, projects and enhancements in these green spaces. This ranges from development of the natural environment, enhancing the offer to encourage residents to use

their local parks and open spaces, to developing play space and other recreational facilities in parks across the borough.

- 2.7 In relation to heritage and culture, with the Council providing a borough wide museum, located in Chertsey but delivering a range of community activity, outreach and education services. The Museum is held in high regard by residents and those within this area of cultural services, not least for its partnership with the Olive Matthews Trust.
- 2.8 Community Safety is a prominent part of the Community Services Business Unit. The Council embraces its statutory responsibilities in relation to Community Safety, and has recently committed to developing a larger team to undertake greater work in this area. This includes engaging more with communities and working in close partnership with the local neighbourhood Police teams and others. The aim is to make positive change in communities and enhance feelings of safety, and support the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour in the borough.
- 2.9 The Council also delivers a 24/7 CCTV monitoring centre; Safer Runnymede, supporting residents and police colleagues through its network of CCTV cameras across the borough. The role of CCTV is seen as an important tool in supporting the deployment of police resources and to officers in the course of their work, as well as supporting the borough and its residents in a range of ways from assisting to keep the local roads moving, to identifying residents at potential risk and ensuring support is mobilised where necessary. The benefits of CCTV are wide and varied, evidenced by the range of incidents the function supports. Therefore, the Council's commitment to CCTV as a tool for enhancing community safety is valued by residents.
- 2.10 Whilst many of the services within the Community Services Business Unit are discretionary, there is no lack of ambition to provide more, different and better for residents and communities. However, it is recognised that the Borough Council cannot do this alone and is therefore committed to working in partnership with others to achieve success.
- 2.11 Importantly, the Council is a member of the North West Surrey Health Alliance, and works with a range of health and care partners to make positive change within communities and health and care services for residents. Through this partnership approach, the Council is the lead provider of Social Prescribing in the Borough and also works with three other boroughs in supporting health pathways, notably hospital discharge through the provision of Homesafe Plus, step down accommodation and supporting the discharge planning process at hospitals.
- 2.12 Prevention services are delivered in partnership with Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC), with the intention of working together to develop services for the most vulnerable residents whilst ensuring services are lean and financially sustainable. The partnership with SHBC also extends to the delivery of the Family Support service, again working together to provide a strong, resilient service to families in both boroughs. The Council hosts the partnership in relation to prevention services, and SHBC hosts the Family Support programme.
- 2.13 There are many other partnership relationships and examples of where services work together with others to make a difference to residents and

communities. This is critical to the future success of the business unit. It is for this reason that the third priority within the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to work in partnership to reduce health inequalities.

**Key new areas of work in 2023/2024 (including description of any growth requests)**

**3. Policy framework implications**

3.1 This Plan supports delivery of the Corporate Business Plan. Specifically, those actions arising from Corporate Strategies that will be addressed in delivering the Service Plan can be seen in the Planned Activity list in the Appendix described as CBP Strategy Action in the Type of Initiative column.

**4. Resource implications (where applicable)**

4.1 The following proposed initiatives require growth to be delivered:

- Development of Safer Runnymede (HWB001)
- Implement a play space improvement programme (HWB018)
- Deliver facilities and services across the borough for children and young people (HWB020)
- Investigate appropriate sites for play, sport and recreation facilities/Kings Lane development (HWB024)
- Implementation of community hub at Egham Hythe (if viable) (CSCD003)
- Extension of Homelink to tenure neutral service offer (HWB012)
- Digitalisation of Community Alarm service (HWB003)

4.2 The following proposed initiatives may require growth as part of their delivery. This may be identified as part of the preliminary work to be undertaken:

- Review of core voluntary sector grant funding (EC008)
- Creation of Local Initiatives Fund (EC006)
- Development/Implementation of Community Safety Strategy (HWB016)
- Continuation of Family Support project (HWB039)
- Review and future delivery of Meals at Home (HWB040)

4.3 Provisional budgets for these schemes have been incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)/Housing Business Plan and budgets will be released upon committee approval for the schemes to progress.

**5. Legal implications**

5.1 Where there are contractual or other legal implications linked to any of the proposed areas of work, full consideration of these, working with colleagues in Law and Governance, will be undertaken.

**6. Equality implications**

6.1 Where intended areas of work require the completion of an Equalities Impact Assessment, this will be done.

**7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

7.1 Within all intended areas of work, consideration will be given to environmental, sustainability and biodiversity implications, in support of the Council's commitment to climate change and its Climate Change Strategy

**8. Conclusions**

8.1 The service plan for 2023/2024 in Community Services is the first step in the delivery of the Council's Health and Wellbeing strategy, and elements of other Council strategies.

8.2 The action plan sets out the authority's ambition in delivering more, different and better for its residents, an aspiration supported by Members and Officers alike.

8.3 However, it is important to note that these ambitions will have to be considered against the financial position of the authority. However, Officers in working through the action plan will also seek to work with partners on joint delivery of projects and look for opportunities for grant funding to help deliver the action plan.

**(To resolve)**

**Background papers**

None stated.