

## **DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PLACES**

**20 November 2019**

#### **THRIVING COMMUNITIES – PROGRESS AND MAINSTREAMING INTO NEW COMMUNITIES**

##### **1. Purpose of the report**

To provide an update on progress in developing the Thriving Communities approach across the Council and on plans for expanding and mainstreaming into new communities.

##### **2. Information and Analysis**

The Council Plan outlines the authority's ambitions to transform the relationship between the council and local communities through its Thriving Communities approach. Since 2013, the Council has been working closely with local people and staff in five communities, to co-design ways of working to mobilise both the system and Derbyshire's communities. What began as a collective cross-agency investigation into the difficulties faced by families with complex needs in the most disadvantaged communities, has grown into a whole-system programme of cultural change for public services which is attracting national attention.

##### **Progress in developing the Thriving Communities model**

Between February and July 2019, an acceleration programme was undertaken in Shirebrook, to refine the Thriving Communities model and assess the organisational conditions necessary to mainstream the approach into new areas. The work has involved:

- Local staff working flexible as a 'Connected Team' alongside local people to work in a truly human, place-based and aspirational way for Shirebrook and its people
- A group of staff undertaking an intensive adaptive leadership programme called 'Leading with Communities'
- Development work within the system to unblock challenges in achieving three key priorities
  - Preventing people from hitting crisis
  - Unlocking community potential
  - Building aspirations, employment and skills.

The acceleration period has enabled the authority to assess the value (for both local people and staff) of the alternative ways of working in local communities. However, evaluation of the work undertaken in Shirebrook has revealed that Thriving Communities ways of working currently happen only when staff are enabled to work creatively, often outside of existing roles and across organisational boundaries.

### **Programme of work**

Leadership development and capabilities, alignment of organisational structures and the continuation of growing the Thriving Communities model within communities is being supported by a delivery partner Worldwide International Global Solutions (WIGS), who have been working with the Council since the inception of this work.

A **Guidebook for Thriving Communities** is currently in production, which will support staff, Elected Members and partners in utilising and embedding council-wide delivery of the approach. This guide (and associated resources) will include:

- **A Diagnostic Tool** – to gather collective insight about community need and aspiration, selecting new communities in which to roll out the programme of work and assess their readiness
- **Thriving Communities Model and Ways of Working** – to help staff in communities to work in self-managed ways for the benefit of local people and the places where they live, and for the system to create the conditions for this to happen (not stand in its way)
- **Capture Tools** - to record local insights and dynamically share rich, in-depth stories from communities in order to make better decisions
- **An Evaluation Framework and Tool** - to help ‘measure what matters’ and inform future investment decisions that bring about the greatest public value. The development of this framework is being led by an evaluation partner DAS (Decision Analysis Services Ltd).

This package of tools, which have been co-designed and informed by all the development work undertaken to date, will enable the Council to roll out the approach, track progress, monitor the successful implementation of ways of working and evidence actual and projected cost savings as a result of reduced demand for high cost services.

It is anticipated that a first version of this guidebook (and key resources) will be available for the new year. This will coincide with the selection of eight new areas in which to undertake the next phase of Thriving Communities work.

Alongside the ongoing practical application of the model in local areas, the next few months will also see a programme of Leadership Development taking place, including the Council's Corporate Management Team and Cabinet in order to ensure the organisational conditions are in place to fully support a county wide roll out. The new areas will come on stream and implement the approach by April 2020.

## **2. Officer Recommendation**

The Committee is requested to:

1. Note progress in developing the Thriving Communities programme and plans to embed the approach over the coming months.

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**Derbyshire County Council**