

Appendix C: Projects and programmes update



Outcome: Improving the happiness and wellbeing of residents

Title	Commentary on progress	Status	Impact of project/programme so far
<p>Community Health Preventative Interventions</p> <p>i) Health Inequalities programme (2022/23)</p> <p>ii) Community Health Prevention Project (2023/24)</p>	<p>Continuation of delivery of 2022/23 programme with funds now fully allocated. Many the of projects are still delivering. Some are continuing due to careful budgeting of the money awarded via the ICS funding, others have become self-sustaining or have found funding from other sources. Others are still in the delivery stage because of over ambitious predicted timeframes or provider/supplier issues beyond their control.</p> <p>Due to the work of the Active Lifestyles Team unique user numbers have significantly increased, especially in the frailty cohort, which have now surpassed the predicted uptake. The opportunity for new delivery partner applications closed on 31st March 2024. There are currently 5 delivery partners operating with 3 applications being processed.</p> <p>The development of the Place Based Pilot (Oxmoor) pillar of CHPP is based on supporting and developing what is already in existence to address the wider determinants of health. Amongst other targeted programmes a bespoke Oxmoor ‘Bundle of Offers’ has been developed and residents will have access to these via a QR code on a leaflet that will be distributed to every household.</p>	<p>G</p>	<p>For both Community Health Prevention projects detailed below, it is important to note that in addition to direct health benefits there will have a positive impact on other determinants of health and well-being (including financial well-being). For supporting evidence see paper to the October 2023 meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships)</p> <p>This programme is a broad range of community-based activities to improve health and wellbeing. Projects have a sustainability plan which seeks to ensure continuation of activity after the life of the funding. Delivery partners in this programme are being encouraged to support delivery of the 2023/24 programme.</p> <p>The consequences of CVD and frailty lead significant costs to the NHS and social care systems and significant impacts on the quality of life and life expectancy of our residents. Frailty is particularly important given the growth in our older population, while CVD is the largest cause of premature death.</p> <p>The work will reduce number of residents getting into poor health in the long term, reducing pressures on the NHS due to reduction in fracture, frailty, dementia, and cardiovascular disease. It should be noted that the impact of such primary prevention activity may, in many cases, not be seen for years. However, the broader more immediate impacts of physical activity (mobility, mood, socialisation) will be more immediately apparent.</p>



Outcome: Keeping people out of crisis

Title	Commentary on progress	Status	Impact of project/programme so far
Financial vulnerability for residents' programme	<p>Our overall approach to supporting the financially vulnerable has been supported by input to a paper we presented to Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) in October, and a follow up paper we took in February 2024.</p> <p>Full co-location of the Residents Advice and Information Team and Rural Cambridgeshire Citizen's Advice (CAB) will take place in April 2024, as the culmination of a fruitful working relationship.</p> <p>We continue to work closely with the County Council, to ensure that decisions on the final phase of the Household Support Fund are designed to minimise the impact when the scheme is ultimately withdrawn at the end of central government funding.</p>	G	<p>Closer working with partners to lead to continuous improvement in access to and quality of holistic support services to those in crisis and those who are vulnerable to crisis. More integrated working with CAB who will be moving to work alongside our own Residents Advice and Information team in April. Better links for CAB into Council teams such as housing, benefits and other support teams will also seek to deliver a quicker and improved level of support for residents.</p>



Outcome: Improving Housing

Title	Commentary on progress	Status	Impact of project/programme so far
Longhurst Contract - HDC Surplus Sites (Affordable Housing)	<p>This project has been delayed due to planning permission not yet being achieved on Station Road, Warboys.</p> <p>Following discussions with Longhurst, revised Heads of Terms were agreed in April 24 which will lead to a revised contract to bring forward the nine sites.</p> <p>The current application for Warboys will be withdrawn and a new application will be submitted by the summer of 2024.</p>	A	To increase the number of quality affordable homes for residents across the district.
Local Authority Housing Fund	<p>This project is on track to deliver 21 homes with funding from Central Government to house Ukrainian and Afghan families. Further funding under LAHF 3 has also been offered to the Council which aims to acquire a further 4 homes, which is currently being explored, the ability to accept this additional funding will depend on being able to source the homes and support for the families who will live in them.</p>	G	To increase the number of quality affordable homes for residents across the district.



Outcome: Forward-thinking economic growth

Title	Commentary on progress	Status	Impact of project/programme so far
Market Towns Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) This programme is made up of a variety of different project types and activities, including major regeneration works in St Neots and Ramset, the enhancement of community facilities, shop front grant support, and digital information systems designed to promote local areas for example. The total programme value is in excess of £18M. ii) Work on the St Neots town centre improvements have been underway since January. Good progress is being made and the project is on schedule for completion. The main Market Square improvements are targeted for completion by November, other junction improvement works will be complete early in the new year. iii) A planning application was submitted in March for the refurbishment and enhancement of the Priory Centre (St Neots). This scheme will rapidly improve this facility and the services it provides. iv) Works are proposed to begin on this scheme in September 2028, at which point the Centre will close for a period of 12 months. This is a little later than previously reported (August) due to further refinement of designs necessary. v) A feasibility study concerning the Ramsey Great Whyte Pedestrian and Produce Hub was produced and is due to be presented to Ramsey Town Council on the 25th April. This project potentially 	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: orange;">A</p>	<p>Improvement to the local economic development of the 4 market towns in the district and creating increased high-quality jobs and skills prospects for local residents.</p> <p>Additional benefits to HDC of increased NNDR potential.</p>

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	<p>includes three distinct elements, pedestrianisation of parts of the Great Whyte, the development of small retail pods to encourage footfall and new retail start-ups, in addition to potentially improving the layout of the Mews Close Car park to partially mitigate the loss of on street parking spaces.</p> <p>vi) The public realm works are scheduled to begin by the end of the 2024/25 financial year. A schedule for the retail units is to be confirmed.</p> <p>vii) The Old Falcon is making progress. The Council has entered into a development agreement with the building owner, which has enabled HDC to support the development of a policy compliant planning application which will enable the building to be brought back into use. A planning application for the building will be submitted by late Summer.</p>		
<p>UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme</p>	<p>Made up of 7 projects, 5 of which are on track (Community based employment and skills provision, Business and IP centres, Green Business Grant programme, Manufacturing Digitisation, Start up and Entrepreneurship programme) and one which has been completed (Vibrant communities).</p> <p>The commissioning of the Active Travel Feasibility Studies is currently underway. Whilst the start date for this scheme has been delayed, we do not expect any major issues in completion of this project and output delivery.</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>Improvement to the local economic development of the 4 market towns in the district and creating increased high-quality jobs and skills prospects for local residents.</p>
<p>Rural Prosperity Fund</p>	<p>CPCA has provided (as of April 2024) the final copy of the Rural Prosperity Fund grant agreement. This will be sealed/signed by HDC in the next two weeks.</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>Improvements and support provided in local rural communities outside of main Market towns and settlements. Direct grants will be provided to local businesses to improve performance in</p>

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	Work on initiating Rural Prosperity Fund projects has commenced with some project activities already underway. Projects are split across areas focused on digital infrastructure, business support and sustainable infrastructure, e.g., EV charging facilities.		addition to digital initiatives to improve connectivity for local residents.
Local Plan	A call for sites has been undertaken; and work is ongoing to review the site assessments alongside the sustainability appraisal. Work is under way to identify options for the proposed development strategy. At this time, there is no reason to suggest the timescales identified cannot be met. There are wider unknowns relating to changes in the planning regime nationally, likely to be further impacted by the general election, but there is an ongoing management of these risks (action being delivered).	G	Enablement of providing a framework for the district to shape how land use and places will change and develop in the future. This will ensure all future development in the district is coordinated, prioritised and appropriate (e.g.: socially, environmentally, economically) to ensure Huntingdon is a good place to live and work.
Place Strategy	Status is Amber given intervention work underway on the Health Embedded and Inclusive Economy Journeys. The lessons learned from 2023/24 will inform a set of objectives for 2024/25 with defined key result areas.	A	The launch of two Steering Groups has allowed external partners to come together in new ways across the priority Journeys of Inclusive Economy and Health Embedded. Approval has also been given for grants which will enable community action on the Huntingdonshire Futures journeys. Planning is underway for the launch of the Environmental Innovation theme which will occur in Q1 2024.



Outcome: Lowering our carbon emissions

Title	Commentary on progress	Status	Impact of project/programme so far
Biodiversity for all	The project continues successful delivery against the compressed timescale required caused by a 12-month funding agreement delay by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. The pilot community sites, and major priority public open spaces are going well and to plan. Following the success of the Greenskills project, supporting the development of life skills and employability, it will be expanded but will require further tender due to the value of contract. A change request has been approved to extend the delivery timescale by six months to mitigate the capacity challenge of delivery against the original project timeline. However, the project status is now Amber as the claims submitted to the CPCA whilst accepted, have yet to be paid, which has been escalated accordingly.	A	Demonstrating our progress, engaging with our communities across Huntingdonshire will inform/influence decisions that increase our percentage of biodiversity across the district.



Outcome: Delivering good quality, high value-for-money services

Title	Commentary on progress	Status	Impact of project/programme so far
Riverside Park St Neots	Contractor appointed to improve footpaths, work to be phased to mirror available funding. Additional funding sources being actively sought to include the A428 Legacy Fund. Work due to start in May 2024 onsite.	G	Improvement to aesthetics and access to Riverside Park.
Civil Parking Enforcement	The Council will be progressing Civil Parking Enforcement in line with the draft Agency Agreement. Works surrounding the delivery of the remedial works (signs/lines) are ongoing with a view to ensuring value is achieved for the Council.	G	The district will take on the ownership and responsibility of parking enforcement.

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Hinchingbrooke Country Park	The new timeline which was agreed at Major Change Board following a change request indicates that we aim to re-submit the planning application in July 2024, which will then be considered by Development Management Committee in October 2024. The new approved completion date of improvement works to Hinchingbrooke Country Park is spring 2026.	G	Increased facilities for residents at the Country Park, to encourage increased visitor numbers and enabling improved health and well-being for residents. Additional benefits to HDC of increased revenue from car parking and hospitality facilities.
Planning Improvement programme	Regular performance monitoring is undertaken alongside national reporting - which shows that the service is operating within nationally set performance requirements. The team has recently recruited, and this will add capacity within the team to enable focus on improvement activity as well as other non-statutory work. Further work is ongoing within the service to refine metrics and processes as part of a move towards improvement and efficiency.	A	Will allow all planning applications to be managed and reported on consistently. Will enable development of improved customer experience and increased income opportunities, creating additional capacity in back-office service activities.
Garden Waste Subscription	Transition of Garden Waste Subscription Service Project to Business-as-usual initiated and subscriptions at standard price promoted continuously through various channels. Hangers to all households delivered, routes scheduled finalised and confirmation of no change in the collection dates communicated to residents. All 5 customer advisors onboarded.	G	To provide the Council with financial sustainability to continue to deliver essential services to all residents, whilst continuing to offer the valued garden waste service to those who wish to subscribe.
Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme	<p>March saw the revised scheme successfully go live in time to be included on annual bills.</p> <p>CTS notification letters ceased to be issued, replaced by an updated Council Tax bill & information leaflet providing key CTS information. The website and e-forms were updated with the new scheme details.</p> <p>New processes devised and tested to allow claims for UC to be accepted as claims for CTS, removing the need for residents to claim twice with the same information</p>	G	Will support residents on lower incomes and ensure they do not get into crisis.

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	<p>Training has been rolled out across the benefits team, and new scheme FAQs shared with the Customer Services and wider Revenues teams</p> <p>The process for the Exceptional Hardship scheme was created alongside a dedicated e-form and webpage. Invitations to claim were issued to those identified as being potentially worse off towards the end of March.</p> <p>Now the scheme is live, the project will move to a monitoring and review phase.</p>		
Council Tax Support Fund (2023/24)	The full allocation of funding from Central Government has now been allocated to Council Tax accounts, and the scheme is now closed.	G	Will support residents on lower incomes and ensure they do not get into crisis.
Customer Services Improvement programme	Project scope has been agreed at a high level, but the recruitment of a Customer Change Director has been unsuccessful to date. Some initial discovery work can continue to be undertaken across Q3, and an alternative solution to resource and deliver the work is being considered and awaiting approval.	A	Will allow all customer contacts to be managed and reported on consistently. Will enable development of improved customer experience via additional digital channels, creating additional capacity in back-office service activities.
Workforce Strategy	The project has remained on track against the plan. The output from Pillar One 'Attraction and Retention' was presented and endorsed at Employment Committee 07 February. The Engagement and Well-being staff sessions were held across January, February, and March. The output from Pillar Two 'Engagement' was submitted to the Project Board 09 February. This is in the approval process, ready to present at the Employment Committee 17 April.	G	The workforce strategy will give a framework that links people management and development practices to the long-term goals of HDC as an employer. This aims to position the organisation as an employer of choice, which will improve both recruitment and retention.
One Leisure Improvements Programme	The programme and projects are in the early stages of being defined and agreed.	G	Maintains the vision to create and maintain high quality, sustainable leisure and sports facilities which meet community needs, increase participation, helps tackle health

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			inequalities and provide accessible, inclusive activities for Huntingdonshire residents as part of an active lifestyle.