

**Public
Key Decision - No**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy Principles

Meeting/Date: Overview & Scrutiny – 11th July

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Ben Pitt

Report by: Oliver Morley, Corporate Director (People)

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

Shared for comment are a set of principles for a new local strategy which we seek feedback and input from Members on, before full work on strategy design takes place. This Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy is designed to practically support the Health Embedded, Inclusive Economy and Pride in Place journeys in the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy, support the objectives within our Corporate Plan, and clearly signal to partners how we wish to work collaboratively with them to support the Place Strategy objectives.

Huntingdonshire District Council published a Community Strategy in October 2021, which laid out how we would work to support residents post Covid. Seeking to support residents to achieve positive outcomes, and to evolve the way we deliver services to support residents to succeed. The strategy had at its heart a focus on our residents and ensuring that the rich partnership landscape in which we operate and the common success factors such as employment are considered to maximise our collective contribution to positive outcomes.

The refresh of the corporate plan identified three priorities, which includes “Priority 1 – Improving quality of life for local people”, and a focus on preventing and resolving crisis, and seeing to maximise the quality of life for residents. The Corporate Plan also introduced a clear focus on maximising the contribution the Council has on improving resident outcomes through the way it works, through for instance the decisions it makes on employment, and purchasing decisions. This is an objective shared by other local public sector partners. This intent is captured in the corporate plan via a commitment to review the Community Investment Strategy and our Social Value which are scheduled for this year.

Finally the Council has a clear ambition to engage more meaningfully with residents. This intent is captured in the Council’s engagement principles presented in September 2023, which includes a clear commitment to Decide Together and take Action Together, where the opportunity for genuine options

appraisal and action exist and the public can play a meaningful role in inputting into decisions. Given the focus on improving quality of life locally, it is imperative that residents their hopes and their experiences, inform any decisions on what we as a Council decide to do, enable or influence.

These three factors and consideration of how they are best achieved has led to significant review of best practice elsewhere, and consideration of the most effective and financially sustainable approaches taken by other places to delivering these outcomes. This led to a commitment to the development of a Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy. Taking as its starting point the approach captured in the areas 2021 Community Strategy, with its focus on the needs of residents, and working to ensure communities and local public services work to support success, through sensible use of data, and aligned service activity and delivery.

The principles then propose we endorse the Community Wealth Building Approach pioneered by Preston Council and the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), as a framework and model recognised by public sector partners, to help shape place based collective action. Finally, we propose to pioneer some intensive engagement sessions with representative resident groups to inform this strategy and its approach, but also as means of delivering the strategy into the future. This information is shared for feedback, visibility and comment, and to ensure the approach maximises the benefits that are delivered for local residents.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Review and comment on the Community Health and Wealth building principles, the approach and outline plan.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks to engage and consult with members on the principles and approach will inform the development of the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy, as well as the proposal for use of aspects of “Community co-production/deliberative democracy” which were actions in this year’s Corporate Plan.

2. BACKGROUND TO THIS WORK

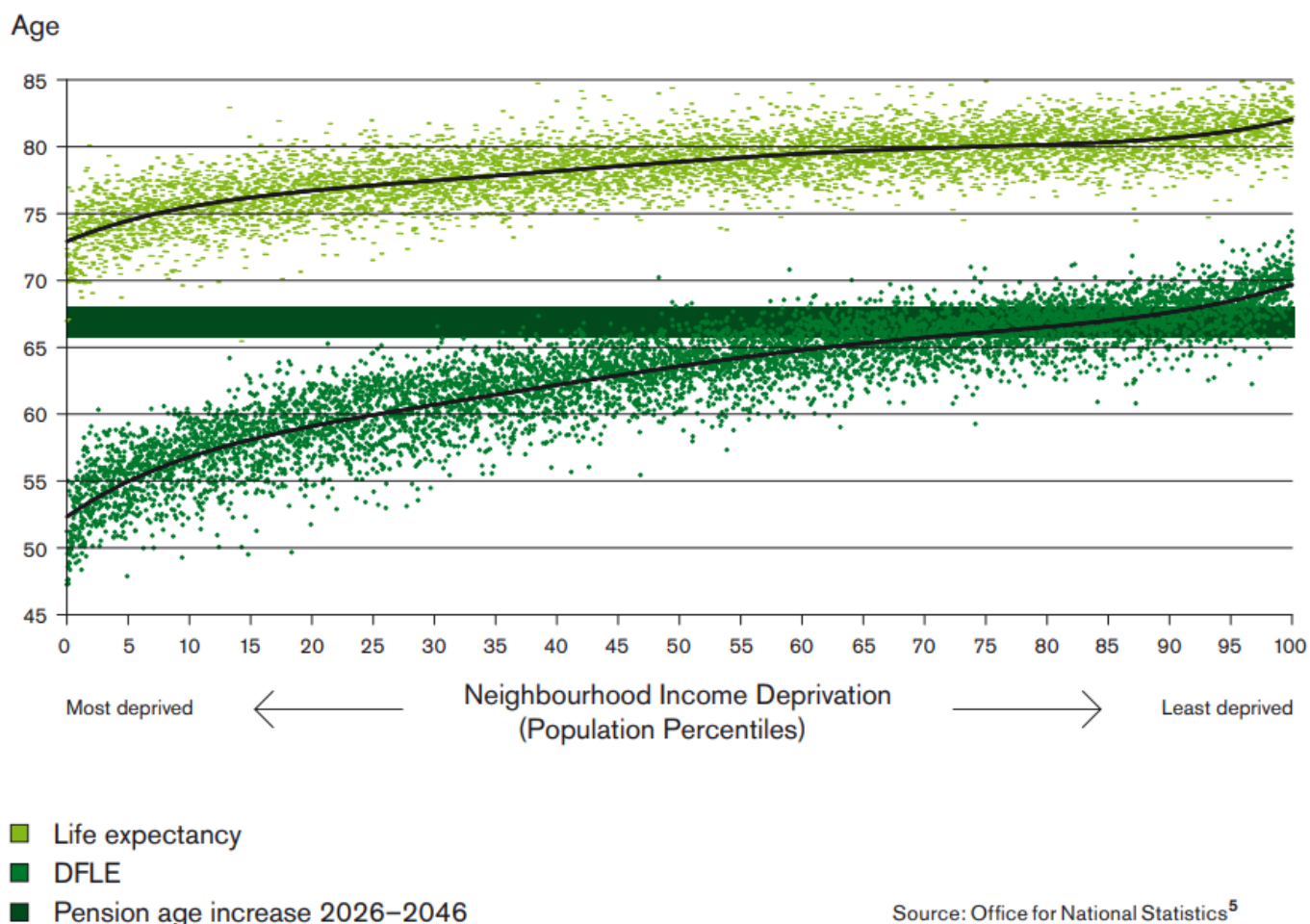
- 2.1 The pressures facing local Councils and other public sector institutions are significant. Rising demand driven by demographic factors such as an aging population, a population increasingly affected by lifestyle related illnesses, and a decrease in good mental health, combined with changes in the workplace all see greater proportions of public sector budgets directed to dealing with expensive statutory demand, and huge pressures particularly on social care budgets.
- 2.2 These challenges are only matched by the ambition that our Members and organisations have for our residents, and the desire that exists to use every lever to maximize positive outcomes for Huntingdonshire residents. These ambitions are effectively captured in the 30 year vision for the area in the Huntingdonshire Futures strategy, a shared Strategy across all local partners and residents. As well as in our own Corporate Plan, which viewed challenges through a lens of “do, enable, influence”, recognizing that Councils are often not able, or not best placed to deliver some of the changes that residents want in their lives, rather to create the conditions for success and quietly co-ordinate behind the scenes.
- 2.3 Huntingdonshire’s 2021 Community Strategy – Transition Plan 2021 to 2023, was built on significant engagement with the public during Covid and beyond, where the Council spoke personally to 1 in 6 households in the area, and reviewed evidence of what solutions work, and what residents wanted. This input confirmed that prevention is better than cure, the role of good employment as primary to resident and household success and saw the Council make commitments to seek to join up public service delivery where opportunities to support positive outcomes exist.
- 2.4 Huntingdonshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, the network of Health providers from GP practices to North-West Anglia Foundation Trust, Schools and Local Colleges, the Blue light services of Fire and Police, and allied Government investments from infrastructure to government agencies often share very similar objectives for our residents. In combination they also spend hundreds of millions of pounds a year in our area, in the staff they employ, the buildings they operate and the services and products they buy. Recognition of this fact has always been acknowledged in Huntingdonshire, and a commitment exists to enhance the work in procurement and commercial investment. This document seeks to develop an approach which seeks to retain a higher proportion of the social value of this spend for the benefit of Huntingdonshire residents.

3. PROPOSED APPROACH – FOCUS ON OUTCOMES

- 3.1 Various models exist that lay out the factors that contribute most significantly to high quality of life for residents. From Maslow’s hierarchy of need to social determinant models endorsed by the government and others. These models show how factors in people’s lives contribute to lifelong prosperity, whilst often described as “determinants of health models” because a lot of the research comes from health. This is largely driven by the quantifiable evidence base available to health in terms of years lived, years lived in good health, and issues of major illness which are recorded as routine, and more easily quantified than local government equivalents. However, as a local authority we effectively view this kind of health data – life expectancy, years lived in good health as a core aspect of quality of life and our ambitions in this area as a Council, in addition to being an important result in itself.
- 3.2 Probably the most famous study on the role of social determinants, or as we might call them “root causes” was the 2010 study '**Fair Society, Healthy Lives**', more commonly referred to as the Marmot review after the name of its primary author, Sir Michael Marmot. What the review demonstrated was

a causal link between income and life expectancy (Figure 1). As the report concluded “There is a social gradient in health – the lower a person’s social position, the worse his or her health. Action should focus on reducing the gradient in health.” The most critical aspect in terms of changing this outcome is good employment, support to achieve it, and action to remove the barriers to accessing it. **That is why we are proposing a Health and Wealth Building Strategy as good employment for our residents is the key driver of both Health and Wealth. We propose making employment and skills one of the key objectives of this approach.**

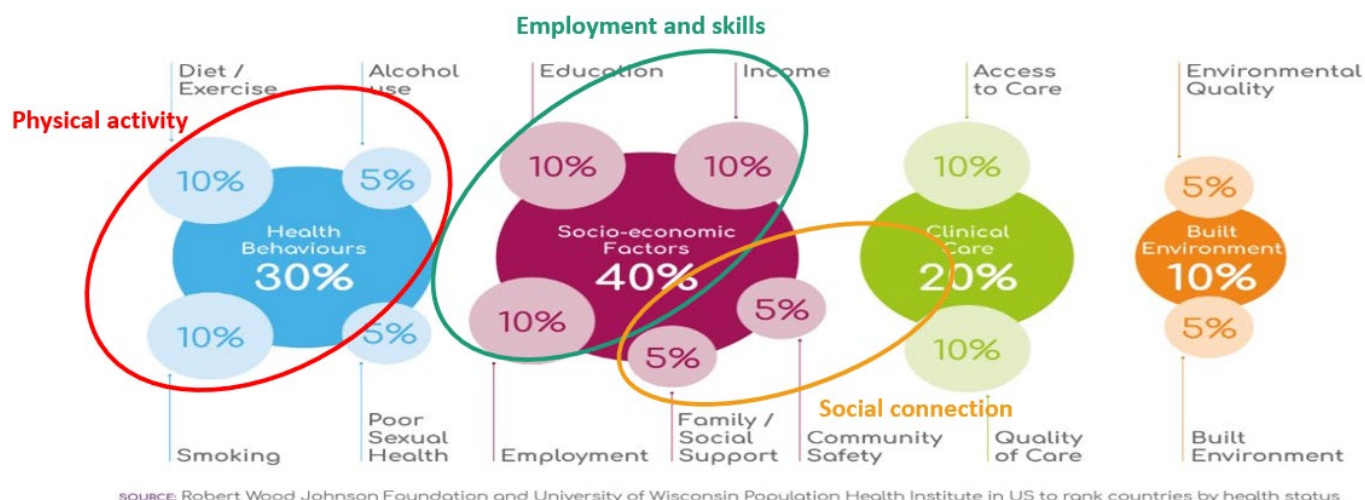
Figure 1 Life expectancy and disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) at birth, persons by neighbourhood income level, England, 1999–2003



- 3.3 There is a strong financial case for seeking to work in this way. It is important to recognise that this approach has at its core a recognition of the economic (wider economic benefit), financial (organisational cost), and social (impact on residents and communities) benefits/cost of such an approach. The cost of ill health, unemployment, sickness, are very real to our organisations and the wider economy. Employment on the other hand generates local tax, reduces likely demand on public sector services, but also increases wellbeing, physical activity, and educational success of children.
- 3.4 This approach is about more than health and employment, however. Figure 2, shows the Robert Wood Johnson social determinant model, indicating the contribution that various factors make to overall health. The 30% contribution to overall health made by income, employment and education link clearly to the role of employment and skills. However, two other areas also emerge, those around physical activity and physical wellbeing and social connection and community, are also highly significant. When these three areas are added together, they amount to approximately 2/3's of the overall factors that contribute to good health/quality of life.
- 3.5 Physical activity improves physical health, but evidence shows it also makes a significant contribution to positive mental health and wellbeing. Critically it is also a core service that HDC deliver routinely

and effectively through our One Leisure, Active Lifestyles, Countryside and Open Spaces teams. Our work delivered via Community Health projects over recent years, and warm spaces, also show our ability to enable and influence in this space, and the success that comes from us effective partnership working with communities. We propose this being a priority focus for the Strategy.

Figure 2



- 3.6 The importance of social connection and community were clearly captured in the areas 2021 strategy. That focus remains core to what we are trying to achieve. Figure 2 clearly shows that a minimum of 10% of health outcomes are a result of social support, and community safety. Cohesive, supportive communities improve lives, increase personal capacity and self-reliance and reduce the demand on the public sector. Evidence shows that two people with identical situations will do better or worse depending on the supportiveness of the community in which they live. The overlap between social support, work, and physical activity are also clear, given the latter two activities are often areas where we both make friends and networks of social support, so these areas should be mutually supportive. We propose making social connection and community support a key objective of the approach.
- 3.7 This approach does not underestimate the role that the built environment plays in wider outcomes. However, this strategy predominantly focusses on the residents rather than the built environment. This approach however will feed into the development of the refreshed local plan refresh and the areas economic strategy which are both in development.
- 3.8 Central to the ability to address gaps across the three proposed objectives – Employment and skills, Physical activity and Social connection, will be understanding the desires of residents, and the gaps or barriers that would enable them to take up more of these options. Section 5 of this paper outlines the approach we propose to take to capture this input. The three areas also mirror the journeys within the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy that we are already committed to – Inclusive Economy, Health Embedded, and Pride in Place.

4. PROPOSED APPROACH – BUILDING ON COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING PRINCIPLES


- 4.1 Selecting the objectives that will be supported by a strategy such as this is relatively easy. The greater challenge comes in identifying the resource and mechanism (the what and the how) to deliver this approach given the continuing demand and resource challenges facing the public sector. A number of different approaches have been pursued nationally to deliver on local priorities of the sort that Huntingdonshire is pursuing. Last year's Corporate Plan included an action to review the benefits of "a local campaign of the sort pursued by Wigan, East Ayrshire or Preston". These three models represent three of the most prominent strategic approaches to working with the community and partners to deliver such an approach, all of which have been considered.
- 4.2 The Wigan approach which is perhaps the most famous example has at its heart a contract between residents and Council in terms of expected behavior and expectation, supported by a significant investment in supporting community infrastructure and voluntary groups.

- 4.3 The East Ayrshire approach is a far reaching approach to community plans that has a significant contribution from residents to set local priorities and to move money between services, through referenda and consultation processes.
- 4.4 The Preston model is a model known as Community Wealth Building, which builds on a well established model of the role of “anchor institutions”, and their role in communities. This is the most actively pursued approach of the three nationally, ties in well with the stated objectives of partners, and is the most deliverable and closely aligned to our corporate plan. This is the model that we propose to structure our approach around.
- 4.5 Community Wealth Building is a model developed by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), which has at its heart a recognition that the decisions that large organisations make in conducting their business have the potential to make significant contributions to local social, economic and environmental success. The model contains five “pillars”
- Fair employment and just labour markets
 - Progressive procurement of goods and services
 - Socially productive use of land and property
 - Plural ownership of the economy
 - Making financial power work for local places

These pillars supported by underlying best practice and frameworks, enable public sector agencies to consider how their approach to procurement, investment, employment practices, and their use of land can further local social outcomes.

- 4.6 Figure 3 below, shows the impact that such an approach across partners in Preston (a district authority with a smaller population than Huntingdonshire) has had over a 10 year period.

Figure 3



Preston – developing an anchor approach



- Increased total spend by anchors
- £70m more for city economy
- £200m more for regional economy
- Created 1,600 more jobs
- 4,000 more people being paid the real living wage
- Food co-op and tech co-ops supported by anchors
- Using local pension funds to invest in local area
- Local at municipal energy
- Preston has moved up deprivation index
- Most improved place to live in UK

- 4.7 Part of the reason for an approach like this, is the momentum that already exists across local partners, and the close alignment with local shared objectives. Figure 4 identifies opportunities in the area, and work already underway, that link neatly to the community wealth building pillars. There is no desire or intent to pursue everything all at once, but to measured

view across opportunities and to progress with those where the opportunity is greatest, and the appetite strongest.

Figure 4

CWB Pillar	What we already have planned	Challenges in the public sector system	Opportunities for us and our residents	Why would a Hunts resident care?	What would we need to do?
Progressive procurement of goods and services	1. Social value policy review	How to deliver community outcomes with limited capacity	7% of HDC spend is within Hunts. Could generate £XXm of local contribution.	Jobs for local residents.	4. Invest in progressive procurement and work with partners.
Socially productive use of land and estate	OPE Development of housing	Housing availability	3. Rebuild of H'brook Hospital A428, EWR.	Housing supply More pleasant place	6. Enhanced land holding review and approach.
Fair employment and just labour markets	Apprentices 1. Continue toward employer of choice	NHS workforce strategy. Extensive use of locums. Social care workforce Food waste work	Linking of local jobs to residents who will benefit A428, EWR build. Leisure build.	More local jobs. Delivered by local people.	5. Develop employment pathways with partners for our residents.
Making financial power work for local places	1. CIS review & CIL refresh	Inequality and housing affordability	CIS reserve and partner investment approaches & local pension fund		6. Influence investment of local Pension & inv funds
Plural ownership of the economy		CCC are pursuing in social care	Support of CIC's and Co-ops		

- 4.8 Maximising how our own policies contribute to local social outcomes is a step entirely in our control. Within this local procurement spend, and ensuring the principles included within our new social value policy support local outcomes, is perhaps the biggest contribution that we can make to local employment in the way that we conduct our day-to-day business as a council. This will be combined with continued focus and delivery of our workforce strategy. Increasing the local spend where it makes financial sense to do so, will support local employment, and local tax receipts. Partners are exploring similar approaches and are keen to explore this further with us. Cambridge City Council are already taking this approach. We would propose to work this up as a focussed area of work.
- 4.9 North West Anglia Foundation Trust (NWAFT) are committed to the full rebuild of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital over the next 10 years, maximising the benefit for local residents of the design and build of this £750million scheme, has the potential to be a significant boost to local employment and the local economy more broadly. This will also help with alignment of the work underway with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. We would propose to work closely with NWAFT on maximising the social benefit of the development in line with the principles of community wealth building.
- 4.10 A range of other options are also being considered which can be discussed at the meeting. Principally these will be seeking to link our residents with the opportunities identified in section 3 of the report, for instance linking young people with jobs, or seeking to support social cohesion through the delivery of our services. We would propose to work up a delivery plan in this area, subject to resource and annual review.
- 4.11 There is significant interest across local stakeholders in an approach like this, and senior level engagement has taken place with several stakeholders on this. We would propose undertaking formal engagement with key public sector stakeholder once we have member direction and endorsement of this as an approach.

5. PROPOSED APPROACH – COMMUNITY CO-PRODUCTION

- 5.1 This approach seeks to place outcomes for residents at the heart of the strategy. Any projects that are developed in response therefore need to have a good understanding of the needs, desires and challenges that those residents have, and how any solutions could best support these. In many places this may not see us “do” much, rather it may be about enabling and influencing to join up activity and create smooth pathways for residents.
- 5.2 Best practice elsewhere proposes the use of representative community co-production groups. This would involve the recruitment of a series of representative panels of local residents, to seek their guidance on how best to support the quality of life outcomes identified in section 3 of this report. These panels will be independently facilitated, and will receive evidence inputs to inform residents contributions. We will seek attendance by partners to ensure a broad reflection on the evidence provided. We propose to share outputs from these sessions will be shared with trusted partners. These groups would be supported by digital engagement platforms and engagement sessions with members, and partners.
- 5.3 In delivery of these co-production sessions we would propose taking as a starting point objectives identified in section 3, around employment, physical activity and social connection, which are all evidence based and were co-developed as part of the Huntingdonshire Futures Work. We will then use the workshops to explore and test how we could enhance these opportunities for residents. The feedback from these sessions will both inform the strategy but critically also inform the ask of partners and ourselves for how we ensure community wealth building initiatives such as the Hinchingsbrooke Rebuild or a targeted employment scheme reaches the residents we wish to support. This is key as well, as we are likely to receive feedback that goes beyond the delivery of our services, to the way services are delivered across organisations. We will capture and make use of this feedback in informing work elsewhere across the organisation such as the planned customer contact review.
- 5.4 These sessions will also support the development of capability in this community co-production/deliberative democracy space. Critically our proposal is that these sessions provide evidence which helps inform elected politicians decisions, rather than replacing the critical elected representative role. Using this approach we believe will result in a strategy better informed by community needs but also test a co-production approach which could have wider application to specific aspects of the delivery of this approach in the future, but also how the Council operates more broadly.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

[*\(See Corporate Plan\)*](#)

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1.1 The development of the Health and Wealth Building Strategy will be within existing resources. The developed strategy will come with a supporting financial proposition, however the majority of the funding is anticipated to come from alignment of business as usual activity and the constructive use of one-off funding pots.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Community Wealth Building principles for Scrutiny July 2024