

Southern Wiltshire Area Board

26th May 2022

Annual Review of Local Priorities

1. Purpose of the Report

- I. To report on progress made in addressing the Area Board priorities selected for 2021/22
- II. To consider any new evidence or information that will help inform the Area Board in selecting its priorities for 2022/23
- III. To highlight potential priorities for the Area Board to consider for 2022/23
- IV. To inform the Area Board of the broad mechanism for delivering these priorities including (where appropriate): leads, working groups and allocating funding.

2. Introduction

This report has been written by the Community Engagement Manager in consultation with the Area Board Chair. It is provided to help celebrate the success so far and support the Area Board Councillors in setting their priorities for the coming year.

In early 2021, the Community Engagement Manager combined data from the Community Area “Joint Strategic Needs Assessment” (JSNA) with other sources of data and additional local intelligence. This was used to produce a Community Area status report that highlighted where further local improvements may be required. In May 2021, this report was shared with local Area Boards to help inform which priorities it should focus its energy and resources upon.

Given the challenging financial environment, both nationally and locally, Area Boards are encouraged to continue to develop this evidence led approach to its work, so that they can have the greatest impact on the lives of our communities. This includes:

- ✓ Selecting priorities and directing resources to where there is the greatest need and where the Area Board can make a tangible contribution;
- ✓ Being clear on what the Area Board is trying to achieve and the mechanism for doing so; and
- ✓ Regularly reviewing and communicating progress against the chosen priorities.

3. Progress on 2021/22 Area Board priorities

The Area Board working with its partners and the wider community has focussed its attention over the past year on the priority areas below.

- i. Communications Priority – parish communications survey delivered, Our Community Matters training planned, considering running a Parish Clerk Conference
- ii. Environment Priority – produced and published new community and family eco friendly projects directory and delivered successful engagement event
- iii. Young People Priority – commissioned new Rural Youth Outreach Project and begun more structured intervention to tackle youth ASB
- iv. Health & Wellbeing Priority – launched Get Out Get Active scheme, launched Make A Friend Be A Friend scheme, increased impact of Silver Salisbury outreach, increased number of schools on Healthy Schools Programme from 4 to 10, helped Laverstock Memory Group transition to a new support lead and base

4. **The context for agreeing new Area Board priorities.**

The selection of Area Board priorities should be undertaken using both the evidence available to us, as well as the context within which we are operating. Both are continually changing, and the following is provided to help inform the Area Board's decision.

- i. The [Joint Strategic Needs Analysis](#) was collated 2 years ago in 2020 and although it used the latest information available at the time, some it is now out of date. This is partly due the significant impact COVID-19 has had on issues such as debt, the economy and mental health as well as the release of more up to date data that was not previously available. For the Southern Wiltshire Community Area, this includes
 - Rural Youth Outreach Project data from “listenings” (outreach in villages) during August-December 2021
 - Partner insight from multi-agency meeting with Age UK, HealthWatch Wiltshire, Carer Support Wiltshire, Public Health, Adult Social Care, CCG in April 2022
 - [Annual report \(citizensadvicewiltshire.org.uk\)](https://citizensadvicewiltshire.org.uk)
- ii. The 2021/22 Area Board priorities were selected whilst in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. The demands of this public health crisis demonstrated the importance of partnership working with some services struggling to cope and many of our community groups and organisations unable to operate. The focus of our time and resources has been upon coming together and supporting the vulnerable within our communities. As we now emerge from the pandemic, the

- focus is shifting away from this reactive response and onto the rebuilding of our communities. In particular, the evidence suggests that
- More volunteers are needed for a range of issues, i.e. community transport, young people and older people's activities
 - Most community groups have got back up and running, but many older people in particular are reluctant to emerge and take advantage of this offer
 - Frailties have deepened for some, and yet statutory services have had to realign (or remove) services in response to growing demand and decreasing central support
 - Those who feel frail do need places to be active and stay healthy and well, but they also require meaningful connection and support where activities are unable to satisfy this area of vulnerability
 - Carers are more unable to access effective respite services now
 - Vulnerabilities are deepening for those previously challenged, whilst others not previously vulnerable, are tipping into greater dependencies through job loss, debt, mental health challenges – our focus is especially needed to ready people for Winter 2022
 - Some Parish Councils are struggling to recruit councillors and officers leaving this aspect of community resilience somewhat depleted – there is a need for more collaboration and/or a parish by parish recovery focus
 - There is capacity and passion to engage around the climate change theme
 - Businesses are keen to contribute to the recovery of communities
 - Those in work are very busy and even more worried about job retention, and yet some are still willing to contribute to community life especially where tasks are very clear and co-ordinated well
- iii. The last 2 years has seen a change in the way that people communicate, especially with the shift to more permanent home and remote working. This has allowed a new approach that includes the ability to be more inclusive and a reduction in the need to travel. The Area Board is encouraged to embrace these opportunities but also mitigate against any local impact upon our communities.
- iv. Wiltshire Council has released its new [business plan](#), outlining its strategy for 2022-2032. It focusses upon the 4 themes of “Empowering People”, “a Resilient Society”, “a Thriving Economy” and “a Sustainable Environment”. In addition, Wiltshire Council on the 1st February 2022, approved both the [Wiltshire Climate Strategy](#) and [Wiltshire's Natural Environment Plan](#). The Area Board should be aware of these plans and seek to help deliver them at a local level.

5. Agreeing and delivering priorities for 2022/23

The Community Engagement Manager in consultation with the chairperson of the Area Board has provided a list of possible priorities for consideration. These can be found in Appendix A. The Area Board should carefully consider how many priorities it can work on at any one time and ensure that they are meaningful for their local area. As a guide, it is recommended that where an Area Board has 4 or less councillors, no more than 4 priorities are selected at any one time. Larger boards can select up to 5 if they believe that they have the capacity to deliver on them. Area Boards can at any time select, review or amend their priorities in order that they remain relevant and linked to current needs.

As well as being evidence led, priorities should be selected where the Area Board believes that it can realistically make a positive impact upon them. To aid the delivery of the chosen priorities, the Community Engagement Manager will support the Area Board councillors including in the creation and management of an action plan. This plan will include clearly defined, manageable and measurable outcomes so the intended outcome is fully understood and will, in turn, facilitate the annual review of delivery on local priorities.

The key mechanism for delivery is to support the local community to use their own experiences, abilities and passions so that they are empowered to shape and deliver positive change. To achieve this the Area Board may wish to consider allocating funding where money is required to help deliver the required aims. The Area Board may also look to set up a local working group to lead on the delivery of a priority, especially where no suitable group already exists.

It is recommended that, for each priority selected, an Area Board councillor takes responsibility for overseeing its delivery and reporting back to the Area Board on progress. The Community Engagement Manager will support the Area Board councillors in undertaking this work.

6. Area Board Lead Councillor Role Description

Area Boards are invited to appoint lead Councillor(s) representatives for each of the priority themes that they have selected. The following guiding principles are in place for Councillors who take a role as an Area Board lead for a priority theme:

- To be the main Area Board point of contact for local officers, councillors and residents within their respective lead area;
- To attend (and usually take the role as chair) relevant working groups of the Area Board;
- To work collaboratively and cooperatively with relevant local partners, community groups, volunteers and outside bodies;

- To provide regular updates back to the Area Board in relation to their lead area, including providing feedback on the success or limitations of previously funded Area Board grants;
- To diligently and democratically consider any funding applications, ensuring due process is undertaken; and
- To in consultation with the local Councillor, monitor feedback for those grant applications that relate to the local priority the lead Councillor has responsibility for, ensuring that relevant feedback on progress and outcomes is provided to the Area Board.

7. Recommendations

- I. The Area Board is asked to acknowledge the progress update from the 2021/22 local priorities work.
- II. The Area Board is asked to consider this report and decide upon the priorities it wishes to focus on in the coming year.
- III. The Area Board is asked to appoint a councillor lead for each of the selected priorities.
- IV. The Area Board is asked to appoint any required working groups in relation to each priority. Note; any existing externally operated groups may already be in place and should be acknowledged and noted.

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APPENDIX A – Suggested priorities for 2022/23

The following are some possible priorities for the Area Board to consider for the coming year

Potential Priority	Key objectives	Additional comments
1. Environment	Start and support new local environment group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on helping Parish Council estates to go carbon neutral by 2030 • Solar Panel info/workshops • Better explore the scope of the biodiversity and associated work on Castle Hill country park impacting and influencing residents to live more green on Riverdown Park and Bishopdown, with the schools etc. Model for other places • The Greening Campaign, including Green Card • Organise village hall greening workshops • Continue to support the Laverstock Schools Travel Plan Working Group
2. Young People	Continue to implement and further develop the Rural Youth Outreach Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New PSPO to address catapulting • New Streetwatch scheme • Youth Worker interventions • Re-look at the potential of a Salamander (now known as Op Spectra) course as another possible intervention • Support pop up events and engagements • Support existing and help to set up new youth clubs • Train young people as young leaders to support the voluntary capacity of the community led youth offer
3. Health & Wellbeing	Support and facilitate a range of projects and activities to support older people and vulnerable adults health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make A Friend Be A Friend Project • Facilitate new/support ongoing activities, for older people, i.e. Silent Discos, Age UK Fitness & Friendship clubs, more Get Out Get Active initiatives and similar with AGE UK and Wilts & Swindon Sports Partnership

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silver Sunday Outreach • Mental Health 8 week free course from Well City Partnership (cultural workshops to support people living with mild to moderate mental health difficulties) • Dementia Support – working with the new dementia action alliance • Carer Support, particularly to facilitate more opportunities for respite • Understand better how to positively impact fuel poverty – to be 2022/23 winter ready
<p>4. Thriving Economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map business operating in Southern Wiltshire Community Area • Understand how we can better engage with them 	<p>This would be a new priority theme to add to the Area Board's work plan, for councillors to consider at its May 2022 meeting</p>