

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. Appendix A summarises the progress that has been made so far.

Area board priority themes for Corsham:

- Youth engagement and positive activity opportunities
- Addressing Climate Change
- Supporting positive mental health and wellbeing
- Supporting the local economy

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.

- 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.
- Two news sources of data for Wiltshire that have analysed data during COVID and subsequent start of the recovery are available. These are:
 - [Annual report \(citizensadvicewiltshire.org.uk\)](https://citizensadvicewiltshire.org.uk)
 - [Recovery JSNA Wiltshire Intelligence](#)
- 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](#) and has committed to being Carbon neutral by 2030.
- The Area Board should be aware of these plans and seek to help deliver them at a local level.

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

- Some organisations are finding it difficult to find volunteers with some not returning due to anxiety over COVID-19.
- The demand upon our health services including the number of COVID related cases continues to be high.
- Many people, especially the older and more vulnerable have lost confidence and are reluctant to socialise again.
- There has been an increase in poor mental health and depression resulting from the pandemic. Some young people have been particularly affected.
- Inflation is very high with fuel costs doubling or more in price. This is hitting the poorer families and the elderly / vulnerable the most.

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 especially as there are many who do not have access to transport or/and do not use digital forms of communication.

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 B. 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 along with its appendices 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.

APPENDIX A - Summary of progress made against priorities for 2021/22

Positive Activities for Young People

Lead – Cllr Helen Belcher

Actions:

- I. Facilitated and expanded virtual Local Youth Network for supporting young people resulting in improved joined up working. Organised 2 online meetings with 16 organisations and community groups involved.
- II. Wiltshire Youth Survey promoted resulting in 374 responses from young people in the local area providing useful information on what support and activities young people require.
- III. Corsham School supported to become part of Wiltshire Youth Council allowing them to share local need and influence where local resources are targeted.
- IV. Programme of activity developed responding to needs identified in youth survey, including The Prepared Project, detached Youth Work, Music Therapy sessions and Mighty Girls workshops.
- V. Information and sign posting through Area Board engagements, CEM and Our Community Matters platform. Including promotion of the Young Work Wiltshire offer, Apprenticeship opportunities, mental health support (local and national), FUEL Summer programme of activities (Springfield Campus and Pound Arts) and the publicising of local clubs, events and activities.

Related funding: Who	What	How Much	Feedback
Corsham School	Music Therapy Sessions for vulnerable students at Corsham School, delivered by The Rhythm Practice based at Pound Arts.	£5000	The project continues to have a significant impact with tangible benefits. Further funding request pending. Impact report highlighting student/parent voice to be shared.
Corsham Windband Association	Expansion of youth membership and legacy project.	£1000	Young people have participated in several celebratory performances at local venues. Youth membership has increased.
Rewired Counselling	SPARK festival - Youth wellbeing event for 200 year 9 students at Corsham School and Pound Arts	£2000	The festival will take place on 8th July
Stay Safe Initiative	Digital Empowerment programme. Protecting and educating young people on how to stay safe online and have a healthy and positive online presence.	£875	Young people, parents and carers have benefitted from this project. Positive feedback has been received from across the school community.
Sea Squad Explorer Scout Unit	Stand Up Paddleboard Equipment	£3456 (capital)	Equipment purchased, introductory sessions organised and trip to Wye Valley planned.

Rise Trust / Corsham Town Council	Detached youth work sessions (two per week) to engage with young people around the town, offering support and sign posting to appropriate agencies.	£7000	Project commenced April 2022. Feedback to be shared at Town Council HWB meeting 7 th June.
Corsham Cricket Club	Coaching Programme	£895	Youth Academy coaching programme delivered.

Addressing Climate Change Lead – Cllr Derek Walters

Actions:

- I. Promoted the draft Climate Change Strategy and Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy consultations and encouraged local involvement and feedback. 73 responses to the Climate Strategy consultation received from the Corsham community area.
- II. Hosted a Corsham Area Climate Strategy Consultation meeting with 42 attendees.
- III. Established a Corsham Area Climate group to bring together town and parish councils and local environment groups to raise awareness of issues / opportunities and explore how organisations can work in co-production together.
- IV. Supported and promoted local climate themed events:
 - The Great Big Green Week activities in Corsham and Colerne
 - COP 26 Corsham Climate Action talk at Pound Arts
 - Corsham Eco Fair
- I. Supported creation of the Corsham Recycling Hub at Springfield Campus and an A-Z Reuse and Recycling guide.
- II. Information and sign posting through Area Board engagements, CEM and the Our Community Matters Platform. Including promotion of home energy improvement grants, Plantlife digital event series, #WiltsCanDoThis campaign, Queens Green Canopy, Community Environment Toolkit and various funding opportunities such as Thrive renewables community benefit and Together for Our Planet.

Related funding: Who	What	How Much	Feedback
Dave Wright	Box Hill community orchard and Rudloe Firs Limestone Wildflower meadow	£2000	Project nearing completion...
Corsham Climate Action	Pound Arts Community Garden – a facility for local people to get involved in growing food and managing a sustainable, organic and biodiverse land area.	£2500	Project underway. Next Health and Wellbeing meeting to be held at the community garden, to promote environmental awareness and how engaging in a community garden can make a positive contribution to wellbeing.

Supporting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead – Cllr Brian Mathew

Actions:

- I. Organised 3 Health and Wellbeing meetings with focus on Celebrating Age, Prevention and Wellbeing Service, Warm and Safe schemes and information sharing across 18 partner organisations and groups.
- II. Actively encouraged and supported older and vulnerable people to get out again into their communities through events and regular activities resulting in an improvement in mental health. Groups and activities promoted included Corsham Community Club, Fitness and Friendship, Souper Friday, library reading group and Movement for Wellbeing.
- III. Supported development and participation in ongoing Celebrating Age programme including Noticing Nature and outdoor concerts in Box and Colerne.
- IV. Promoted activities in the Corsham Community area in order that those who are vulnerable, or elderly are fully supported:
 - Families Out Loud, helping families with addiction.
 - Age UK and Carer's Support groups
 - Corsham Memory Shed
 - Alcohol Awareness
 - Christmas Day lunch
 - Addressing Loneliness campaign.
 - Family and Community learning courses.
 - Over 60s Information and Advice Fair Springfield Campus Nov 21
 - Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub
- I. Worked in partnership with If the Shoe Fits and Corsham Town Council to deliver a Foot Health / slipper exchange event to over 60 residents raising awareness of falls prevention.
- II. Provided support for those in sheltered housing schemes to find suitable activities in their communities so that they do not feel isolated when previous support ended.

Related funding: Who	What	How Much	Feedback
Wiltshire Digital Drive	Unwanted laptops and tablets refurbished and distributed to the local community	£5000	Positive response from community. More than 90 of the 860 school children and families helped to date were in Corsham and surrounding areas.
Wiltshire Music Centre	Celebrating Age – arts and heritage events and activities to reach most isolated in Corsham area.	£1500	4 events/activities organised – Corsham, Box and Colerne
Neston Over 60s Club	Screen / Microphone equipment to support group	£200 (Capital)	Equipment purchased and used for an ongoing programme of guest speakers and events.
If the Shoe Fits	Slipper Exchange and Falls Prevention day	£900	Event held 11 th March. Future event planned 2023/24
Heritage Trails Project	Heritage Trails promotion and leaflet printing	£1260	Heritage Trails project and Walking Wiltshire / Active Health promoted to HWB group

			contacts.
Colerne Art Group	New art group in Colerne which will target older, isolated residents.	£850	First block of sessions fully booked with waiting list. Group to be publicised in Colerne Parish magazine in April
Cotswold Wardens	Footpath restoration in Box	£1250	Works completed
Families Out loud	To support families of drug and alcohol users in the Corsham area	£2450	CEM to discuss with FOL and offer support with promoting service.

Supporting the Economy Lead – Cllr Ruth Hopkinson

Actions:

- I. Promotion of Covid relief grant opportunities in the area including grants to support retail, leisure and hospitality sectors.
- II. Information sharing and sign posting – WC business newsletters, digital training, Work Wiltshire, local employment opportunities, Pound Arts Kickstart vacancies, Help to Grow scheme, shop local.
- III. Supported discussions with local partner organisations on town centre/business networking forum.
- IV. Meeting held with Outset at Digital Mansion with the aim of promoting free support to local small/start-up businesses.
- V. Promoted Corsham Town Council town centre survey.

Corsham Our Community Matters Platform and Newsletters 21/22

<https://ocm.wiltshire.gov.uk/corsham/>

Number of newsletters sent over 12 month period	Number of subscribers	Page views April 21-March 22	Number of contributors
46	896 (March 2022)	15,750	82 (March 22)

APPENDIX B – 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
Supporting the Economy	To be agreed at Area Board meeting July / Sept	Cllr Ruth Hopkinson tbc
Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing	To be discussed at next health and wellbeing meeting and agreed at following Area Board	Cllr Brian Mathew tbc
Addressing Climate Change	To be discussed at next Corsham area Climate Group meeting and agreed at following Area Board.	Cllr Derek Walters tbc
Positive Activities for Young People	To be discussed at next Local Youth Network meeting and agreed at the following Area Board.	Cllr Helen Belcher tbc