Stonehenge Area Board

June 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 Stonehenge Area Board Chair and Councillors. It will help to celebrate the successes 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 but some of the key achievements include:

i. **Combatting isolation and loneliness:**

Several projects have been funded through the Health & Wellbeing sub-group of the Area Board. These include the popular Silver Salisbury with Amesbury programme, Celebrating Age and Our Time project for older people.

ii. **Improving Mental health:**

As above, the Health & Wellbeing group has funded projects tackling mental health issues including a programme of therapy provided by GUL and Amesbury community garden.

For both of these priorities, funding has also been provided to support projects aimed at older and vulnerable people in addition to several local events for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with an emphasis upon increasing the confidence of people to socialise again. Work has continued to strengthen military / civilian integration and the Paths for All walking project has continued in partnership with Tidworth and Pewsey Area Boards.

iii. **Positive youth activities:**

The rural youth project commissioned by Stonehenge Area Board and four other community areas is working to support activities in rural areas. A well-attended and successful "pop-up" youth event was held in Shrewton. Amesbury Youth Café and the Elements Café continue to offer regular provision to young people in Amesbury including young people with special needs. Clubs also run regularly in Durrington and the MOD runs a club in Bulford. We are also working young people who need extra support through the Youth Adventure Trust.

iv. **Mitigating climate change:**

There has been engagement locally with the "Wiltshire Climate Change Strategy" and "Green and Blue Infrastructural Strategy", both of which have now been adopted. The

Greener Durrington project is progressing well and Better Planet Schools is up and running in a number of schools in the Amesbury area.

v.   Digital inclusion:

A programme of introductory sessions has been launched at Amesbury library for those who have had little experience of using the internet and ICT facilities.

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.

Two news sources of data for Wiltshire that have analysed data during COVID and subsequent start of the recovery are available. These are:

- [Wiltshire Citizen's Advice Annual Report](#)
- [Wiltshire Intelligence Bringing Evidence Together (JSNA Update)](#)

Additional data for the Amesbury area can be found here:

- [Community Engagement | Silver Salisbury | Salisbury](#) (scroll down to Silver Salisbury consultation to see results which also covered the Amesbury area) – getting out and about for older and vulnerable people remains a top priority following Covid-19.
- The [Wiltshire Climate Strategy](#) and [Green and blue infrastructure strategy](#) have both now been adopted and Wiltshire Council have committed themselves to being carbon neutral by 2030. The challenge is to consider what local actions we can undertake.
- Inflation is very high with fuel costs doubling or more in price. This is hitting poorer families and the elderly / vulnerable the most.
- Research commissioned by Stonehenge Area Board and carried out by Community First identified a need to improve youth provision in rural areas.

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 for the Stonehenge Area suggests:

- Social isolation and loneliness - 14% of older people often or always felt lonely (Sept 2021: Silver Salisbury consultation which included **Amesbury**). Nationally, 7.2% of adults often or always felt lonely (Feb 2021: ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey).
- Barriers to preventing older people living the life they would like to lead – The top three responses include mobility issues, lack of confidence using technology, and physical health (Sept 2021: Silver Salisbury with Amesbury consultation).
- Barriers for young people accessing youth activities and community facilities include transport, cost and rurality. (October 2021: Amesbury Youth Survey).
- Mental Health support - There has been an increase in poor mental health and depression resulting from the pandemic. Young people have been negatively impacted and anxiety (35%) and self-confidence/esteem (29%) are rated the highest on influencing young people in Amesbury (October 2021: Amesbury Youth Survey).
- Rebuilding community life - social connectedness is central to our health and wellbeing, and rebuilding social activities, community participation and social support, can have powerful effects on health and wellbeing for all residents. More volunteers are needed for a range of issues, i.e. community transport, young people, sports groups and older people's activities There is a need to encourage more people to volunteer for community organisations.
- There has been an increase in poor mental health and depression resulting from the pandemic. Older people and some young people have been particularly affected

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

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 Stonehenge Area Board Chair and Councillors, 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. Up to 5 priorities should be considered to ensure that there is 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 consider any funding applications, ensuring due process is undertaken; and
- ensure 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 (Appendix B) 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 where a suitable existing externally operated groups is not already in place.

Report Author: Jacqui Abbott, Stonehenge Community Engagement Manager
E-Mail: Jacqui.abbott@wiltshire.gov.uk

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

Isolation and Loneliness / Mental Health

Lead Cllr Monica Devendran

- Quarterly Health & Wellbeing meetings with a range of partners and providers.
- Silver Salisbury programme with Amesbury brochure insert Autumn 2021.
- Celebrating Age Programme across the community area.
- Amesbury Green Fingers community garden.
- Mental health therapy course via GUL. New coffee club set up by Cllr Monica Devendran.
- Support to access community activities including to those in sheltered housing schemes.
- 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 e.g. Age UK & Carers support groups in Amesbury.
- Addressing Loneliness campaign.
- Family and Community learning courses.
- A range of Area Board funded jubilee events bringing the community together.
- Information and sign posting on information, activities & events through Area Board engagements, CEM and Our Community Matters platform for partners, providers and participants.

Young People

Lead – Cllr Mark Verbinnen

Actions:

- Re-established and expanded Local Youth Network for supporting young people resulting in improved joined up working. Quarterly meetings.
- Delivery of youth clubs in Amesbury and Durrington including for special needs young people.
- Enford & Avon valley youth club & cooking workshops.
- Support to scouts groups including Shrewton and Larkhill.
- Durrington junior school outdoor space for school and community clubs.
- Partnership work with the Adventure Youth Trust to support disadvantaged young people in Amesbury.
- **Wiltshire Youth Survey** promoted resulting in 411 responses from young people in
- the local area providing useful information on what support and activities young people require.
- Rural Youth Project commissioned alongside 3 other areas – consultation completed and delivery of findings underway.
- Pop Up youth event in Shrewton attended by 45 young people.
- 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 programme of activities, summer programme of activities (MOD / Army Welfare Service / Wessex Circus) & general publicising of local clubs, events and activities.

`

Mitigating Climate Change

Lead: Cllr Graham Wright

- Promotion of the draft Climate Change Strategy and Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy consultations and encouraged local involvement and feedback. 112 responses to the Climate Strategy consultation received from the Amesbury community area.
- Information and sign-posting through Area Board engagements, CEM and the Our Community Matters Platform. Including promotion of home energy improvement grants, Plant life 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, Better Planet Schools and Wiltshire Climate Alliance events.
- Completion of the Green Durrington pilot project.

Digital inclusion:

Lead: Cllr Mark Verbinnen

- A programme of introductory sessions has been launched at Amesbury library for those who have had little experience of using the internet and ICT facilities.
- CEM participation in Get Connected group, information & signposting through Our Community Matters.

APPENDIX B – Suggested priorities for 2022/23

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

Priority	Key objectives for working groups	Working group allocation / Councillor Lead	Notes
Health and Wellbeing	**Reduce isolation and loneliness** **Improve mental health** **Improve digital inclusion** **Support lunch clubs and other key activities for older people** **Support volunteering**	Health and Wellbeing **Cllr Monica Devendran** **Lunch club lead support to H&WB group:** Cllr Graham Wright	Research continues to highlight issues around loneliness and isolation / mental health.
Young People	Enhance positive activities Expand youth engagement Improve access to youth provision in rural areas including Shrewton and clubs of the Avon Valley. Promote offers of providers including Army Welfare Service Special Educational Needs (SEND) provision	Local Youth Network **Cllr Mark Verbinnen**	Research has highlighted rural provision, desire for cooking, parkour, self-defence, re-establish Shrewton youth provision & support to Avon Valley, SEND provision.
Getting around and improved access	**Improving access to transport including community transport, information and volunteer provision (e.g. Link schemes).** **Improving access to activities including via information and new opportunities. Improved access to sport & leisure activities & community clubs.** Encourage take up of the Paths4All initiative (links to Health & Wellbeing and Protecting the Environment). Improving Town and Parish Highways and Street Scene and rural access.	**Health and Wellbeing** Cllr Monica Devendran **Activities lead support to H&WB group:** Cllr Graham Wright **Paths4All theme lead:** Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling **Rural Access theme lead:** Cllr Kevin Daley	This is a cross-cutting priority around transport, access, getting out and about. The main working group for this priority is the **Health and Wellbeing group.** This priority will be supported by 2 theme leaders to cover Paths4All and Rural Access. This priority also links with LHFIG, Chaired by Cllr Graham Wright.
Protect the Environment and reduce carbon footprint.	Encourage partnership working Promote local initiatives to reduce carbon footprint Encourage greener forms of transport including cycling and walking.	**Cllr Robert Yuill** **New working group to be established**	Work with Amesbury Town Council and all Parish Councils.