Trowbridge Community Area Status Report

Background and context

The overarching aim of this document is for Trowbridge Area Board to understand how to support local responses from communities, businesses and organisations and link this to the work of Wiltshire Council, it's partners and agencies, so that collaboratively we can tackle issues including those arising from Covid-19.

The Trowbridge community area has seen an incredible response to the COVID19 pandemic with volunteers leading the response and strategic partners working collaboratively to support our communities. Every person within the area has access to support from one of the many community groups that were set up, some of which are continuing to offer additional support.

As we now look ahead, this short document provides a summary of information that can be utilised to help inform the local community response. It brings together the differing data and information sources from across the community area that will help us to understand the local the state of our community and the impact of COVID-19. It also highlights communities that may have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and it considers how the actions, projects and plans that are emerging will be collated and supported.

Over time this document will be regularly updated in response to changes, new information and actions undertaken.

The Trowbridge Area Board has kept strong working links through Councillors and Officers and collaborated closely with Trowbridge Town Council and the many community based groups that came into being due to the pandemic. The Area Board have supported key local partner, business and community stakeholders working together to rebuild our local community. Whilst the impact of COVID-19 is considerable, it is recognised that some local issues already existed and that these will need to be tackled as well.

The Trowbridge community area consists of the Town of Trowbridge as well as the parishes of Hilperton, Southwick, West Ashton and North Bradley. A key requirement is to ensure that all within the community area have the same opportunity to engage with this work.

Whilst it is natural to focus on the negative impacts of COVID-19, it is important to recognise and build on any positives that have occurred. These include the closer working between organisations, increased community cohesion, new volunteers and the wider use of the internet / social media.

Community data and information

Local data is being collected from a range of sources to provide an overview of the current situation within our community. This is being combined with the outcomes of discussions on the impact of COVID-19 to inform the key issues emerging and where resources should be focussed.

- JSNA local data sets – (collected in winter 2019)
  https://www.wiltshireintelligence.org.uk/community-area/trowbridge/

- COVID19 support group survey – (June 2020)

- Wiltshire CAJSNA 2020 Community Survey Results (Trowbridge)

- [Covid 19 Enquiry Areas Published 09022021 - Google Docs](#)

- [Home (citizensadvicewiltshire.org.uk)](#)

- [YoungMinds - children and young people's mental health charity](#)

- [Children and young people mental health needs Assessment](#)

- [Gypsy, traveller and boater populations health needs assessment Wiltshire](#)

- [Office for National Statistics](#)

- Trowbridge Area Board discussions

- Wiltshire's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Report - Prepared for Wiltshire Recovery Coordination Group (RCG) – 9th September 2020

- Updates and discussions from Town and Parish Council meetings/ plans

- Additional Partner organisation data
   - I. Link scheme data
   - II. Wiltshire Money
   - III. CAB
   - IV. Town and Parish Council plans

- Discussions with key groups including:
   - I. Police
   - II. Schools via Collaborative Schools
   - III. Child Wellbeing Partnership
   - IV. Trowbridge Future
   - V. Wiltshire Youth For Christ
   - VI. Social Housing providers
   - VII. Trowbridge Chamber of Commerce
   - VIII. Wiltshire Multi faith community
   - IX. Local Surgery
   - X. Sports Development team

Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS)

There are around 2000 charities registered in Wiltshire, though c.2,700 registered charities deliver services in Wiltshire with many more unregistered local groups and community organisations.

Wiltshire's VCS provides vital services, core to our communities' resilience and sustainability, our health, wellbeing and economy.

Predicting the long-term impact on the sector is challenging: *latest national research by ProBono Economics (Aug.2020):*

- 85% of charities expect a negative financial impact
- 70% think it will take over a year for pre-covid income levels to be restored
- 68% expect demand for services to increase
- 58% expect to scale back their provision
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Current local picture: (*as of December 2020 Wiltshire VCS Impact Survey – Part 2)*

- 32% of those VCS who continued to offer a service saw a 32% increase in demand with the biggest demand being around Befriending support / supporting peoples mental health and wellbeing.
- 45 % of services remained partially open; 31% fully open and 20% still temporarily closed and 4% permanently closed
- 75% have stated they have changed the way they are delivering their core services
- 73% stated they are operating at a reduced level of service delivery
- 44% of the VCS said they will need more volunteers to meet the increased demands for their services

Positive local grant-making:

- Wiltshire Community Foundation c.£514,000 to 144 groups *(March to August)* and TNLCF: c.£370,000 *(April to June)* a *'drop in the ocean' when considering £150M - £200M sector income and estimated reductions in income.*
- 55% of organisations had been successful in securing funding in the last 6 months *(Wiltshire VCS Impact Survey Part 2 2020)*

Understanding the emerging themes and the impact of COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 has affected some groups in the area more than others and exasperated some pre-existing issues. Further investigation will be required in some cases to ascertain who needs what support. Possible groups may include:

1. *Minority and BAME groups* – Trowbridge has quite a diverse ethic minority population within the community. Each of the minority groups are very supportive of one another but face challenges such as language difficulties and some cultural barriers.

2. *Young people* – They face challenges such as finding employment, poor mental health, lack of support or positive activities, as well as disruption to education. 12.8% of 0-19 year olds in the Trowbridge Community Area are thought to be living in poverty (JSNA data pack)

3. *Older and vulnerable people* – The need to self-isolate more has had a negative impact on mental health, and an increase in loneliness and depression. Those living with dementia have been one of the most vulnerable groups

4. *Families on low income* – We have seen an increase in debt and consequently the demand for supporting services such as increased benefit claims and use of

foodbanks. This issue is interlinked to employment, housing, mental health, loan sharks and other issues.

COVID Support Groups
Many of the COVID pop up support groups formed at the start of the pandemic have either dispended or gone dormant. However, these connections within these community have now been made and residents feel confident they can be kick started again should another 'wave' hit or further restrictions are imposed.

Local groups such as Link Scheme are still offering trips to collect shopping and prescriptions alongside driving individuals to appointments, however, the number of people using LINK for this has significantly dropped.

Analysis of the data so far suggests the following issues are emerging. This list may increase and change after further consultation and as new data arises

Possible Emerging Issue	Impact of COVID-19	Supporting evidence source
Anti-social behaviour rate is 22 reports per 1,000 compared to Wiltshire average of 14	No significant impact	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results JSNA 2020 data
Waste and recycling 56% of Energy Performance Certificates issued to homes in Trowbridge Community Area have a rating of D-G (low efficiency), equal to the average across Wiltshire (3)	No significant impact	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results
Highway infrastructure and maintenance Between 2012-2017, there was an estimated 7.1% increase in traffic flow on roads in Trowbridge Community Area	No significant impact bar some backlog	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results
Accessible positive activities for young people	Fewer activities available due to COVID restrictions and projects on hold	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results Discussions with partners
Fly tipping	Increase due to restrictions on recycling centres	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results
Childhood Obesity 29% of 10-11 year olds in Trowbridge Community Area are obese or overweight. This is slightly higher than the Wiltshire average (28%) and equates to almost 1 in 3 children in Year 6 (1)	Possible increase due to more time spent at home	JSNA 2020 data
Accidental injury including falls resulting in hospital admission	No significant impact	JSNA 2020 data

higher than Wiltshire average. 2,240 per 100,000 persons, compared with 2,135 per 100,000 persons for Wiltshire		
Average Mortality rate from preventable causes 147 per 10,000 persons. This is the same as the rate for Wiltshire	No significant impact	JSNA 2020 data
Significantly lower educational achievement than Wiltshire average 59% of children in Trowbridge Community Area achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of primary school. This is lower than the Wiltshire average of 64%	Disruption in education due to closures and isolation	JSNA 2020 data
Debt – The average estimated personal loan amount per person for those in Trowbridge Community Area is £678.21, which is lower than the Wiltshire average of £796.23	Loans and debt are anticipated to increase significantly as furlough ends and if further restrictions are placed on the public due to Covid19	JSNA 2020 data Wiltshire Money data
Business support and Employment – Trowbridge Community Area has a rate of 90 apprenticeships per 10,000 people aged 16+. This is lower than the Wiltshire rate of 139 per 10,000	Unemployment rising steeply and fewer apprenticeships. Some businesses struggling	JSNA 2020 data
Library use – 44% of residents in Trowbridge Community Area are currently members of the local libraries compared with 34% across Wiltshire	Library currently operating reduced service	JSNA 2020 data
Use and access to technology	Increased use but not all people can access it.	Local knowledge from partners and charities
Poor mental health	Deterioration in mental health caused by COVID including isolation and loneliness	Data from local agencies Discussions with local partners and officers
Keeping people active In 2018/19, there were 343,804 visits to Wiltshire Council owned leisure centres, swimming pools, or health and wellbeing centres in Trowbridge Community Area	Significant restrictions on leisure use due to Covid and ongoing maintenance of local pool	Discussions with partners and leisure services

It is important that this is an inclusive process as possible with special attention to ensure that the villages and minority groups have equal opportunity to feed in and partake in this

recovery work. However, it is recognised that some may choose not to engage, and that work will take place that is not captured in this document.

How local actions can be supported

The local response within the Trowbridge Community Area is one of co-production recognising that to rebuild our communities, it is important that we work together, sharing information and resources where appropriate.

Trowbridge Area Board covers the whole community area and is responsible for this document. It links local delivery to Wiltshire Council, the Police, Public health and other partners. It is an accountable body with influence and powers. It has its own funding to help support local initiatives that support the recovery and also encompass issues that were existing prior to COVID-19

Thematic Leads (2 per theme) will network together local stakeholders who are or wish to be active within their theme. Existing groups such as the Child Wellbeing Partnership may be utilised, where required a new group may be established or the leads may simply use virtual networking. The leads will be responsible for carrying out any further investigation, bringing together work currently happening and identifying gaps. The 4 themes are:

I. **Economy and employment**
II. **Health, well-being and adult care**
III. **Community Resilience**
IV. **Young people, education and children**

One possible route is a **Trowbridge Community Area Recovery Steering Group.** An *aspirational community formed and led group*. It would be free from any statutory or legal responsibilities. Consisting of a range of local organisations, councils and community activists who have chosen to come together to collectively help deliver and support local action. It would act as a steering group bringing together the local work identified by the thematic leads.

Trowbridge Area Board will have updates of how this work is progressing as a standing item at its meetings. It will formulate its own work plan of short and longer term actions that will support and contribute to the local priorities.

Next Steps

I. Engage and consult with partner organisations and community groups (continually)

II. Update this document as a result of engagement (ongoing)

III.   Bring forward this document for discussion at the first Trowbridge Area Board meeting of new council.

IV.   Review this document regularly in response to changes and celebrate completed actions every two months or as required (From May 2021)