

COMMUNITY POWER STRATEGY

Report of Councillor Richard Cox, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement

Date:	8 March 2022
Agenda Item:	5
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Key Decision?	NO
Local Ward Members	n/a



CABINET

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In July 2020 Cabinet approved an engagement strategy which focused on communities rather than customers, moving them from transactional communication methods to being more co-creative, and so by inference, fully engaged.
- 1.2 This report sets out our aspiration to go beyond the remit of the original strategy and adopting a community power approach to engaging communities in local decisions and working with them to improve outcomes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the Community Power Strategy as set out in **Appendix 1**.

3. Background

- 3.1 Community power captures a wide range of different practices, approaches and initiatives based on the principle that communities have knowledge, skills and assets which mean they themselves are well placed to identify and respond to any challenges that they face, and to thrive.
- 3.2 New methods of enabling community insights to shape action are increasingly being developed from councils trialling participatory and deliberative democracy, moving beyond engagement to co-production, including:
 - Community decision-making: Using deliberative and participatory tools to involve citizens more meaningfully in local decision-making.
 - Collaboration with communities: Public services shifting from hierarchical and siloed ways of working, to more collaborative approaches which deeply involve communities as equal partners with essential insights.
 - Building community capacity and assets: Equipping communities with the resources and skills they need to mobilise and genuinely participate in local action
- 3.3 The Community Power Strategy sets out our high-level approach and ambition to develop effective models for Lichfield District, building on best practice and accelerating our pace of change in #Beingabettercouncil

Alternative Options

The council choose not to have a community power and remain with the previous engagement strategy. However this approach is felt to be a key concept in developing our #Beingabettercouncil approach and new Target Operating Model.

Consultation	This strategy has been developed with support from New Local.
Financial Implications	None specifically from this report and strategy. Delivery of key aspects of this plan are linked to the #Beingabettercouncil programme and development stages will be funded from existing resources or as part of our new Target Operating Model.
Approved by Section 151 Officer	Yes
Legal Implications	1. Legal advice will be sought at relevant stages to determine governance arrangements for local decision making and realisation of community power.
Approved by Monitoring Officer	Yes
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	1. This strategy underpins delivery of the strategic plan in enabling people to help themselves and each other.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	1. Not relevant to this report.
Crime & Safety Issues	1. Not relevant to this report.
Environmental Impact	1. None relevant to this report.
GDPR / Privacy Impact Assessment	1. None relevant to this report.

	Risk Description & Risk Owner	Original Score (RYG)	How We Manage It	Current Score (RYG)
A	That the community power models divert resources from other key areas of work and outcomes	Yellow Likelihood Yellow and Impact Assessment Yellow	Engagement with communities is central to the development of the organisation, this strategy will be a key consideration in the development of the Target Operating Model to provide resources.	Green Likelihood Green and Impact Assessment Green
B	The community power models lead to diluted resources and conflicts with confusion regarding roles and responsibilities	Yellow Likelihood Yellow and Impact Assessment Yellow	Structures discussed in this strategy are to be supported by effective governance models and processes.	Green Likelihood Green and Impact Assessment Green

	Background documents Report template for O&S Cabinet and Full Council (lichfielddc.gov.uk)
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	Relevant web links Community Power in Practice - New Local
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