



Report to

Council

Meeting Date: 28th March 2023

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder's Report –
Councillor Elizabeth Mallinson**

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Customer Services have been preparing for annual billing, which has been more complex due to LGR. We have recruited and trained additional staff to ensure we are prepared for main billing and the transition to Cumberland Council.

Our focus has been on providing technical insight and usable tools for Advisors throughout the new authority area. Best practice from Carlisle has led to the creation of a shared knowledge base and informed the design of new telephony systems. This is testament to how Carlisle City Council have operated for many years, where we have demonstrated our ability to innovate and provide excellent customer service. This will be a key aspect of building the new Cumberland authority.

SAFER STREETS INFORMATION

With the support of funding from the PCC, Carlisle City Council has been able to recruit Safer Street Officers who work in partnership with the Welfare Hub. Their role is to provide reassurance and intervene where they see potential vulnerability. The Welfare Hub has been working for a number of months now and has become a vital service to people using Carlisle's night-time economy. They have helped people with minor injuries, given assistance in finding safe ways home, especially when they have become lost from friends during the evening and have no other means in getting home. As well as working closely with the Welfare Hub volunteers, the Officers also link in with the door staff at the nightclubs and pubs in town to offer support to any persons who may have had too much to drink. Statistics show that you are three times more likely to become a victim of crime when you are under the influence of drink or drugs. By intervening early this service can reduce calls to the emergency services. The Welfare Hub provides a safe haven for people to get support or advice and the opportunity to speak to a Police Officer if needed.

As part of the Safer Streets initiative to reduce violence against women and young girls (VAWG), the Officers also look to identify areas of the City Centre where improvements to lighting or CCTV could assist in improving safety at night. This has resulted in a number of agencies working together.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

I would like to recognise the hard work of the Healthy City Team over the last four years that I have been Portfolio Holder in delivering positive community and health outcomes to our Residents. Some notable successes include:

Community Centre Support

During the last four years the 11 Community Centres have been supported by Carlisle City Council and have continued to provide essential benefits to their communities through affordable room hire and the direct provision of community services from youth clubs to book and lunch clubs.

During this time Carlisle City Council has provided grant funding that has contributed to salary costs, the development of a community garden, parent support groups, lunch and art clubs. In the last year the 11 Community Centres have provided services and activities to over 6,000 people.

Thriving Communities

In 2021/22, a partnership led by Tullie House and delivered with support from Carlisle City Council and others received funding from Arts Council England and the National Academy for Social Prescribing to deliver Thriving Communities Carlisle. Other delivery partners included Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Carlisle Healthcare, North Cumbria Integrated Care Community, Susie Tate Projects and Prism Arts. The project received match funding from Carlisle City Council and the Cumbria Community Foundation.

The success of Phase 1 of Thriving Communities clearly demonstrates the strong need within the community for this type of accessible arts, culture and nature based social prescribing activity. The project delivered over 7,500 engagements as part of Phase 1, 43% higher than the initial target. In terms of specific demonstration of need, the Short-Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (S-WEMWBS) was used to monitor changes in participants' wellbeing across the programme. The WEMWBS has been validated for use in the general population and across many different settings including health services and community projects. The S-WEMWBS uses a 5-point rating scale to explore functioning and feeling aspects of wellbeing across seven domains. Participants in Inside Out showed an increase across all seven domains.

With support from Carlisle City Council (and additional funding from Natural England), the partnership was able to continue delivering Thriving Communities in 2023/24. In Thriving

Communities Phase 2 the project will continue to target vulnerable adults experiencing loneliness and isolation, in particular adults falling under the protected characteristics of age and disability including chronic health conditions, the Arts Council England additional characteristic of socio-economic deprivation, and veterans. Our activity will be split into two strands, both delivered in partnership with 5 - 6 Community Centres in Carlisle.

Wellbeing Walks: June 2021 - present

Wellbeing Walks successfully restarted in June 2021 following a break due to the COVID pandemic. A morning and afternoon walk are held every two weeks on Wednesdays with up to 30 people attending the morning walk and up to 20 people attending the afternoon walk. Many individuals have attended the walks for a number of years with new walkers also regularly joining. The walkers enjoy the physical and social benefits of participating in the walks, some walkers have long term health conditions whilst some come along to enjoy the company of others. During the summer of 2022 young people from James Rennie School regularly attended the walks with teachers and support staff. Participation in the walks allowed the young people to take part in an activity within the community, engage with other people and develop their social skills.

The walks have taken place in the green spaces within the City and District and also within the urban areas of the City. Walkers have commented that through the walks they have visited places within the City and surrounding area which they have not visited before. The walking programme is supported by seven trained volunteers. In March 2021 the Healthy City Manager and Communities and Participation Officer worked in partnership with Active Cumbria to develop a partnership agreement with the Ramblers to enable Cumbria to become a super partner in the new Ramblers Wellbeing Walks scheme. The support of the Council contributed to the continuation of the Wellbeing Walks throughout Carlisle and District.

Food Carlisle

Food Carlisle relaunched in January 2021 and has received £47,500 of grant funding for coordinator time, along with a further £10,000 partnership resilience grant, from Sustainable Food Places.

One of the key priorities following the relaunch was engaging with the public. The Partnership has delivered and supported 25 events over the last two years. Following the Pandemic, one of the first City Council events was Food Carlisle's Plant, Food and Wellbeing Fair, which was very well supported by community organisations and the public. The Partnership supported Community Centre reopening events and was involved in open farm days to engage with the public around the topic of good local food after lockdown. In 2022, as part of the Hadrian's Wall 1900 celebrations, Food Carlisle developed "Food at the Frontier", delivering ten events and a Food Trail as a legacy to the project. Other highlights include a series of "cooking on a budget" classes, supporting the Queen's Jubilee event in Bitts Park, and in the Autumn the Food Summit celebrated the work of the partnership, identified priority workstreams and gathered support for work going forward.

All these events have given partners the opportunity to engage with different people, support their communities and plan for the future.

Active Spaces

Significant investment in our play areas with over £300,000 spent on improvements in the last 12 months alone.

DISABLED ADAPTATIONS UPDATE

February continued to be a busy month for Housing Assistance Applications and Grant approvals in Housing and Pollution and Homelife, between the teams they approved 55 applications, totalling just over £200,000 allocated to works including stairlifts, level access showers, essential heating repairs, clean and clearance works and essential hospital discharge works.

CARLISLE LOCAL FOCUS HUB

Cumbria Night Safety Charter

We are currently working with the OPCC's office to deliver Cumbria's first Night Safety Charter. Carlisle has been chosen as the pilot area to deliver the charter across the night-time economy providers including Licenced Premises, Takeaways, Hotels, Transport, Taxi, Security Industry Authority and many other organisations who operate in the night-time economy.

The Charter looks to raise the standard of safety for all users of the night-time economy in the City Centre especially for women and young girls. The Charter is a voluntary pledge for each premises or service provider to ensure staff receive awareness training in promoting safety of women and young girls, sexual harassment, hate crime and any form of abuse. The training will explain to staff how to encourage reporting by themselves, victims and bystanders. Each organisation will receive Charter status once training is complete and receive a certificate and an information pack to display.

Knife Awareness Programme

After the successful work and legacy which was left by the visit of the Knife Angel, the Local Focus Hub has been working with Cumbria Constabulary. Operation Damask is the current knife awareness operation which main objective looks to reduce the carrying of knives or sharp objects. The LFH is arranging for visits to all local secondary schools by "Samantha's Legacy" charity. This charity will deliver a deeply emotional educational talk following the tragic stabbing of their 15-year-old daughter/sister Samantha Madgin in 2007. The charity looks to educate and engage with young people to support young people's resilience to the influences and pressures that could lead to crime. The work also encourages schools and local communities to take part in local initiatives to inspire young people to pursue positive alternatives to violence and crime. (This is funded by Carlisle City Council - ASB City Centre fund)

Creative Project – Gillford Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)

Working with Stephen Dunn (Community Involvement Officer) with staff and pupils from the PRU, the Local Focus Hub is supporting a project which will see the young people work together to create an art installation. The Gillford Centre work with young people who for many different reasons are unable to attend mainstream schools. The Gillford Centre often receives negative and stereotypical attitudes towards many of their students. They have limited opportunities to participate in creating something for the public to see. The current plan is to create a positive response to The Cursing Stone using positive quotes and words and have a tree sculptor work with children to inscribe artistically onto a large piece of oak, so the quotes go around the trunk. An initial approach is currently being made to Tullie House to have the installation placed in their garden for a short time before moving the work to schools and other locations.

This work will allow pupils to reflect and provide them with a sense of self-worth and purpose and hopefully by taking ownership of the artwork they will learn to respect property and the communities around them. (Funded by Carlisle City Council City Centre ASB Fund)

Carlisle – Community Safety Partnership

The final Carlisle Community Safety Partnership meeting was held on 16th February. The important work of this group will now be picked up by a newly constituted Community Safety Partnership for Cumberland.

National Child Exploitation Awareness Raising Day – 18th March 2023

The National Child Exploitation Awareness Day aims to highlight the issues surrounding Child Exploitation; encouraging everyone to **think, spot and speak out against abuse** and adopt a zero tolerance to adults developing inappropriate relationships with children or children exploiting and abusing their peers.

The Local Focus Hub will be reminding staff and partners of the signs of exploitation and the importance of correctly reporting child exploitations through the correct channels. Awareness literature and links to further training will be shared on the build up to the Awareness Day.

Update on Local Focus Referrals

Currently the Carlisle Local Focus Hub has 20 open referrals. A recent referral was submitted by Neighbourhood Police concerning the level of anti-social behaviour at the rear of Green Room Theatre and the safety concerns of the attached empty building which is currently subject of repeated criminal damage and vandalism. Backhouse Lane which runs at the rear of the building has been neglected for a number of years and whilst there are plans in the future to develop the southern end in the near future, very little is planned for the northern end.

An Initial site meeting was held with Cumbria Highway's Lighting Engineers, Parking and Enforcement Manager and Police to look at a temporary measure to improve lighting and to look at joint patrolling with Police and City Council Civil Enforcement Officers.

Further work with Crime And Fire Prevention will look at further advice and guidance.

COLLABORATIVE FUNDING PILOT

Carlisle City Council and Carlisle Partnership have been awarded a £54,778 development grant from the National Lottery Community Fund to deliver a collaborative funding pilot over one year – with potential for future funding. Moving with the new Cumberland Council, the project will be an opportunity to inform and shape a fresh approach to funding place and supporting communities.

Over the year of the award engagement with key stakeholders will allow for opportunities to be identified and maximised through area working, with an emphasis on ground-up community engagement. The project will allow for funders; budget holders and key stakeholders to 'Convene; Connect and Contribute' to issues that are important to communities and place. Opportunities will be explored to simplify and improve the application process for organisations; increase success rates for applicants; allowing a joined approach to funding in the area.

As we progress with the development of the Cumberland Council Plan, locality panels, community engagement, social investment, and other opportunities this project will be a great additional resource to support this exciting work.