



COUNCIL

Wednesday 25 September 2019

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to explain what Community Partnerships (CPs) are, and to outline their purpose, structure, governance and funding. The report seeks Council approval for their establishment in East Suffolk, and the necessary funding to facilitate this.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Steve Gallant, Leader of the Council Councillor Letitia Smith, Cabinet Member for Customers, Communities and Leisure
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Supporting Officer:	Nicole Rickard Head of Communities 01502 523231 Nicole.rickard@eastsuffolk.gov.uk Luke Bennett Partnership Manager (East Suffolk Partnership) Luke.bennett@eastsuffolk.gov.uk
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1 WHY HAVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS?

- 1.1 During the consultation process on the creation of the East Suffolk Council (ESC), concerns were expressed about the larger wards which were proposed, and the increased populations in each, averaging 3,670 residents per Councillor.
- 1.2 There was also concern about the size of the geographical areas of each ward to be covered by the 55 newly elected Councillors of the ESC. It was anticipated that it might be a challenge for Councillors to develop and maintain good working relationships with the Town and Parish Councils in their wards, as some would have more than 40 Parish Councils and Meetings to attend.
- 1.3 Therefore, the Constitution and Governance Working Group of the Shadow Authority for the ESC, at its meeting on 22/10/19 endorsed the concept of CPs, as a means to address these concerns.
- 1.4 In paragraph 13 of the Summary of the ESC's Constitution, on page 8, under the heading "Partnership Working", the ESC acknowledged the importance of collaboration, in assisting it to meet its vision and objectives. It specifically stated that the ESC may establish up to eight CPs which would cover the district.

2 WHAT ARE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS?

- 2.1 It is proposed to create eight CPs, based on logical, geographical groupings of communities, using the ESC ward boundaries as the building blocks. Each of the eight CPs will include between two and six wards. The proposed CPs are shown on the map at Appendix A to this report.
- 2.2 The CPs will
 - provide a positive way for Councillors to reach into their communities and bring them together, with other stakeholders, at regular meetings, workshops and events.
 - Discuss, analyse and understand local needs based on facts, figures and local insight provided by the Suffolk Office of Data Analytics (SODA), and develop collaborative solutions to meet those needs.
 - facilitate partnership working and collaboration at a much more local level.
 - enable ESC to pool and devolve funding, and involvement in decision making, to its communities.
 - be innovative, informal and develop to suit the needs of each CP area.
- 2.3 Each ESC Councillor for a CP area will be a member of that CP, so there will be between 4 and 14 ESC Councillors per CP. The table below shows the wards in each area, the number of councillors and the number of residents registered to vote in each CP area:

Community Partnership Name	Wards	Cllrs	Population
Lowestoft	5, 10, 12, 16, 17, 21	14	52,766
Beccles, Bungay & Halesworth	2, 3, 11	7	25,646
Kessingland, Carlton Colville & Southwold	6, 15, 25, 29	5	18,061
Framlingham & Wickham Market	9, 13, 27	4	14,271
Leiston & Saxmundham	1, 24	4	13,731
Woodbridge, Melton & Deben	7, 19, 22, 28	5	18,058
Kesgrave & Martlesham	4, 14, 18, 23	8	29,506
Felixstowe	8, 20, 26	8	29,054

- 2.4 To maximise their effectiveness and ability to innovate, it is hoped that CPs will evolve differently in each of the eight localities, within a framework agreed by ESC. It is not envisaged that each CP will be the same because they will develop to suit the needs of their own locality. No one size fits all. Each CP is different, in terms of its geography, population and needs.
- 2.5 It is intended to launch CPs in October/November 2019 by offering an open invitation to a community workshop in each of the eight areas. At this workshop, key facts and figures about the CP area will be presented, and local intelligence/feedback will be gathered about the needs of each CP. This will be followed by an interactive process to establish the initial priorities for each CP area. These Community Workshops will be run annually.
- 2.6 The first meetings of the CPs will be held in January/February/March 2020. These sessions will be by invitation only to those groups of representatives which will constitute the CP, the membership of which is outlined below. The CPs will be chaired by an East Suffolk Councillor for at least the first year.
- 2.7 Each CP will meet at least quarterly.

3 WHO WILL BE INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS?

- 3.1 Each CP will include all of the ESC Councillors for that area – between 4 and 14 Councillors per CP. The other core members of each CP are as follows:
- Town and Parish Council representation (agreed through the Suffolk Association of Local Councils – SALC)
 - Suffolk County Councillors whose Divisions cover all or any of the wards within a CP area
 - VCS representation (agreed through the VCS infrastructure organisation – Community Action Suffolk)
 - Youth representation

Other members are likely to include local representation (agreed individually with these organisations) from:

- Suffolk Police
 - The relevant Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) – Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG or Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG
 - Business representation – agreed through the Business Forums/Chambers of Commerce
 - Three CPs will include the relevant place-based initiatives – Lowestoft Rising, Leiston Together and Felixstowe Forward
- 3.2 Positive meetings have been held to date with Suffolk County Council, SALC, Community Action Suffolk and the Police who are all supportive and keen to work with us to develop the ESC CP concept further.
- 3.3 For example, Christine Abraham, Chief Officer of Community Action Suffolk said *“Community Action Suffolk is delighted to be supporting East Suffolk Council to develop the new Community Partnerships. We will work together to find effective ways to engage voluntary and community organisations in shaping and influencing the priorities for each CP as well as identifying groups that can provide solutions through the delivery of local services and activities”*.

4 HOW WILL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS WORK?

- 4.1 CPs will be interactive and participatory meetings rather than formal area committees. Meetings will be held in the CP area in an accessible and suitable venue.
- 4.2 Each meeting will be in two parts. One part will focus on the priorities identified by Town and Parish Councils and communities, gathered through a variety of mechanisms for example social media, through the various representatives at the meeting (e.g. Town and Parish Council, VCSE, young people) and the Youth Voice suggestion boxes in schools and youth settings. The other will focus on the priorities identified through the initial workshop in each CP area, against which funding will be allocated through either a grant offer or commissioning process.
- 4.3 The ambition is that each CP will evolve organically to reflect local distinctiveness, assets and needs.
- 4.4 The Chair of each CP will automatically join the Strategic Partnership Board. This will provide an opportunity for the eight CP Chairs to meet with strategic partners such as the Police, County Council, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) organisations), business sector and Greenprint Forum. This will provide an opportunity for all to come together to discuss the challenges common to more than one CP and to identify collaborative solutions.
- 4.5 It is proposed that there will be an annual East Suffolk-wide Forum where representatives from all eight CPs can come together with community stakeholders, business representatives and strategic partners to jointly problem-solve, promote their achievements and share examples of good practice. This will further evolve the existing ESP Forum which meets annually at Trinity Park and regularly attracts around 200 delegates.

WHAT RESOURCES WILL EACH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP HAVE?

- 4.6 Each CP will have a budget of £10,000 in year 1 (2019/20), and £25,000 per annum in the following three years which can be spent against one or more priorities agreed by the CP (and consistent with the ESC Business Plan).
- 4.7 ESC will also make available a strategic CP Budget of £150,000 in 2019/20 and £300,000 per annum for the next three years that CPs, through their Chair, can bid to for bigger projects and/or projects that cover more than one CP area.
- 4.8 ESC Staff will be expected to engage with the CPs. The Communities and Economic Development Teams are already aligned to work to the proposed CP areas.
- 4.9 Additional staffing resource will be supported through the New Homes Bonus to support CPs, including the provision of a CP Manager. Staffing will also be made available from the Democratic Services team for the arrangement of the CP meetings, including the booking of venues, publication of agenda, reports and action notes. There is also a budget for venue hire, refreshments etc.
- 4.9 It is proposed that both SALC and Community Action Suffolk be provided with funds of up to £10K each, from the ESC, to assist them to support Town/Parish Councils and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations respectively, in working with the CPs.

5 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN?

- 5.1 CPs will support the delivery of the ESC Vision 'Maintain and sustainably improve the quality of life for everyone growing up in, living in, working in and visiting East Suffolk' at a very local level.
- 5.2 CPs have a key role to play in relation to the ESC's Enabling Communities ambitions and will support Economic Growth through engagement with the business sector and with local businesses and business people. Potentially all of the ten critical success factors – Economic Development & Tourism, Leisure, Planning, Housing, Benefits, Customers, Communities, Community Health, Green Environment, Resources – could be a focus for the CPs, depending on the priorities agreed by each CP, and the key issues raised within each CP area.
- 5.3 CPs have the potential to support the delivery of a range of actions in the Business Plan and indeed have the potential to inform the development of the new ESC Business Plan – these include actions around improving mental and physical health and wellbeing, particularly in light of the ageing population and the desire to increase the number of years that East Suffolk residents live in good health, and economic growth.

6 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The ESC will act as an accountable body for CPs, as it does for ESC's three place-based initiatives and as did the former Councils of Suffolk Coastal, and Waveney in relation to the East Suffolk Partnership. This means that the funds are held, and accounted for, by the ESC, in order to facilitate partnership projects and secure buy in from our key partners.
- 6.2 It is anticipated that this approach will enable the CP meetings to be open, inclusive and interactive, with a workshop style, rather than that of a formal board or committee meeting.
- 6.3 Each CP will agree how frequently (minimum of four per year) it is to meet, and some ground rules about how the meetings will be run, which will be developed in their Terms of Reference (to be agreed at an early meeting of each CP). Each would develop a short annual Work Plan identifying their priorities, aligned to the ESC Business Plan, and report back on progress against this Work Plan through an Annual Report to the ESC's Cabinet.
- 6.4 All CP decisions will be based upon reasoned briefing notes and sufficient information (which would be publicly available). This approach, which builds upon the effective ESP model, would enable quick decision making, maximise progress between meetings and minimise bureaucracy.
- 6.5 The funding for each CP area, if a grant-based approach is the preferred option, would be allocated through a multi-agency Funding Panel made up of the ESC Councillors who sit on the CP, together with a Town and Parish Council, local business, VCSE and SCC representative. This Panel would make recommendations, through the CP Chair, to the Leader of the ESC who would sign off the recommendations in accordance with accountable body principles.
- 6.6 The CP budgets will be allocated against clear criteria (linked to the ESC Business Plan) designed to ensure that funding is not used for purposes beyond the ESC's powers or indeed the law. A robust and scored (against an agreed scoring matrix) assessment of each project would be undertaken by the Funding Team of all projects submitted for

funding, and this would be presented to the Funding Panel. Monitoring would be undertaken to ensure that each project achieves its intended outcomes.

- 6.7 The proposed funding allocation for four years through the New Homes Bonus was agreed by the Shadow Authority for East Suffolk at its meeting on (DATE)(Paper XXX refers). The updated, proposed expenditure for the CPS is shown below, and is slightly lower than that originally proposed:

New Homes Bonus Funding - Community Partnerships and Community Grants				
<u>Enabling Communities Budgets</u>	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
55 Councillors x £7,500 each	413	413	413	413
<u>Community Partnerships</u>				
8 Partnerships x £25k (Year 2 onwards)	80	200	200	200
Resourcing and Engagement	120	124	128	132
Strategic Partnership Pot	150	300	300	300
Exemplar Grants	160	0	0	0
East Suffolk Partnership	100	0	0	0

7 OTHER KEY ISSUES

- 7.1 This report has been prepared having considered the results of an Equality Impact Assessment. The EqIA identifies that the Community Partnerships have the potential to have a positive impact on a number of the protected characteristic groups, led as they are by data about needs in each specific area, particularly young and older people (age), disability and economic disadvantage.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 A Working Group of ESC Councillors, consisting of a Councillor from each of the new CP areas, plus the Leaders of the other political parties (or their representative), has been involved in developing the ESC's proposed approach to CPS. This has enabled these proposals to be discussed and challenged at a Councillor level through the two meetings held to date.
- 8.2 Engagement with key partners around the purpose and benefits of CPs will continue to be very important, as will developing some key messages – along the lines of those in Appendix B – to ensure wider, public understanding of what CPs are and how they will work.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 Various options have been considered in relation to the form and function of CPs.

10 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 A commitment has been made to develop and deliver CPs, in response to concerns about a potential democratic deficit caused by the ESC having fewer Councillors, covering larger geographical areas, with larger populations than before it was created. A significant

amount of time has been spent investigating different models at a national level and scoping out the proposed form and function of the ESC CPs.

- 10.2 The model proposed in this report provides an exciting, new opportunity to engage with our communities and their representatives in an innovative and unique way. It will involve the CPs in addressing local issues based on data, evidence and insight and in developing solutions, using devolved funding, in exactly the way the Government intended, under the Localism Act 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Full Council:

1. Approves the establishment of eight Community Partnerships, one for each of the areas shown on the map at Appendix A to this report
2. Endorses the proposed purpose, remit, governance, structure and funding for Community Partnerships in East Suffolk, as set out in this report
3. Approves the proposed budget for the Community Partnerships, as set out in the table at paragraph 6.7 of this report
4. Agrees to do all it can to ensure that the East Suffolk Community Partnerships are a success and
5. Reviews the establishment, workings and success of the Community Partnerships in 3 years.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Map of Community Partnership Areas
Appendix B	Overview of Community Partnerships

BACKGROUND PAPERS None