



East Suffolk Community Partnership Board

Background Briefing Paper for Priorities and Ways of Working Workshop

June 12, 2024

Introduction and Background

1. When the eight Community Partnerships and Board were formed in 2019, the Board priorities were the two highest scoring priorities on aggregate from those identified across the eight Community Partnership workshops (held in October and November 2019). The workshops were held to help identify the priorities for the individual Community Partnerships, based on both data and local insight about assets and needs. In late 2019, these priorities were confirmed as 'Social Isolation and Loneliness' and 'Transport and Travel'.
2. Shortly after the first round of meetings of the Board and individual partnerships were held in early 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic struck. During that year, Board and Community Partnership meetings moved online and 'Covid Response and Recovery' was identified as an additional priority for the Community Partnership Board.
3. In 2021, the Board agreed that it would also focus on Mental Health and Wellbeing (which was the third highest scoring priority at the 2019 workshops), given the close links between Mental Wellbeing and both Social Isolation and Loneliness and Covid Recovery. In 2023, the Board replaced Covid Response and Recovery with a broader priority around Tackling Inequalities following a workshop on that theme at their September meeting.
4. The current Community Partnership Board priorities are therefore:
 - a. Social Isolation and Loneliness
 - b. Transport and Travel
 - c. Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - d. Tackling Inequalities
5. Since 2019, each of the Community Partnerships has reviewed their priorities on an annual basis, using updated data packs and workshop discussions to inform the priority setting process. Some Community Partnership now have completely different priorities to those agreed in 2019 whilst others have changed their priorities very little. The current priorities for each Community Partnership are set out in Appendix A to this report.
6. In many ways, how the Board and Partnerships work is as important as what they focus on and two pieces of work have influenced this aspect of Community Partnership

working – the Peer Review Deep Dive of Community Partnerships held in 2021 and the recent Community Partnership Chair, Vice Chair and Communities Officer Development Session, facilitated by Oliver and Company, held over three workshop sessions earlier this year.

Workshop Part 1: What We Focus On

East Suffolk Data Pack

7. As outlined above, the original priorities for the Board were set in 2019 and informed by a Data Pack which set out available data around a range of themes, with a specific focus on East Suffolk and (where data at smaller geographies was available) the Community Partnership geographies. This pack was updated in late 2021 and used to inform the refresh of priorities for the Board.
8. Since the March 2024 Board meeting, work has been done to update the Data Pack and wherever possible to include data about a wider range of themes to fill previously identified gaps. The revised 2024 version of the Data Pack is attached as Appendix B to this report. This will be presented briefly at the meeting.
9. An overview of key themes emerging from the Data Pack has also been produced and this is attached as Appendix C to this report.
10. The Board priorities i.e. what the Community Partnership Board focuses on will be the focus of the first half of the workshop at the Board meeting. As additional context, the themes now covered within more than one Community Partnership priorities that are not reflected in the four Board current priorities are:
 - physical health and wellbeing/activity
 - environmental improvements
 - young people.
11. The Board may wish to consider the following points when thinking about what changes, if any, to make to their priorities:
 - Does the data/insight show that there is unmet need?
 - Is there another organisation/partnership focussing on this already i.e. can the Board genuinely add value?
 - Can the Board and its partners realistically impact on this area of need?
12. Board members are asked to consider the following question:

Workshop Question: Considering the content in the revised East Suffolk Data Pack (Data), what you and your organisation know about East Suffolk communities (Insight) and the aspirations of your organisation, should any changes be made to the CP Board priorities?

Workshop Part 2: How We Work

Peer Challenge Action Plan

13. The challenge took place over three days (12 – 14 October 2021) – just under two years after the Community Partnerships were launched.
14. East Suffolk Council asked the Team *“What can we do to enhance the Community Partnerships and what changes might be required to make them more effective in the future?”*
15. The Challenge Team structured the review around three themes - People, Process, Outcomes - and in their final report made the following recommendations.
 - i. Take time to reflect, review and reset the compass for Community Partnerships.
 - ii. Celebrate what you have achieved.
 - iii. Manage the transition from virtual meetings to an increased face-to-face format to support relationship building.
 - iv. More effective communication within and across the CPs and the CP Board
 - v. Further engage with communities of interest e.g. young people
 - vi. Invest in creating increased capacity and capability in the wider system.
 - vii. Create a learning and development plan to support the next phase of delivery. (Chairs, Vice Chairs and Officers)
 - viii. Quick win – Improve communication between CPs and outwards with localities
 - ix. Consider strategic sponsorship of CPs from across the organisation
 - x. Build stronger linkages through locality teams e.g. economic development and health
 - xi. Ensure all related processes and commissioned support are congruent with your vision for CPs
 - xii. Review grant and funding processes
 - xiii. Move away from traditional meeting style
 - xiv. Understand how you identify success, impact, and ROI
 - xv. Make the shift to more facilitative problem solving
 - xvi. Develop a robust evaluation framework.
 - xvii. Strengthen oversight – ensure grip.
 - xviii. Engage all stakeholders internal and external on the next steps for Community Partnerships.
16. Good progress has already been made to address the recommendations made by the peer review team which were developed into a more detailed action plan with implementation of the plan overseen by the Cabinet Member, CP Chairs and Communities Officers. However, there are several outstanding actions where more needs to be done:

1 People

- Support CP Chairs/Vice Chairs to deliver their individual CP action plans

- Support CP Chairs and officers to increase the number of external people with specific knowledge / skills / resources that will help to deliver their priorities
- Do more to ensure we hear underrepresented voices - especially young people who can shape CP priorities and activities

2 Process

- Do more to communicate more widely what CPs do
- Move further away from focussing on the funding and promote the wider impact of the CPs

3 Outcomes

- Ensure that all CPs develop more targeted priorities and SMARTer outcomes
- Significantly improve to quantity and quality of the impact measures that all CPs obtained from their projects

Community Partnership Chairs Training

17. Following the elections in May 2019, all but one of the Community Partnership Chairs changed and it was agreed that it would be useful for the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Communities Officers to undertake a programme of training with Oliver and Company to support the learning and development of all participants and the further evolution of the eight Community Partnerships.

18. Three face to face full day workshops were held in different locations across the District between November 2023 and March 2024 and were very well attended by the Chairs, their Vice Chairs and the Communities Officers. A full report was produced from each workshop. Key themes were then distilled from each and an overview report produced, including fourteen key recommendations. This overview (with the recommendations on the first two pages) is attached as Appendix E to this report.

19. The key themes of the fourteen recommendations are:

- Purpose, vision and goals
- Community Partnership definitions
- Principles
- Impact measurement
- Meeting essentials
- 'offers' and 'wants'
- CP role descriptions
- Meeting ground rules
- Increasing involvement in CPs
- Energy and limiting assumptions
- Rural proofing
- Poverty proofing, and
- Communications

as well as securing the future of the partnerships and Board beyond March 2025.

20. The Peer Review report and the CP Chairs Training Report are therefore key inputs into the second part of the workshop where the Board will be asked to consider the following question:

Workshop Question 2: What else should the Board do to help the eight Community Partnerships, and the Board itself, to work even more effectively?

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board consider the material provided in advance of the workshop (the Data Pack and Data Pack summary, Peer Review Action Plan overview and Development Sessions overview) and consider the two questions (set out above):

- 1) Considering the content in the revised East Suffolk Data Pack (Data), what you and your organisation know about East Suffolk communities (Insight) and the aspirations of your organisation, should any changes be made to the CP Board priorities?**
- 2) What else should the Board do to help the eight Community Partnerships, and the Board itself, to work even more effectively?**

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