



## Report to Scrutiny

Item Number: 6

**Contains Confidential or Exempt Information**

No

<b>Subject of Report:</b>	Thriving Communities update on work programme
<b>Meeting:</b>	Scrutiny Panel Active Citizenship 14 November 2019
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<b>Director Responsibility:</b>	Gary Alderson, Director of Environment, <a href="mailto:AldersonG@ealing.gov.uk">AldersonG@ealing.gov.uk</a> 0208 825 8576
<b>Brief:</b>	To consider how the desired shift under Future Ealing towards <u>enabling</u> residents is developing.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Panel is invited to: Consider and comment on the approach to neighbourhoods as part of the emerging strategy for Thriving Communities outlined in this report. Make suggestions for further development where necessary

## Thriving Communities (Formerly 'Services to Neighbourhoods')

- 1.1. Thriving Communities is a Future Ealing programme to deliver better outcomes for residents and communities. The aim is to develop a strategy, informed by new ways of engaging/involving residents in decision making and collectively addressing local issues through closer working with communities.
- 1.2. The key themes underpinning the development of the strategy are:
  - Community connections and social action
  - Participation and engagement in decision making
  - Catalysts - facilitating and enabling change
- 1.3. Thriving Communities Objectives
  - **Citizens leading** their neighbourhoods in an inclusive way (**social action** and participating in **decision making**)
  - **Shift in culture** to enabling and facilitating citizens in social action
  - **More people active** in their local area, supporting others and contributing to stronger neighbourhoods
  - **Improved health and well-being** through **inclusive social networks and activities**
  - **Coordination** across public, private, voluntary and community organisations to **maximise** the positive impact of public sector resources and community strengths
  - **Innovation** at a local level, **change** how the council engages and supports residents to connect and be involved
- 1.5 **Community connections and social action:** to encourage and enable active citizens who are better connected and self-organising. The wider benefits of participation in community life can help reduce social isolation, loneliness, contribute to better mental and emotional health and lead to more resilient communities. The workstream builds on examples of good practice where the council has changed the way it works to support resident led community activity. Thriving Communities recognises the value of working closely with residents and seeks to roll out new ways of involving residents in transforming their neighbourhoods.
- 1.6 The **Year Here** research was commissioned to build on the active citizen work started in 2018 as part of the Neighbourhoods Outcome Review. The focus has been hear the views of the community in our neighbourhoods, Year Here provided independent engagement and listening in two neighbourhoods (Northolt and

Hanwell) to help draw out universal themes that could inform how we develop our approach to Thriving Communities across the borough.

1.7 An 8-week research exercise was undertaken in the two neighbourhoods during March and April 2019, the final report is attached. In distilling some themes from the findings, and in discussion with relevant ward members, areas for initial prototyping were agreed. These include neighbourhood level activities, starting in Northolt; as well as starting to explore with elected members the options on approaches to local decision-making and how these could work in Ealing.

1.8 Key themes and insights from the Year Here research are set out in table 1. These have informed the emerging themes of the Thriving Communities strategy.

- **Community connections and social action** – our communities are resilient and skilled; engaged in social action and have the potential to contribute to better outcomes – brokering opportunities for social action and communities to connect with each other
- **Participation and engagement** in decision making – finding more inclusive ways for all residents, including young people to be engaged and involved in local decision making
- **Catalysts** - facilitating and enabling change - the council could work more closely with the vcs to promote volunteering opportunities; provide more opportunities to help communities and young people to connect with their local area

Table 1

Theme	Insights	What might this mean for:	
		Residents, Community Groups, Public & Private Service Providers	The Council
Share skills and learning	There are many assets in communities that, if shared collaboratively and leveraged properly, could be used to improve outcomes for residents.	Self-organising to meet others to share information and contacts. Working together to develop approaches/platforms that help: - Enable different parts of the community to grow in confidence and learn from each other. - Improve connections through different community channels. - Sharing local talent and successful initiatives to bring pride to the community.	Playing a part in facilitating discussions on ways residents can develop platforms to share knowledge and skills.
Promote volunteering	People say they are unaware of volunteering opportunities. People are unaware of how their skills might be valuable, or lack confidence in coming forward.	Organising better communication between residents and organisations that rely on volunteering. Self-organise sharing of skills and time across all age groups. Self-organise better collaborations across different volunteer bases to work closer together in meeting the needs of the	Supporting resident and VCS to explore how to improve awareness of volunteering opportunities.
Young People	Young people are under-represented in decision-making. Young people are fearful. Young people are disconnected from many activities in their communities.	Support young people to have a sense of belonging their local area by engaging them in activities. Create more opportunities for young people to make decisions in and about their local area. Support young people through mentoring including entrepreneurship programmes.	Include young people in co-designing how to be involved in decision-making. Help young people connect to activities in their local area.

- 1.9 The **Transform Your Space (TYS)** fund supports community led place-based projects by providing match funding for projects that residents and communities have identified as important to improving their locality and building community connections. The fund provides match funding of up to 50% towards schemes that residents are fund raising for. This has reduced the reliance on full council grants for community projects and enabled the council to support more community projects through the council grant scheme and communities and residents attracting funds from external sources.
- 1.10 The fund was launched in 2015 for community initiatives that supported large capital place-based schemes that were brought forward by residents. In 2019/20 the emphasis of the scheme has changed to supporting smaller community projects that can demonstrate local support for their proposals. TYS partners with Spacehive, crowd funding platform <https://www.spacehive.com/about> to help build capacity of local people and groups to use different fundraising platforms to raise the profile of local projects and get community pledges to fund their activity as match funding to any funds made available from the council.
- 1.11 Community connections and social action initiatives informing the development of the strategy are listed below.

Activity	Status
<b>Active Citizenship</b>	Park Foundation and parks volunteers; Do Something Good volunteering and social action website; Let's Go Southall
<b>Waste and Recycling Behavior Change</b>	<b>Community engagement programme in Southall</b> to support the clean streets agenda, including reducing fly tipping and encourage resident pride in their neighbourhood, working towards long term behaviour change. Facilitated by community management team and now supported by 'Our Southall' a citizen led volunteer group that has emerged from the initial council led community engagement in partnership with the waste and recycling team.
<b>Year Here Research</b>	<p><b>Northolt lack of opportunity for young people in Northolt/feeling safe and fear of crime:</b></p> <p><b>Cinema Club</b> in Northolt Library led by young people facilitated by the library service (Place Directorate) and the integrated youth service (Children's Services). There is a steering group of six young people from both the Medlar Estate and Alec Reed Academy. The steering group are leading the development of the club. Pilot screenings have taken place over August/September and a screening planned for late October. Feedback and review by the young people will inform a series of screenings next year.</p> <p><b>Transform Your Space (TYS)</b> TYS round 2 fund opens October 2019. It includes an open call for young people to submit ideas to transform their local area - a public space, whether outdoor or indoor - to</p>

	<p>become a safe and vibrant place that can be used by more young people or a mix of young people and adults; and shows working with others in the community to build community connections</p> <p><b>Northolt Ideas Lab and Northolt Place Plan:</b> to incorporate this into the initial engagement for the Local Plan to identify assumptions and issues to be addressed locally under the participatory and deliberative democracy workstream.</p> <p><b>Hanwell leading change locally:</b> Hanwell community participants in the Year Here research where keen to be more involved in leading change in their area. This activity is to be taken forward in the second strand on local decision making through the participatory democracy workstream.</p>
<p><b>Community managed libraries (CMLs)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hanwell</li> <li>• Perivale</li> <li>• Northfields</li> <li>• Pitshanger</li> <li>• West Ealing</li> </ul>	<p>Application deadline to run CMLs as part of a wider community offer - 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019</p> <p>Award decision 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 Applicants supported by Locality to develop r business plans and proposals</p> <p>Transition to new model January to March 2019.</p> <p>CMLs open April 2020</p>

1.12 **Participation and engagement:** to improve engagement and participation in local decision-making. Exploring the council’s current approach to engagement and participation and how it can enable better participation: moving away from consultation overload and silo engagement models to a more coherent way of engaging with residents at a neighbourhood level that reinvigorates the local democratic process.

1.13 The Democratic Society (DEMSOC) is working with the council to develop its approach to participatory democracy and deliberative democracy in response to the Future Ealing Thriving Communities agenda:

**September - October Phase 1** – internal self-awareness: understanding how the council currently engages with its residents and communities and how the council will need to change culture and structures to enable new ways of engaging and involving residents in decision making.

- (1) Interviews and engagement with Ealing staff
- (2) Interviews with councillors October/November 2019
- (3) Playback of findings to councillors and workshop session on different models of local decision making and how trialling new methods can help wider engagement and involvement of residents at a local level and how

this can add value to the democratic leadership locally as we develop the Ealing approach towards Thriving Communities

- (4) Thriving Communities Direction of Travel report – purpose to agree the direction of travel to inform the work programme and develop the strategy.

#### 1.14 Timeline for developing Thriving Communities Strategy

2019/20 - 2020/21	Activity
Phase 1 September/December (internal)	<p>DEMSOC interviews (organisation/members)</p> <p>Thriving Communities Direction of travel report Cabinet</p> <p>Learn and Grow</p>
Phase 2 January/ March (external)	<p>Engaging with partners and voluntary and community sector</p> <p>Inform and involve</p> <p>Learn and Grow</p> <p>Informing new proposals and strategy development</p>
Phase 3 April/June	<p>Participatory engagement event around the Local Plan 'Issues and Options'</p> <p>Learn and Grow</p> <p>Informing new proposals and strategy development</p>
Phase 4 June/July	<p>Community supported participatory event in Hanwell, Northolt and Southall exploring issues and options that have emerged from the wider Local Plan event in the spring.</p> <p>These locations have been chosen to build on the engagement and learning in these areas as part of the Thriving Communities prototyping new ways of working.</p> <p>Hanwell and Northolt building on the Year Hear research with residents; Southall building on the Behaviour Change initiative</p>

	and Let's Go Southall.  Learn and Grow  Informing new proposals and strategy development
Phase 5 September/October/November	Thriving Communities Strategy Cabinet report September 2020  Thriving Communities Deliberative Democracy event around budget deliverables November 2020

## 2 Legal Implications

- 2.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. The Thriving Communities work programme is in development. Legal implications will be considered as the strategy develops, including legal implications participatory and deliberative democracy and wider involvement in decision making.

## 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications at this stage.

## 4. Other Implications

- 4.1 There are no other implications at this stage.

## 5. Background Papers

- Neighbourhoods Outcome Review Report: Scrutiny Review Panel 2 – 2019/2020: Active Citizenship
- Year Here Research (attached)
- Changes to neighbourhood services: Library Strategy 2019 - 2023

## Consultation

<b>Name of Consultee</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Date Sent to Consultee</b>	<b>Date Response Received from Consultee</b>	<b>Comments Appear in Report Para:</b>
<b>Internal</b>				
Executive Director Place	Tony Clements	24/10		
Director	Environment	Gary Alderson	24/10	25/10
Director of Legal Services	Helen Harris	24/10		
Chief Finance Officer	Ross Brown	24/10		
Director, Strategy & Engagement	Kieran Read	24/10	25/10	
Director, Regeneration and Planning	Lucy Taylor	24/10	25/10	
Leader	Cllr. Julian Bell	24/10		

## Report History

<b>Decision Type:</b>		<b>Urgency item?</b>	
For Information (delete as applicable)			
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	Date Report Drafted:	Report Deadline:	Date Report Sent:
XX.XX.19	21.10.19	XX.XX.19	XX.10.19
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