

Our Place Westfield Project – Update Report

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Place & Performance
Assistant Director: Kim Close / Helen Rutter, Communities
Service Manager: Kim Close, Area South Development Manager (South)
Lead Officer: James Divall, Neighbourhood Development Officer (South)
Contact Details: James.divall@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462261

Purpose of the Report

To update members on the progress of the 'Our Place' Westfield project.

Public Interest

'Our Place' is a national initiative led by Locality in partnership with the Local Government Association. 'Our Place' aims to support communities and public service organisations to develop an operational plan and take control in their area to make sure that things work in the way for local people.

Recommendation

That members note the progress made.

Background

During 2007 South Somerset Together, the Local Strategic Partnership for South Somerset commissioned work to assess the health and social inequalities experienced by the residents of Yeovil. Evidence from a number of sources, as well as the commissioned report which was published in 2008, showed significant health and social inequalities in the wards Yeovil Central, Yeovil East and Yeovil West.

In particular these wards showed higher than average levels of income support claimants, crime and antisocial behaviour, lone parents, low access to cars, exclusion from school, levels of long term limiting illness and teenage pregnancies.

In addition, evidence in the Livequal Milford pilot indicated:

- A lack of co-ordination amongst agencies trying to tackle health inequalities
- A lack of community and health facilities at a neighbourhood level

This pilot was so successful that SSDC agreed to expand the **Livequal** project to include the Westfield area of Yeovil. SSDC is also exploring opportunities for rolling out the approach in other areas of the district.

Westfield was highlighted by the District Council Area South Committee as a priority area for support and focus with regards to the work programme with Livequal. The area comes with new challenges and problems for the programme but due to its adaptive, responsive and pro-active nature of operations, it was felt that Livequal could take the lessons learnt from Milford and implement the same methodology into this neighbourhood.

During the initial engagement phase of the Livequal programme establishing itself within the Westfield neighbourhood, news of a new national scheme called 'Our Place' was highlighted

as a possible new vehicle to support the Livequal's programme of operations within the Westfield area.

Through 'Our Place' the Livequal programme could heighten the profile of need for community support in the neighbourhood, engage further local partners, use new methods of community engagement and need identification/evidencing. Through further discussions it was identified and agreed that to integrate the new 'Our Place' programme into the Livequal scheme of operations would help the community with extra resources and tools to identify and target the health inequality needs within the Westfield neighbourhood.

After a successful 'Our Place' application to Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in February 2014, The 'Livequal' programme evolved into a Westfield 'Our neighbourhood' project building on the foundations set from the community consultation whilst integrating 'Our Place' programme methodology and tools. The new 'Our Place' pilot in Westfield focused on a community centred/led 'grass roots' approach to local programmes and initiatives designed and delivered where possible by the community themselves.

The development of community led services within Westfield delivered locally with co-operation between both the community and agencies will have some benefit to all parties. These services will provide better outcomes, better quality services, signposting opportunities, reduce costs and will avoid duplication delivery and expenditure whilst operating from a local community 'branded' service establishing local ownership and promoting community engagement.

The aim is for the newly co-designed services to reduce the reliance on the state through harnessing the enthusiasm, skills and knowledge within the community.

Update Report – Westfield Our Place Project.

As a result of the successful 'Our Place' application in February 2014, an 'Our Place' partnership steering group was formed to look at the Westfield Community Consultation document (2013 document completed as part of the Livequal project in Westfield).

Westfield Community Association sits within the heart of the programme closely supported by local community organisations, groups and venues such as the local Academy, primary school, churches, community shops, sports/social and well-being groups and the residents themselves operating within the community. The consultation led by the community association and supported by the wider community, has provided the evidence of need and provided the programme with the knowledge of what the aspirations are for the neighbourhood.

The community themselves have highlighted three key focus areas for the 'Our Place' programme:

1. Access to community services and community facilities
2. Digital Inclusion
3. Community Safety (especially road safety)

From these themes a large comprehensive operational plan has been developed working with the Westfield Community Association and partners. The operational plan document template from Locality is designed with the aim of building a business plan document for the project, to help local communities showcase how they can effectively implement a

'community led' approach to delivering services and tackling health inequalities within their community.

The document has provided new evidence tools such as Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) tools, logic models and case study templates that have now been mainstreamed into both community and local authority work as common practice.

Since the completion and submission of the final 'Our Place' report, the Project Manager and Westfield Community Association have refined the document to be more user friendly, simplifying it to a small manageable action plan for local residents to see and understand. This document has been labelled 'Our Neighbourhood – Westfield' to encourage engagement from local residents and to move it away from the 'Our Place' programme to a more local orientated ownership and approach. The document is still being developed, with the Project Manager, who is working with both the community and visiting local partners to establish support with the overall programme and the individual projects within the action plan. The final action plan will be completed by a partnership meeting led by the Project Manager and Westfield Community Association programmed within the next few months.

Financial Implications

None

Council Plan Implications

Focus two: environment

Focus four: Health & Communities

Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

Elements of the community led action plan is targeting localised fuel poverty in Westfield as well as researching the possible use of more cleaner sustainable energy usage such as solar energy systems within the community.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The community led plan is actively working towards better access to support, signposting and physical community venues for residents of all abilities, ethnicity, sex, age and cultures within the Westfield Community.

South Somerset Disability Forum will be actively used with regards to their expertise and knowledge in the development of physical venues.

New signage, information boards, digital media and training are included within the report to access, support and inform more residents in Westfield.

A new bus and mini bus parking bay is planned as part of the project to not only to meet community safety concerns but also to support and enhance accessibility on our pavements for less able users, push chairs and wheel chair users.

Background Papers

- 'Our Place' Westfield Operation Plan 2014
- Area South Committee Report (Health Inequalities update report) Wed 6th November 2013