

Report to: Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 8 October 2015

Lead Member / Officer: Leader of the Council/Head of Business Improvement and Modernisation

Report Author: Strategic Planning Team Manager

Title: Denbighshire Wellbeing Plan Progress Report

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 To update scrutiny on the findings of an evaluation of the Denbighshire Top 20 project's first six months.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To provide information regarding a project that has been instigated by the Denbighshire Wellbeing Plan which was published in December 2014

In developing Denbighshire's Wellbeing Plan, whose theme is Independence & Resilience, the county's Strategic Partnership Board (SPB) followed the following process:

- Identified priorities through Needs Assessment & Community Engagement activities
- Investigated what is already being done to address the priorities
- Decided what – if anything – would add value to existing activities
- Agreed what could be achieved in Partnership to meet the desired outcomes

There are a number of initiatives that are being undertaken in partnership which will help to achieve the Wellbeing Plan's vision. In addition, a number of new initiatives are being proposed to help achieve the vision; the Denbighshire 20 Project is one such initiative.

Partners believe that there is a cohort of people who, through taking a more innovative partnership approach, can have their needs met which reduces their reliance on unplanned - and often inadequate and unsustainable - services.

3. What are the Recommendations?

It is recommended that scrutiny consider the full set of recommendations which can be found in the attached evaluation report (Appendix 2 – appendix 2 is excluded from publication by virtue of paragraph 13 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

In particular, it is recommended that scrutiny considers how learning from Top 20 can be shared to inform services' early intervention and prevention (common causes for nomination to Top 20 include: loneliness and social isolation; alcohol abuse; poor community networks; high demand on evenings and weekends).

4. Report details

The Denbighshire Top 20 Project is the first project launched under the auspices of the Wellbeing Plan which was published in December 2014. The Wellbeing Plan identifies the project as: 'identify the people with the poorest outcomes and collaborate on assertive coordinated interventions to maximise their independence and resilience and reduce unplanned access to services'. The project is designed to attend to those people for whom traditional or planned service delivery has not apparently achieved their objectives.

Since its launch the project has taken an evolutionary and tactical approach. While this approach has allowed a culture of creativity and flexibility, a result is that the Project Brief (Appendix 2) has not been formally adopted and success criteria have not been agreed.

A review was undertaken in August 2015 to identify strengths and weaknesses of the project; highlight learning from the project, and make recommendations for future direction.

Seven informal telephone interviews were conducted with members of the Top 20 project team

Respondents generally agreed that Denbighshire Top 20 is offering a different way of working; that the group is able to try new interventions and that improvements can be seen. Information sharing during meetings is good and respondents felt that individuals are working better together, and that there is a sense that agencies' awareness of what each other can and cannot do is increasing. It is acknowledged that without the group some of these individuals would not be supported by a multi-agency approach because they do not meet the individual 'criteria' of many of the agencies on the project team.

Around 8 people are being worked with, with 4 active cases currently. Information sharing and issues relating to nominating people in the first place has not been a straightforward process. Based on two new nominations, there appears to be some drift in relation to the rationale for nomination to Top 20.

There is an appetite to try new interventions to resolve longstanding problems, and to think creatively. However, some organisations do not appear to be as prepared as others to take risks or deviate from traditional practice.

Two partners have suggested that Top 20 consider a pooled budget. Concerns about public image could also be deterring some partners from taking risks.

There are cases where a multiagency approach trialling new ideas has worked, and has enabled a coordinated package of support. There are other cases where Top 20

made no difference to the interventions put in place for individuals/families. Nonetheless, there is consensus that Top 20 is still important and that the multi-agency approach added value through 'new perspectives'.

It is difficult to say if the positive outcomes that have been achieved can be sustained and have longevity. Partners need to be comfortable with this.

AREAS OF NOTE

There are general patterns of people abusing emergency services because they are lonely and socially isolated – LSB has agreed to define the cost of this and how can it be prevented.

In some cases, Top 20 could result in increasing unreasonable expectations of individuals who are not taking sufficient personal responsibility.

Some respondents expressed frustration with other partners around the table. One respondent said: "Public services and individual organisations are evolving and changing but are our expectations of others still traditional?"

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The project is being delivered under Denbighshire's Single Integrated Plan, the Wellbeing Plan, which was ratified by Council in 2014.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

The project is being delivered with existing resources.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report

An equality impact assessment is to be carried out as part of the project governance

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

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9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Not applicable

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

A risk assessment is to be carried out as part of the project governance

11. Power to make the Decision

Articles 6.1, 6.3.2(c) and 6.3.3(d) outline scrutiny's powers in relation to the above.

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