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# Community Conversations – Supporting Information

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## 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The previous report to the Board (30<sup>th</sup> March 2017) provided a summary of the instigation of Community Conversations and a review of their status as responsibly for their ongoing development passed to the Building Communities Together Team.
- 1.2 This report provides a summary of work undertaken since that previous report was written and also briefly outlines some emerging plans for the future development of Community Conversations.
- 1.3 Whilst responsibility for Community Conversation only passed to the Building Communities Together (BCT) Team at the beginning of April 2017 prior to that date the BCT Team Manager worked alongside the previous lead officer, colleagues from the West Berkshire Volunteer Centre and partner officers to gain an insight into their development, status and ideas for the future.
- 1.4 Officers of the Safer Communities Partnership Team, who have now transferred into the BCT Team, were routinely attending Community Conversations and had strong working relationships with a wide range of officers participating in them and therefore had a good working knowledge on this initiative.
- 1.5 As described in the previous report there had been a Learning Event and a Review Meeting in January 2017 the outcomes of both of these were very helpful in enabling the BCT Team to identify areas of work to consolidate and formulate some ideas for change.

## 2. Building Communities Together Team

- 2.1 Phase 1 of the creation of the BCT Team commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 with the co-location of West Berkshire Council (WBC) officers in the Contact Centre at WBC Market Street Offices. These officers occupy desks adjacent to those allocated to officers from the Community Rehabilitation Company and National Probation Service.
- 2.2 The WBC officers within the BCT Team are:
  - Building Communities Together Team Manager (formerly Safer Communities Partnership Team Manager)
  - Civil Contingencies Manager
  - Principal Policy Officer (Communities)
  - Anti-social Behaviour Coordinator
  - Domestic Abuse Reduction Coordinator
  - Emergency Planning Support Officer
  - Crime Prevention Coordinator (post currently vacant)

- 2.3 From the 1<sup>st</sup> April the BCT Team Manager has reported to the Deputy Local Police Area Commander and as the Team develops other cross organisational reporting arrangements will be introduced.
- 2.4 Phase 2 of the development of this multi agency team will be in June 2017 when a Sergeant and 8 Police Constables from Thames Valley Police join the BCT Team. The Sergeant will report to the BCT Manager and the TVP officers will co-locate at Market Street offices..

### **3. West Berkshire Volunteer Centre**

- 3.1 The West Berkshire Volunteer Centre Project Officer continues to provide support for Community Conversations working closely with the BCT Team Manager and Community Anchors.
- 3.2 The experience and knowledge of the Project Officer has been invaluable during the period of transition.

### **4. New Community Conversation in Newbury**

- 4.1 The Community Anchor for Newbury undertook 3 days Restorative Practice Training in February 2017 and is now planning the first Newbury Community Conversations which will take place on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2017 in Newbury Baptist Church.
- 4.2 The BCT Team Manager and Project Officer are providing support and in addition the Newbury Community Anchor has been linked to the Calcot and Hungerford Community Anchors for peer support.
- 4.3 The Newbury Community Conversation will take place between 12noon and 2pm and will adopt a World Cafe format to:
- engage attendees
  - gather information
  - identify local strengths and assets
  - identify local issues that the local community would like to address
  - develop initial actions
- 4.4 The date for the first Newbury Community Conversation has been chosen to coincide with 'The Big Lunch' which is being promoted locally through Newbury Weekly News to hopefully benefit from this additional publicity and to attract a good number of participants.
- 4.5 The Big Lunch is a national initiative seeking to address social isolation and 're-connect communities' so there is a natural synergy with a Community Conversation.

### **5. Re-energised Community Conversation in Calcot**

- 5.1 A 'new start' Community Conversation was held on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at The Gate Church which was very well attended and skilfully facilitated by the new Community Anchor.
- 5.2 There were table/group exercises and discussions resulting in the identification of some action points that it is hoped will have a real impact in the community.

5.3 A follow up meeting with the Community Anchor to talk through the next steps to maintain momentum is planned at the beginning of May and as mentioned above the Anchor is assisting the Newbury Anchor with their planning for their own Conversation in June.

## 6. Community Conversation Toolkit

6.1 It was identified that a 'toolkit' to assist Anchors with initiating, facilitating and sustaining Community Conversations would be an extremely helpful resource and it was suggested that the Patient and Public Engagement Group could assist with its development.

6.2 The ideas captured at the Community Anchors Learning Event in January 2017 have been used to generate an initial draft of a Community Conversation Toolkit attached to this report as Annex A.

6.3 This draft document was discussed at the April meeting of the Patient and Public Engagement Group and it will be developed further in partnership with 'new' and 'established' Anchors and colleagues in communications and graphics.

6.4 The recent Community Conversation in Calcot and the planned Conversation in Newbury provide timely opportunities to refine the toolkit alongside the activity it is being developed to support.

## 7. Hungerford and Lambourn Community Conversations adopt a Multi Professional Lens approach

7.1 As highlighted in the previous report there is a highly effective Community Anchor in Hungerford who continues to facilitate very effective Community Conversations. A 'multi-professional lens' approach has been adopted with a wide range of officers coming together to provide support for each other and to work together to improve outcomes for families and children across Hungerford and the local area (Hungerford, Kintbury, Lambourn, Wickham, Shefford).

7.2 Regular thematic meetings are taking place and to date the following 'topics' have been discussed:

- Anti-social Behaviour
- Domestic Abuse
- Mental Health and Self Harm

7.3 The meetings are using a simplified version of the TVP Problem Solving Framework, SARA (described in the previous report), and discussions follow the following stages:

- Scanning
- Analysis
- Response (solutions/actions)

7.4 The Community Anchor is also providing peer support to new Community Anchor in Newbury.

## 8. Other existing Community Conversations and Community Anchor Meetings

- 8.1 Future Community Conversations in Thatcham will be coordinated under the Thatcham Vision and the multi agency work to address youth related anti-social behaviour described in the previous report continues using SARA problem solving and community engagement solutions.
- 8.2 Community Conversations in Burghfield and Mortimer have been very productive with some significant outcomes achieved as previously reported. Both communities benefit from robust communication mechanisms and volunteers. The BCT Team Manager and Project Officer are arranging to meet with Community Anchors to involve them in the development of the toolkit and to discuss further development of Conversations.
- 8.3 The BCT Manager is currently arranging to meet with all Community Anchors, including those within Schools and partner organisations, to strengthen links and explore options for coordinating and supporting their activities.

## 9. Young People's Voices

- 9.1 It has been identified that young people's voices need to be heard however to date Community Conversations have not been well attended by young people. It was highlighted by several participants at the January Review Meeting that young people may prefer to participate in other ways rather than 'attending a meeting in the local hall'.
- 9.2 Alternative ways of engaging with young people are therefore being explored including working with the network of Peer Mentors. The Peer Mentor Coordinators have agreed to have a Community Conversation at their annual Conference on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017. All 10 mainstream secondary schools are invited to send Peer Mentor representatives to the Conference and it is anticipated, from previous experience, that there could be approximately 50 – 60 Peer Mentors attending.
- 9.3 The Health and Wellbeing in Schools Coordinator has been instrumental in creating the opportunity described above and is also working with members of the BCT Team to launch a Schools Arts Festival linked to on-line safety.
- 9.4 From 2006 to 2016 local secondary schools participated in the annual Schools Play Competition organised by Thames Valley Police and partner agencies under the Safer Schools Programme. Each year schools were invited to create an original play addressing a topical community safety related issue and the plays were performed at the Corn Exchange, Newbury.
- 9.5 In 2017 all secondary schools will be invited to participate in an Arts Festival where students will be encouraged to produce an original piece of art (dance, drama, music, spoken word) or multi- media item (exhibition, film, presentation,) related to on line safety.
- 9.6 The '#Protect your World' Arts Festival will hopefully engage young people and give them a way to join in with the potential for holding a symposium on cyber crime being considered for Autumn 2017.
- 9.7 Secondary and primary schools across West Berkshire continue to participate in Restorative Practice with further training planned for the Autumn.

## 10. Thematic and Targeted Community Conversations

- 10.1 To date Community Conversations have been primary 'geographic' with a community being identified through data analysis and subsequently instigated by an Anchor arising from that community.
- 10.2 During the Review Meeting in January and from discussions between colleagues it has become clear that the potential for developing conversations with 'communities of interest' should be explored.
- 10.3 One such conversation that is currently being explored is around Dementia. There are a number of communities where Dementia Friends initiatives are established and they are different communities to those that currently have Community Conversations underway. The potential to link up this work for the benefit of all communities, those living with dementia and those supporting them is being explored.
- 10.4 Taking the learning from the Hungerford Community Conversation there may be other opportunities for convening meetings of professional who through their work represent members of the community around a specific issue. This will be developed further by the BCT Team Manager and colleagues.
- 10.5 It is important that Community Conversations are effective in bringing issues forward that generate the most demand on local services and that they also bring together professionals working with vulnerable individuals/communities.

## 11. Potential new Community Conversations

- 11.1 The West Berkshire Volunteer Centre is coordinating an event in Pangbourne in May 2017 which could be a catalyst for a Community Conversation and provide an opportunity to explore the potential with members of that community.
- 11.2 There are a significant number of Neighbourhood and other Watches across West Berkshire with volunteers actively engaged in the prevention and detection of crime. The potential to link these active citizens to Community Conversations will be explored by the BCT Team Manager who is making a presentation to the South West Newbury Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators meeting in August 2017.
- 11.3 In addition to Neighbourhood Watches there are a number of Neighbourhood Actions Groups and TVP are exploring establishing Community Forums all of which need to be effectively coordinated and further updates will be provide to the Health and Wellbeing Board in subsequent reports.

## 12. Restorative Practice Training and Restorative Approach/es

- 12.1 The Brilliant West Berkshire Programme Board agreed a recommendation for a 'Train the Trainer' approach to sustaining Restorative Practice. Potential Trainees are being approached for training in Summer 2017 to be able to deliver training in both Schools and for partner officers from Autumn 2017.

## 13. Performance and Project Management

- 13.1 Appropriate Performance Management Indicators relating to Community Conversations have been developed and incorporated into relevant Action Plans.

13.2 An audit of Community Conversations will, as recommended in the previous report, be completed during May 2017 to inform the development of output, outcomes and impacts. The audit will also inform the development of a Project Management Structure for Community Conversations which will be developed by the BCT Team during June 2017.

## 14. Conclusion

14.1 Responsibility for Community Conversations has transferred to the newly formed and developing Building Communities Together Team.

14.2 Existing Conversations are being sustained and opportunities to start new Conversations are being explored.

14.3 Ways to bring young people's voices forward are being explored.

14.4 A Toolkit is to be developed and ways of supporting Community Anchors are being explored.

14.5 Performance Indicators have been included in relevant Action Plans and a Project Management Structure is to be developed.

14.6 The Health and Wellbeing Board will routinely receive update reports on developments.

## 15. Consultation and Engagement

15.1 Nick Carter, Health and Wellbeing Steering Group

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### Background Papers:

#### Health and Wellbeing Priorities 2017 Supported:

- Reduce alcohol related harm for all age groups
- Increase the number of Community Conversations through which local issues have been identified and addressed

#### Health and Wellbeing Strategic Aims Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim(s):

- Give every child the best start in life
- Support mental health and wellbeing throughout life
- Reduce premature mortality by helping people lead healthier lives
- Build a thriving and sustainable environment in which communities can flourish
- Help older people maintain a healthy, independent life for as long as possible

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim and priority by providing the Board with information regarding the activity to increase the number of community conversations.

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