

**REPORT TO:** CABINET

**DATE:** 14 OCTOBER 2021

**TITLE:** COMMUNITY RESILIENCE STRATEGY

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** COUNCILLOR JOEL CHARLES, DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

**LEAD OFFICER:** JANE GREER, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT (01279) 446406

**CONTRIBUTING OFFICER:** CHRISTINE HOWARD, YOUTH AND CITIZENSHIP MANAGER (01279) 446192

**This is a Key Decision**  
**It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I012849**  
**Call-in Procedures may apply**  
**This decision will affect no ward specifically.**

**RECOMMENDED that:**

- A** The Community Resilience Strategy 2021 – 2023 is approved, subject to consultation, in order to support the wider societal challenges as part of the council’s commitment to leading Harlow’s post Covid-19 recovery and a focus on building the right foundations for sustained improvements to community resilience for the benefit of the town’s residents and businesses.
- B** Cabinet authorises that consultation be undertaken on this draft for a period of six weeks. Minor amendments will be submitted to the Director of Communities and Environment who will, in conjunction with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience, develop the final version of the strategy following the conclusion of the consultation period.

**REASON FOR DECISION**

- A** Implementation of the strategy will inform the Council’s work with partners, residents and businesses to recover from the impact of Covid-19, confront social and financial exclusion and build strong, resilient and involved communities that can respond and recover effectively from future adversity.

**BACKGROUND**

1. Since March 2020, the Council has led on the delivery of the Covid-19 Community Hub service responding to the needs of the town’s most vulnerable

residents whose lives have been impacted both socially and financially as a direct result of Covid-19.

2. National and local data indicates that older people, families, children, young people and people from diverse groups, including the BAME community, disabled people and those with poor mental health, have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and that health inequalities still exist in our town.

## **ISSUES/PROPOSALS**

3. It is clear that in its role as community leader the Council needs to better understand the needs of the town's ever growing, rapidly changing and diverse community so that with our partners we can respond appropriately through delivery of the right services, at the right time and in the right place.
4. Through renewed and strengthened community engagement and honest two way conversations with residents and businesses we will be able to know and understand our communities better and work together to identify and tackle inequality and drive forward the council's commitment to social inclusion, community-led action and co-creation of services to meet local identified need.
5. By supporting people to recognise their own needs and know how and where to get assistance to help themselves and others, we can build resilience and reduce dependence on statutory services in the longer term whilst at the same time support our thriving third sector.
6. The Community Resilience Strategy should be viewed as a strategy that encompasses all elements of the town's post Covid-19 recovery. It does not replace, but will be inextricably linked to, other Council strategies including Community Engagement, Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing and The Town Plan for example.
7. The Community Resilience Strategy is supported by six strategic pillars (The Council's leadership role; Arts and Culture; Community Engagement; Enhanced Voluntary Sector; Health Inequalities; Safe Communities) which will ensure the whole community benefits from recovery, opportunity, inclusion and future prosperity and commits the Council to support ways to extend opportunity and prosperity, so that more residents are able to achieve their life ambitions.
8. Implementation of the Community Resilience Strategy and its associated action plan will be reviewed and monitored quarterly and progress reported to the Senior Management Board (SMB) and Portfolio Holder for Community Resilience.
9. The Community Resilience Strategy is set out at Appendix A to the report.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Environment and Planning (Includes Sustainability)**

None specific.

**Author: Andrew Bramidge, Director of Strategic Growth and Regeneration**

### **Finance (Includes ICT, and Property and Facilities)**

None specific.

**Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance**

### **Housing**

As contained within the report.

**Author: Andrew Murray, Director of Housing**

### **Community Wellbeing**

As contained within the report.

**Author: Jane Greer, Director of Communities and Environment**

### **Governance (Includes HR)**

None specific.

**Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Support**

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Community Resilience Strategy

## **Background Papers**

None.

## **Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

None.