

## Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

<b>9Date of meeting:</b> 29 July 2020	<b>AGENDA ITEM NO:</b>  <b>9</b>
<b>Report title:</b> Healthy Bicester Programme Report	
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### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide the Bicester Strategic Delivery Board (SDB) with a progress report on the Healthy Bicester Programme.

### 2. Programme Delivery January – July 2020

#### 2.1 Programme Development

On 12 March 55 local stakeholders attended a workshop at the John Paul II centre to review and develop the Healthy Bicester programme. We heard from partners about some of their successes during 2019 and current challenges just prior to the Covid-19 lockdown. The Healthy Bicester programme has been reviewed in light of their comments and suggestions, most of which are still very relevant as many of the issues we are facing have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The positive message from the workshop is that our Bicester partners are still very supportive of and committed to the Healthy Bicester programme.

#### 2.6 Project Delivery

As a result of the lockdown a number of projects have been placed on pause or have been converted into remote activities. Additional activities have also been undertaken to support local partners including the establishment of a prescription delivery service undertaken by volunteers from Alchester Running Club for residents in Bicester and from village mutual aid groups for residents living in surrounding villages unable to collect their prescriptions from their Bicester surgery. The schemes had Local Pharmaceutical Society approval and resulted in thousands of prescriptions being delivered from pharmacies and practices. The rapid mobilization of these schemes reflects the excellent relationships between local partners in the Healthy Bicester programme as well as the collective commitment to support those who were vulnerable and shielding themselves from the virus.

The newsletter attached provides further information on the activities that have been undertaken in the last 6 months and how initiatives to support health and wellbeing that have been tested in Bicester are being scaled to other communities in Cherwell

### 3. Recovery and Resilience Building

The coronavirus has had a differential impact on our community, exacerbating existing health inequalities and intensifying mental and physical health needs. It has tested the capacity of Bicester's voluntary and community groups as well as its businesses, with many

suffering financially as well as having to suspend or cancel activities. However, it has also seen great innovation such as the Food Bank providing support to many more local families, faith groups providing support to those without digital access, and furloughed volunteers preparing and delivering a million meals to NHS workers as part of The Tribute to the NHS with the support of Bicester Vision and the Chamber of Commerce. During the pandemic residents demonstrated how important it was to them to 'be a good neighbour' with thousands of acts of kindness as well as how much they valued their local assets such as the Blue Line Health Routes for daily exercise.

The focus of the programme in the 'recovery' phase is to address the emerging health and wellbeing issues with our partners and to build on this positive innovation. Activity is underway in the following areas:

- Review of care for patients with a long term condition – identifying how people can be supported to better manage their health without needing to attend a GP surgery
- Supporting County and District Council officers with initiatives that enable active travel in Bicester and support social distancing in the High Street. This includes ensuring that the strategic recommendations contained within Bicester's draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan are supported with any funding available from the Active Travel Fund. A number of schools have been engaged to identify whether they wish to participate in the School Streets initiative to make the school gates a safer experience and to encourage walking and cycling to school.
- A survey being undertaken in partnership with Bicester Vision and the Bicester Chamber of new volunteers who volunteered during furlough to identify how they could be supported to sustain their volunteering in some way after lockdown restrictions ease.
- Identification of volunteering needs in local care homes when they feel confident to increase public access.
- Developing a new scheme to support residents to access the wellbeing benefits of the natural world – working with the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), local community groups and the social prescribing service to enable people to access 'green prescriptions'.
- Offering guidance and information on local support for employee health and wellbeing as businesses restart via a Bicester Vision webinar and the distribution of the attached flyer to local businesses.
- Regularly checking in with local voluntary groups to understand their challenges and signposting them to potential funding opportunities.
- Providing information through the Healthy Bicester Facebook page to encourage people to look after their health and wellbeing and signposting them to local support.

We will continue to work closely with Healthy Bicester Partners so that as we gain further understanding of the impact of the pandemic we continue to address emerging needs.

#### **4. Media Report**

Please see Appendix B for details of the media coverage achieved between January-July 2020.

## **5. Evaluation**

PHAST consultancy has commenced its evaluation of healthy place shaping in Cherwell and has developed an evaluation plan which seeks to answer two key questions: does healthy place shaping work and how can it be sustained in the challenging financial situation.

## **6. Conclusions**

The Strategic Delivery Board is asked to note the progress the programme is making in terms of delivery.