Appendix A

The proposed Community Development Service (CDS)

Aim of the service

This service will embrace the Marmot principles of working with communities and individuals to identify and build on the assets/skills within neighbourhoods with the aim of enabling individuals to have greater influence and control over what happens in their lives and the area in which they live. This in turn has a positive effect on their quality of life and general wellbeing.

How this will work in practice

The team's focus will be a community empowerment and development approach, facilitating individuals and groups to build local capacity and get more involved and influential in their local area. We will be utilising a range of asset based approaches that have been used successfully elsewhere in the country.

It is important we build trust, recognise and link into the work that has already started in the city. Many different organisations and community groups are already active within the city, using asset based approaches to lead change within neighbourhoods. The new service will not duplicate this work but seek to link these existing community based approaches together, creating stronger and more sustainable support networks.

In essence the service will:

- We will work with local people and agencies to understand what assets/skills exist in an area including existing service provision from all sectors.
- Be open to requests and seek direction from individuals and the community on issues in their local neighbourhoods which they want to address. This might involve communities raising issues directly through Members, Officers and other agencies. The team will also be mindful of where there are wider issues that need to be addressed, such as low educational attainment, high mortality rates or high crime rates.
- The officers will assist local people in the development of a community action plan with the focus on the actions the community themselves will undertake to resolve the issue originally identified.
- The CDS will facilitate and identify opportunities to do this which may include supporting groups to access funding; supporting access to education/training opportunities; encouraging/supporting the setting up of groups with a common aim, etc. Use and share best practice tools and approaches with communities and ensure appropriate evidence bases are developed.
- The CDS may also introduce and signpost the community to existing service providers where there are opportunities to work together.

In summary, the team will work with the community on the issue, until they have supported the community to identify a solution, have the skills to resolve it and are self-sustainable (see Appendix One).

A case study has been produced to demonstrate how some of this work is already underway in Coventry (Appendix Two).

Roles and Responsibilities
- Intelligence gathering and knowledge sharing
- Foster collaborative working
- Facilitate Fund raising
- Training - community members /professional staff
- Work identification based on local opportunities or issues and allocation

Skills and Behaviours
Key skills and behaviours required for asset based working include:
- Compassion build on belief in people and people power
- Action learning and analysing situations together, reflecting things along the way.
- Observation skills to help others see the assets in a community.
- Active listening – hearing and helping others to help each other.
- Ability to speak up where necessary but to remain quiet when necessary too.
- Ability to 'do' with others not for them.
- People working for outside agencies should act as facilitators not drivers and not try to second guess what the assets could be
- Ability to remain strong when faced with obstacles and ability to instil this in others.
- Determination – ability not to be swayed to the path of least resistance
- Ability to move beyond the office out into the community.
- Establishing community champions and networks that become self-sustaining by staying and standing with people until they feel self-sufficient.
- Ability to tap into networks and build alliances in and beyond the community.
- Work in partnership with people, joining our skills with their skills and thereby creating change.
- Appreciate the value of community connections and social capital
- Ability to relate to people from a wide range of backgrounds and to engage with target groups
- Understanding of the issues, concerns and interests of others without being patronising
- Commitment and enthusiasm
- Good leadership, motivational and organisational skills
- Capable of working both on own initiative and as part of a team
- Sincerity, patience and tact and the ability to earn the trust of others

Excellent listening skills and confidence in talking to people both in groups and on a one-to-one basis.

Outcome measures

It is important that we measure the success of the service. A performance management matrix will be produced to measure the quantitative and qualitative outcomes from the services. This will be developed with the support of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee and they will receive regular reports on progress. Outlined below are some examples of outcomes that demonstrate the impact the service is having alongside existing services:

- Increased numbers of active community groups in communities
- Evidence of community led action leading to co-produced solutions, programmes and services
- Increased community participation in events and information sessions
- Capacity Building and empowerment of residents and community groups
- More employment and social enterprise in communities
- Increased training sessions, education and skills linking to marmot outcomes
- Evidence of improvements in community safety leading to a decrease in levels of anti-social behaviour
- Increasing evidence of action on the 10 ways to feeling and doing well in Coventry (Health and Wellbeing) evidenced by things such as the household survey. This can demonstrate people feeling they are able to influence, contribute to their community, liking where they live and improved wellbeing
- The number of community initiatives, supported by the Community Development Service, that are still in existence and functioning 6 months after the direct support and facilitation is withdrawn.
- Evidence of improvements in environmental issues leading to an enhancement of the local environment
- Information relating to the assets available in communities and connecting residents to them

Recruiting the right officers

Having the right people in post is fundamental to the success of this service. Officers will need to be practical, self-starters and understand the corporate and political context in which they work. They need to be problem solvers and be able to work across a number of different organisations, with both practical and strategic skills.

It is anticipated that the team will work 09:00-17:00 Monday to Friday but flexibility from the team will be required on evenings and weekends to meet the needs of the local community.

Cost

Funding for the service is circa £550,000.

It is envisaged that the service will be made up of two Community Development Managers, 12 Community Development Officers and a Business Support Officer. Grades will be dependent on the results of job evaluation. A formal structure and job descriptions/person specifications will be produced in conjunction with Human Resources.

Appendix One – A staged approach

The Community Development Service will work in a staged way which will ensure consistency, minimise duplication of effort and maximise use of existing resources. It is recognised that due to work already undertaken by Council services, in some areas the team will build upon this work, and will not need to start at stage 1 or may be able to move through the initial stages more quickly. The stages are outlined below.

Stage 1 Identify	Stage 2 Assess	Stage 3 Engage	Stage 4 Develop	Stage 5 Maintain
The team will identify specific issues within a community that require addressing. This may be done in partnership with residents or other agencies.	This stage involves intelligence gathering and assessments of the community where required action has been identified.	Engage with the communities using tools and techniques including asset mapping events, fun days, pop up shops to ascertain what communities identify as improvements they want to make.	Working with community leaders and groups provide them with support to empower them to take action in their neighbourhoods to lead positive change.	Leave the community to continue to develop and build up the changes through their collective actions

Stage	Activities
Identify	• Carry out visits to local community groups, schools, religious institutions; • Liaise with voluntary sector organisations and agencies to identify issues; • Have regular contact with communities and neighbourhoods.
Assess	• Build up intelligence on identified issues; • Develop understanding of the communities and speak with professionals and residents who have knowledge of the areas; • Identify potential leaders or groups to approach who could support asset based working or undertake a peer role; • Access information and knowledge of existing individuals. • Complete asset mapping of local community • Undertake appreciative enquiry
Engage	• Undertake events and activities to engage the communities; • Ensure regular contact with community, community groups, voluntary sector and other partners • Establish a partnership network • Upskill individuals and groups to create local structures and mechanisms to tackle issues through asset based approaches; • Undertake a social brokerage function; • Link the group with existing asset based work good practice in the city and establish peer support function; • Link to other start-ups; • Link to services that may be benefit to the group

Develop	- Provide training for local community; - Support links with agencies and organisation for community to utilise; - Support implementation of activities including events and - Support initiation of formal groups that will lead change in the future; - Support communities to develop evidence bases and monitoring methods.
Maintain	- Once established the team will step back and allow the community to continue with developing own community action plans; - Support independence of the groups; - Embed relationships with agencies and groups; - Produce an evidence base of the changes and link communities into on-going monitoring.

Appendix Two: Case Studies

BELL GREEN SILVER SURFERS

Background

The following project was started by Neighbourhood Action and is an example of the best practice that we would like to imbed into the Community Development Service.

They are a group of socially minded senior citizens from the Bell Green area in Coventry and the project is run from a local community centre. The aim of the group is to help senior citizens get over their fear of computers and gadgets by showing them how to use the internet, shop online, emailing, and digital photographs. This is done not by fixed courses but by accessing a tutor which allows the group to work at their own speed and decide what they want to learn.

The group initially started with 3-4 members and has steadily grown in numbers; to date they are now at 12 regular members with a waiting list of 4. It started by sharing some computers operated by the local youth club, which are now very outdated and due to the restrictions placed on the software does mean some websites are not available.

In 2011 the group decided that it wanted to grow, to that end they made an application to the Wellbeing Seed Fund for £500 to engage a tutor and pay for their room at the Community Centre. The criteria for the funding required them to consider the way their project looked to improve Wellbeing of the participants. Briefly the project provides an opportunity for older people to get out of their homes and meet with other like-minded people from the area, developing new friendships and support networks, reduces social isolation and learning new skills.

Some of the members of the group now own their own computer, but some now use the IT equipment in the local Library should they need access to a computer.

On Tuesday 16th October 2012, Anna Soubry, Minister for Public Health at the Department of Health visited Coventry and met community members, especially the Bell Green Silver Surfers, health professionals, local authority staff and Coventry Councillors at Bell Green Library. The focus of the visit was for Anna to get an insight into the community work including community development around wellbeing initiatives such as Bell Green Silver Surfers and how people can improve their lives.

Members of the Silver Surfers with Anna Soubry MP on the 16th October 2012.

Moving Forward

The increase in membership and waiting list means that they need better equipment and therefore with their increased confidence in what they are doing they have successfully applied to Awards for All for £6500. This funding was used to purchase new computers as well as some more tutor time. They have also been successful in an application for Community First Funding (£2500) to fund more tutor time and additional computers. They have purchased a couple of tablets.

They have a very good relationship with the Management Committee of the Community Centre and any expansion or redevelopment of the Centre will also cater for their needs.

Conclusion

The Bell Green Silver Surfers is a fantastic example of how a small amount of funding can kick-start a group providing it with a renaissance. Not only does the group meet the criteria for improving Wellbeing, it is confident to apply for capital funding for new equipment and is also looking for future funding to support the project. The project supports an existing asset, the Community Centre, but has also built a relationship with the Management to ensure that any future development of the Centre supports their aim to grow and attract new membership.