

Impact Assessment



Assessment of: Ending Devon County Council's contribution to the Wellbeing Exeter partnership

Service: Integrated Adult Social Care

Head of Service: Solveig Wright (Head of Integrated Adult Social Care Interim)

Version / date of sign off by Head of Service:

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1. Description of project / service / activity / policy under review

This is an impact assessment of the proposal to cease Devon County Council's Integrated Adult Social Care contribution to the Wellbeing Exeter Partnership.

Exeter City Council is the lead commissioning body and the current agreement with a pooled budget and collaborative commissioning and delivery model is held with Devon Community Foundation, running until March 2025. Devon County Council initially funded the early pilot of Wellbeing Exeter through the ICE (Integrated Care Exeter) programme funded by a dedicated Transformation Challenge Award from Central Government. On-going funding of £395,000 per year has continued from 2018, funded from the Adult Social Care budget.

Wellbeing Exeter was established through the Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) Project (2012 to 2017). Under the leadership of the ICE Director, Wellbeing Exeter was established as a proof of concept in 2013, working within one GP practice in Exeter and a range of voluntary and community sector organisations. By 2015 Wellbeing Exeter expanded to cover several GP practices across the city and key partners agreed to extend funding to continue to develop the programme. As part of the exit strategy for ICE, Exeter City Council was invited to take over the management and leadership of Wellbeing Exeter when it appointed the ICE Director to its Strategic Management Board in July 2017.

Wellbeing Exeter is now an established partnership of public, voluntary and community sector organisations working together providing foundations for individuals and communities to promote and improve their own health and wellbeing. The partnership brings together key strategic funders pooling resources to deliver the holistic programme: Exeter City Council, Devon County Council, Sport England and Exeter's Primary Care Networks (groupings of GP practices).

Wellbeing Exeter was established as a single structure for encouraging preventative behaviours by individuals and promoting "resilience" within the system and across communities. In practical terms this means offering a range of community-based options to targeted individuals, to enable them to access what they want to maintain health and wellbeing, reducing the need for statutory care services now and into the future. There are three main ingredients to the approach:

1. Resilient People: social prescribing
2. Resilient Communities: community building and supporting active lifestyles
3. Resilient System: network support and co-ordination

2. Reason for change / review

Devon County Council is facing a huge financial challenge and must get the best possible outcomes from every penny that is spent. This means reviewing every single area of our work to ensure that resources are being used as effectively as possible.

The Council has contributed to Wellbeing Exeter since its inception and can see how much it is valued. But despite that, the services offered by Wellbeing Exeter fall outside our immediate and statutory responsibilities within adult social care services, and we are having to think hard about

where best to target our scarce resources, in order to support growing numbers of vulnerable adults.

As current funding commitments are coming to an end, Wellbeing Exeter's commissioning organisations came together in February 2023 to make decisions about its future role in the city and the wider health and care system. At that point DCC advised the programme lead that it was proposing to stop the contribution towards Wellbeing Exeter.

3. Aims / objectives, limitations and options going forwards (summary)

The financial challenge facing the authority leaves Devon County Council having to make difficult decisions to cease services, and this is one of those considerations.

We greatly value our Exeter City Council partners and will continue working together to achieve the best outcomes for our population. Our relationship with the Council is important to us and we continue to work with them. The service won't close as there are other contributors, but it will mean a significant reduction in services offered. We have committed to staying in close contact with the programme lead and will support them in terms of bids for other funding.

Since 2018 ECC has ring-fenced a proportion of the 15% Neighbourhood CIL (community infrastructure levy) to pay for the community building of Wellbeing Exeter and has realigned its Community Grants programme in support of the Wellbeing Exeter underlying principles. Wellbeing Exeter features very prominently in the city's Corporate Plan 22-26 which is a positive sign in terms of investment and support.

On behalf of commissioning partners, Exeter City Council is completing a strategic review to identify the future sustainability of Wellbeing Exeter. A pooled budget and collaborative commissioning and delivery model of Wellbeing Exeter has evolved. As current funding commitments are coming to an end in March 2024, commissioning organisations need to make decisions about its future role in the city and the wider health and care system.

A desired outcome of the review is a commitment from stakeholders to support Wellbeing Exeter in its next stage of evolution. A funding prospectus is being prepared for June 2023 with the aim of recruiting additional philanthropic investors and a new organisational form such as a Community Interest Company for April 2024 and beyond.

Potential mitigations include:

- Reprofiting of the remaining overall Wellbeing Exeter programme budget to focus on communities and reducing work with individuals
- Identification of other potential sources of funding

4. People affected, diversity profile and analysis of needs

- People referred through Exeter Primary Care Networks experiencing poor health outcomes
- Young people
- Residents from culturally diverse communities
- Older people experiencing loneliness and social isolation
- Residents living in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the city
- Families living in Exeter under asylum seeker and related refugee support schemes

Residents in Cranbrook, with a particular focus on:

- Families with young children
- Residents on low incomes

5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

The key stakeholders are Exeter City Council, Devon County Council, Sport England and Exeter Primary Care Networks (GPs).

The recurring funding from DCC has been £395,000 since 2017. However, Exeter City Council has proposed a reduced contribution from DCC for

2023-24 in recognition of the funding issues. This amount £270,157 is 58% of the Wellbeing Exeter Community Connector delivery budget.

Without this contribution, delivery would need to be reduced accordingly which would result in a significant reduction in Community Connector capacity and Wellbeing Exeter's ability to support adults and young people suffering from poor health outcomes and older people experiencing loneliness and social isolation.

Options if funding is withdrawn:

Option 1: Being equal across the partnership, this would mean reduced funding awards to each delivery partner of 58%, which would significantly hamper their abilities to deliver their work and would mean staff redundancies. Currently 24 Community Connectors are employed by Wellbeing Exeter funding across seven partners. In this scenario, the reduction in DCC funding would lead to partners, correspondingly, reducing their staffing by 58%: so 14 staff (24 x 58%) would be made redundant as of 1st April 2023.

Option 2: If a more targeted approach were taken, funding for certain partners could be withdrawn entirely in order to maintain levels of service in other areas. For example, if Wellbeing Exeter withdraws its funding for its offer to young people (through delivery partners SPACE, Young Devon and YMCA) a total saving of £198,048 can be made, which would mean far less significant cuts to the other partners in order to maintain services for adults. The impact on young people in Exeter would be significant as all Wellbeing Exeter services to at-risk young adults would immediately cease, for instance all secondary schools in the city would be impacted.

6. Additional research used to inform this assessment

- Wellbeing Exeter Strategic Development Review Briefing note for Commissioning Board February 2023
- <https://www.wellbeingexeter.org.uk/>

7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

Devon County Council has maintained an ongoing dialogue with the City Council and the Wellbeing Exeter Commissioning Board and advised the likelihood of cessation of funding in January 2023. This was reported in the report to the strategic development review meeting of the

commissioning board in February 2023.

DCC ASC commissioners approached the Eastern Locality Director of NHS Devon to understand if they would be able to support with funding but were advised none was available.

DCC Public Health and Communities team were also approached as the wellbeing service aligns with public health and communities' objectives, but no funding was available.

In agreement with Exeter City Council, Devon County Council will undertake a 45-day public consultation via our Have Your Say website to commence in early March 2023.

8. Equality analysis

Our assessment of the impact of the devolution for people with characteristic protected under the Equality Act 2010 is as follows:

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group.	How will the project / service / policy / activity:
All residents (include generic equality provisions)	<p>This change applies to those listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People referred through Exeter Primary Care Networks experiencing poor health outcomes • Young People • Residents from culturally diverse communities • Older people experiencing loneliness and social isolation • Residents living in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the city • Families living in Exeter under asylum seeker and related refugee support schemes <p>Residents in Cranbrook, with a particular focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families with young children • Residents on low incomes 	

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group.	How will the project / service / policy / activity:
Age	<p>The Wellbeing Exeter programme can apply to people of all ages, even though Devon County Councils contribution comes from adult social care.</p>	<p>Age-based work includes two adult community connectors based at RAMM/Age UK Exeter, where their work focuses on isolated older adults. This area of work is relatively new to Wellbeing Exeter and will enable the service to work with older adults who are most likely to suffer from loneliness and isolation or suffer from cost of living crisis, connecting them with cultural community based cultural opportunities.</p> <p>Six Community Connectors focus their work on younger people and they are hosted via local partners YMCA, Space and Young Devon. 228 young people were referred to Wellbeing Exeter in 2021/22. If a 58% drop in budget were reflected in these numbers, we would only reach 132, often vulnerable, young people.</p> <p>Wellbeing Exeter also has two Family Community Connectors working with young families, to which there were 65 referrals in 21/22. A reduction would mean working with 58% fewer families across Exeter and Cranbrook.</p> <p>The impact of removing Devon County Councils contribution to the Wellbeing Exeter Partnership will be negative and the possible mitigation is detailed in section 5. More specifically strengthening and closer working with NHS, secure other sources of funding, and targeting services to those people with protected characteristics.</p>

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group.	How will the project / service / policy / activity:
<p>Disability (incl. sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people</p>	<p>People with disabilities are supported by the WEP activities.</p>	<p>Wellbeing Exeter community connectors and builders regularly work with people with long term health problems and those with disabilities. 35% of adults supported by Community Connectors were unable to work due to sickness or disability.</p> <p>Main reasons for referral (areas of need) is anxiety/emotional wellbeing and isolation/loneliness (70% of referrals for these reasons).</p> <p>A reduction in budget reduces the number of members of the community Wellbeing Exeter are able to positively impact upon and there is potential that with this significant reduction in prevention work demand on statutory services down the line will increase and outcomes for individuals will worsen.</p> <p>There will be a negative impact on people with disabilities for which mitigation has been outlined above in section 3, however emphasis could be put on working closer with NHS colleagues.</p>

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group.	How will the project / service / policy / activity:
Culture and ethnicity: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin/race, skin colour, religion and belief	People from diverse cultural backgrounds are supported by the WEP activities.	Wellbeing Exeter's Adult Community Connector based with Inclusive Exeter works closely with culturally diverse groups participating in projects and activities. In addition, Wellbeing Exeter holds posts that connect with Ukrainian refugees housed in and around Exeter and Cranbrook. 17% of the young people in community connecting in 2021/22 were from a non-white, non-British background. A reduction in budget would adversely affect the number of people from priority culturally diverse groups and individuals that Wellbeing Exeter can work with. These are often individuals who are unlikely to access mainstream services and are therefore at risk of further exclusion. There will be a negative impact on people with from diverse cultural backgrounds for which mitigation has been outlined above in section 3. Specifically pooling resources to target services at people with protected characteristics.
Sex, gender and gender identity (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)	A majority of people supported by the Wellbeing Exeter programme are female.	In 2021/22 58% of adults referred into community connecting were female. A 58% reduction in services would mean the number of females we would work with would reduce from 528 to 306, which clearly also affects other demographics such as family work where 94% of those we work with are female. There will be a negative impact on females for which mitigation has been outlined above in section 3, specifically securing funding from other sources.
Sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership	Wellbeing Exeter does not hold this data, but there is often a correlation between wellbeing and sexual orientation issues.	There is the potential for a negative impact and the potential mitigation is target remain resource on people with protected characteristics.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group.	How will the project / service / policy / activity:
Other relevant socio-economic factors such as family size/single people/lone parents, income/deprivation, housing, education and skills, literacy, sub-cultures, 'digital exclusion', access to transport options, rural/urban	There is a correlation between socio-economic and deprivation factors and the people supported by Wellbeing Exeter programme.	There is a negative impact on people from lower socio-economic groups which may be possible to mitigate against in the reprioritisation of remaining resources.

9. Human rights considerations:

The Wellbeing Exeter programme makes an overall positive contribution to the human rights of the citizens of Exeter and Cranbrook which will be negatively impacted by a withdrawal of Devon County Council funding.

10. Supporting independence, wellbeing and resilience. Give consideration to the groups listed above and how they may have different needs:

Devon County Councils contribution to the Wellbeing Exeter programme is a means of supporting independence, wellbeing and resilience, and its cessation will constitute a negative impact.

11. Environmental analysis

Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process			N/A
Planning Permission			N/A
Environmental Impact Assessment			N/A
Strategic Environmental Assessment			N/A
	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).	
Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost:	N/A	N/A	
Conserve and enhance wildlife:	N/A	N/A	
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape:	N/A	N/A	

Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage:	N/A	N/A
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions:	N/A	N/A
Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise):	N/A	N/A
Contribute to reducing water consumption:	N/A	N/A
Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level):	N/A	N/A
Other (please state below):	N/A	N/A

12. Economic analysis

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Impact on knowledge and skills:	N/A	N/A
Impact on employment levels:	N/A	N/A
Impact on local business:		

13. Describe and linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts (Combined Impacts):

The Wellbeing Exeter programme is mainly concerned with social rather than environmental and economic activity, but the cessation of funding will have negative implications for the third sector providers involved in delivering partnership activity.

14. How will the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area be improved through what is being proposed? And how, in conducting the process of procurement, might that improvement be secured?

Cessation of DCCs contribution to the Wellbeing Exeter programme will not improve the economic, social and environment wellbeing of the Devon area.

15. How will impacts and actions be monitored?

We greatly value our Exeter City Council partners and will continue working together to achieve the best outcomes for our population. Our relationship with the Council remains cordial and we continue to work with them.