

Recovery and Renewal Progress Update

Resilient Communities					
Action	Agreed funding	Target Start	Target End	Success	Progress at January 2022
Establish Community Compact	n/a	May-21	n/a	Partnership in place between the community and voluntary sector and the council. Joint projects completed and greater resilience	Joint meeting was held with Involve Kent and VCS in July 2021 to consider Community Compact, Originally envisaged as a document, the engagement with the VCS via forums, consultation and events, plus the publication of the Civil Society Consultation has moved this original concept forward and MBC's role is facilitatory and the compact is its commitment to the VCS. It is likely that this commitment will be formally developed and established through a market-place event with the VCS in Maidstone. MBC represented on KCC and District Council VCS Forum established in November 2021.

Resilient Communities					
Action	Agreed funding	Target Start	Target End	Success	Progress at January 2022
Support and Encourage Volunteering in the Borough.	£25,000 Recovery Fund	Jun-21	Oct-22	Increase in the number of volunteers, volunteering in the Borough and as a consequence more community initiatives delivered. Work with involve to develop an indicator.	Website pages have been developed and updated with guidance on Volunteering. Research has been undertaken on our local offer which includes online platforms for advertising opportunities and Kent's Lord Lieutenant's Office is working in partnership with Kent Volunteers. A Joint Meeting was held with Involve Kent and VCS provided qualitative feedback on volunteering, there is ongoing work with Community Groups to help access the need. Work has recently begun work on benchmarking offer with CIPFA nearest neighbours, Evaluating internal policies and use of volunteers. Team have sought expert advice/training on best practice from APSE. The next steps – to complete the research to date and develop options ready to take 'to market'.
Online Community Participation	£15,000 Recovery Fund	Sep-21		Online tool in place and used to successfully engage with the public on projects and initiatives.	The team have evaluated several platforms, narrowing down to two which meet the needs of the wider Council, stakeholders from across the Council met to establish which provider would best meet the need. Feedback informed final choice. Purchase to be completed by end of the month
Community Resilience Fund	£150,000 Recovery Fund	Oct-21	Oct-24	30 projects delivered by a variety of community and voluntary sector groups and organisations.	To date we have had 14 applications, adding up to bids for £26,858. The first wave closes on 11 February. There have been a wide variety of applicants from Scout and gardening groups to charities supporting the homeless.

Resilient Communities					
Action	Agreed funding	Target Start	Target End	Success	Progress at January 2022
Equip Trinity Foyer to be a Community Hub	£30,000 Recovery Fund	Jun-21	Oct-21	New community hub delivered for all housing and related support services in Trinity Foyer	<p>The funding is being used to ensure digital inclusion and a multi-media training equipment are installed and embedded in the functions of our new Community Hub at Trinity. The specific digital aspects are being implemented by a local Audio-Visual contractor. We are currently working on developing our timetable of activities and learning support for those individuals most excluded from the job market and on the peripheral of societal activities. Our two new Homelessness Navigators have commenced in the role and working towards maximising digital inclusion.</p> <p>The handover of Trinity has been delayed due to unexpected refurbishment issues arising – handover now predicted to be in March. All the digital inclusion equipment will be in situation at the same time.</p>
Financial Inclusion Strategy and Actions	£34,320 Recovery Fund			The number and value of unclaimed benefits that residents are supported to claim A reduction in the number of households in financial crisis or at risk of moving into crisis Increased take up of debt advice services by households with problem debt A reduction in the number of households identified as being in a repeated	A dedicated welfare support officer has been recruited and started on the 17 th January. Immediate priority is to complete the campaign to increase the take up of Pension Credit among low-income households and develop stronger links within the advice sector.

Resilient Communities					
Action	Agreed funding	Target Start	Target End	Success	Progress at January 2022
				pattern of Council Tax debt The number of low-income households supported with energy efficiency measures The number of low-income households supported to access a more appropriate tariff	
Love Where You Live and Get Involved.	£35,000 Recovery Fund	Sep-21	Sep-22	8 community environmental projects delivered. Civic Pride increased as measured by the Resident's Survey. Baseline the number of participants in the project.	A pilot area in Tovil is being developed by the Street Scene Operations Manager and Communications Team which will be used to launch the project to other community groups, volunteers, Parish Councils and Ward Members across the Borough in the Spring. The pilot will enable the team to work closely with a group of volunteers in one community to determine what resources are required and how best these can be used to support the community to improve an area of unsightly, unadopted land. The team are currently engaging volunteers and known groups in the area. The plan is to provide support with planning and delivering the project as well as practical support in terms of funding small improvements such as lighting or fencing. The pilot area will then provide the blueprint for 7 other community projects across the Borough.

Responding to Increased Demands arising from COVID-19

Action	Agreed funding	Target Start	Target End	Success	Progress at January 2022
Revenues and Benefits – Citizens Advice Maidstone Post	£18,000 Contain Outbreak Managem ent Fund	Aug-21		Residents with debt problems are assisted to maximise income, reduce debt by claiming the benefits they are entitled to	A service level agreement has been entered with the Citizens Advice Bureau who pro- actively contact 40 low-income households who are experiencing with debt issues.