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## Well-being paper for discussion

**Purpose: To consider the town council's role in supporting physical and mental well-being, and how to develop what the council offers.**

### Town Vision

The Town Vision (2024) highlighted the role of the town council in working with groups and individuals to create the conditions for a happy and healthy town.

This aspiration should underpin the work of each committee of the council, but especially the Community and Well-being Committee.

Factors contributing to well-being include mental and physical health, financial security, personal safety, social connectedness and access to green spaces.

In a section on Community, Health and Happiness, the Town Vision listed the following aims and priorities to help achieve our vision:

- Better and more accessible access to shops and services in the town.
- Support for community groups – including support between groups.
- More conversations involving the schools.
- Support for the organisations and services that look after people's physical and mental health, including the health centre.
- Support for organisations alleviating and tackling poverty in the town.

Sections on business and employment, climate change and our local natural environment, young and education, housing and travel also include aspirations that are key to happiness and health.



## **Progress**

Over recent years the town council has progressed many relevant projects and policies including:

- An expanded events programme, largely free to access
- Residents' panel consultations on topics such as accessibility, green spaces, communications and wellbeing.
- Care of our green spaces and river including re-wilding, tree-planting, renovating picnic tables, developing the memorial bench scheme and working with the River Detective and Watermark town initiatives
- Provision of grants for organisations and services that support mental and physical health such as a mental health project at St Laurence School, WRAPed Textile Craft group, Community Snug at the Crafty Hive, Walkers are Welcome, Read Easy North & West Wiltshire
- Promoting volunteering through BoA Join In day, coming up on June 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Liaison with, and promotion of, the Hub
- Community Fridge project
- Schedule for upgrade of Play Areas – Poulton complete, St Aldhelms in progress

However, recent meetings of this committee have heard from residents who are keen to see the council do more to promote well-being. There is a need for initiatives to address social isolation, caring responsibilities and physical and mental health issues affecting all generations, as well as the on-going impact of covid. Domestic violence is also a significant concern. Support that is available is not always known to those who would benefit and is not always easy to access.

While the council has no professional remit for healthcare, it is our role to actively contribute to an environment and support a community in which people can lead healthy and happy lives.



The last residents' panel asked about accessibility and wellbeing, and the report is attached to this agenda. Ideas that came out of the survey – that could be looked at by this committee - include:

- Community-wide programmes to promote mental and physical health.
- More social groups and social spaces to meet new people
- A wider range of sporting/leisure facilities to improve physical health and fitness
- More opportunities to support mental health – including support and wellbeing groups, meditation and youth drop-ins.

### **Additional ideas for discussion**

Ideas that could be considered include:

- Profiling of support groups in, for example, BOA Snippets and the hard copy newsletter delivered to homes
- Clearer and more prominent promotion of the grants process in order to benefit more support groups
- Closer working with Bradford on Avon Health Centre. The Practice Manager, has suggested joint projects with the council such as webinars on health topics, and health centre attendance at certain events, for example to provide blood pressure checks
- Developing a volunteering bulletin designed to promote volunteer groups and volunteering opportunities
- Consideration of an accessibility audit looking at a range of barriers to participation in activities which are good for physical and mental health
- To ask all committees of the council to review their projects for promotion of wellbeing.