



# COMMUNITY POWERED WARWICKSHIRE

## Final Report

for Warwickshire County Council

2024

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# 1. Introduction

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) came to New Local with a big ambition: to create a community powered county. In 2021, we began working together to shape a compelling vision, strategy and delivery model which puts communities at the heart of the Council's work.

New Local's initial support (Apr 21-Mar 22) involved developing a vision and overarching narrative for a Community Powered Warwickshire (CPW). It also involved partner engagement and mobilisation, the development of a series of groundbreaker initiatives to put community powered approaches into action, and recommendations and guidance to mainstream the approach, including an evaluation framework for community power.

Over a subsequent two-year period (Apr 22-Mar 24), Warwickshire County Council has sought to build on this work. It set out a Community Power Delivery Plan to guide its activity and has worked with New Local to support the implementation of these delivery commitments.

## Shaping and implementing the approach

At the heart of this work, New Local worked with Warwickshire County Council to shape what a Community Powered Warwickshire means for the county. This resulted in three ambitions which have underpinned and driven the CPW approach and the activities undertaken to support this.



**Involve communities  
in decision making**



**Work alongside communities  
to take practical action**











**Enable communities  
to lead**

Delivery of the Community Powered Warwickshire approach has been led by Warwickshire County Council's Community Partnerships Team, working closely with councillors, officers, partners and communities and supported throughout by a Community Power Steering Group, chaired by the Portfolio holder for Environment, Climate & Culture, Cllr Heather Timms.

New Local has worked alongside Warwickshire County Council in this work, contributing a range of activities to support organisational culture change, learning and

development, and partnership development. Some of the delivery activities over the last two years are shown below.

 <p><b>Big Conversation</b> Online event (Sep 22) with 65+ partners, keynote by Helen Goulden CE Young Foundation spotlight on Community Supermarkets groundbreaker, discussions to shape Warwickshire offer, chaired by New Local</p>	 <p><b>Bi-lateral discussions</b> Discussions with borough/district councils and VCSE partners</p>	 <p><b>Advisory support</b> e.g. • CPW Directorate Anchors • Social Value • CPW &amp; Levelling Up • Social Fabric Fund</p>	 <p><b>Cabinet, Corporate Board &amp; Steering Group</b> New Local has facilitated in-person discussions with Cabinet and Corporate Board to shape and agree the community powered approach, as well as reporting to the portfolio holder via quarterly steering group meetings.</p>
<p><b>Councillor peer learning</b> Online peer learning session facilitated by New Local (Nov 22) to connect councillors across the country around their community powered role.</p>		<p><b>Staff Community of Practice</b> Online Community of Practice recruited from across directorates and facilitated by New Local over a period of c8mths (Dec 22-Jul 23), 16 attendees, 4 sessions.</p>	
 <p><b>Thriving Communities Partnership</b> New Local facilitated an online workshop of the Thriving Communities Partnership (Feb 23) with c16 attendees across VCSE, county and district/borough councils, exploring the future role of the partnership and how partners could best work together.</p>	 <p><b>Warwickshire Towns Network (WTN)</b> New Local facilitated an in-person workshop (Mar 23) attended by c60 people at the WTN conference on 'how does community power contribute to thriving towns and places?'</p>	 <p><b>Community Powered Libraries</b> New Local facilitated an in-person workshop (May 23) with senior leaders, service leads, and external libraries experts to explore what a future community powered library service could look like.</p>	

### This report

This report brings together an overview of activity and outcomes from a Community Powered Warwickshire to date. It seeks to provide an overview of how Warwickshire County Council has progressed community powered approaches and spotlight key areas of achievement.

Recognising that a shift to community powered ways of working is a long-term goal, as well as reflecting on the progress made to date the report also considers how Warwickshire County Council could continue to evolve community power into the future.

## 2. Spotlighting Community Powered Warwickshire

Warwickshire County Council has sought to effect change in different ways through its work on a Community Powered Warwickshire. From setting out a clear vision and framework for community power, to embedding it in policy and strategy, getting practical community powered initiatives up and running, and supporting Members and staff to work in community powered ways.

In this section of the report we aim to tell the story of Community Powered Warwickshire through spotlighting some of the key developments and actions taken. These are not exhaustive of everything done or achieved through CPW but are selected given their significance in supporting progress on community power in Warwickshire and the opportunity they provide for wider learning.

The format is designed to offer a concise overview of what was done, what has been achieved, and key impact or learning outcomes to date. It is possible to read these as standalone insights or, when taken together, an overall commentary on Community Powered Warwickshire.

Five spotlights are provided:

1. Community Powered Warwickshire Delivery Plan
2. Embedding Community Power in Policy and Strategy
3. Creating Opportunities with Communities
4. Growing Capacity and Investment in Communities
5. Evaluating Community Powered Warwickshire

# Community Powered Warwickshire Delivery Plan

## What was done

Warwickshire County Council developed a ten-point Delivery Plan to guide its work on Community Power. This was developed following initial work undertaken on vision, partnership development, and narrative shaping.

The Community Powered Warwickshire Delivery Plan includes ten outcome focused commitments covering **organisational development**, services and assets, **decision making**, **relationships**, and **empowerment and capacity building**.

## Community Powered Warwickshire Delivery Plan



## What has been achieved

The Delivery Plan was developed by Warwickshire County Council to help translate the vision for community power into a tangible programme of activity which could support community power. The Plan has been used to ensure action is taking place against each of the core commitments and the Community Partnerships team has tracked and reported progress in relation to each commitment on a quarterly basis to the Community Power Steering Group. Examples of some of the activities implemented through the Delivery Plan are provided below.

## Community Powered Groundbreakers

Four groundbreaker initiatives have applied a community powered approach in practice. They sought to capitalise on existing strengths, showcase community power within the council and county, promote joined up working in different parts of the organisation and with communities, and provide opportunities to test and learn about the impact of community powered ways of working.

### **Highways to Help**

Creating a unified and co-produced way of working across the transport, highways, and road safety policy area. This has included community information/signposting packs, development of safe and active travel champions, co-design and co-production of low traffic schemes, and community adoption of verges, wildflower planting, and community orchards. This groundbreaker has been supported by several Town and Parish Council Reference Group meetings with a highways and road safety focus.

### **Community Supermarkets**

Creating community capacity, tackling inequality, and addressing cost-of-living pressures have been addressed through providing access to affordable food, working in partnership with Feed the Hungry UK. The ground breaker focuses on three locations, Lillington, Camp Hill, and New Arley.

### **Stepping Forward Starts Here**

Unlocking the time and skills of Council staff and equipping them to work alongside communities. This has included a Community of Practice, identifying CPW Directorate Anchors to embed the approach, Learning at Work sessions, and regular inclusion of CPW on team meeting and workshop agendas.

### **Community Powered Place-Shaping**

Involving a programme of activity to create opportunities across identified priority places as well as focused activity as part of Transforming Nuneaton, selected as one of the Government's Town Fund localities to drive town regeneration, which Warwickshire is seeking to do in community powered ways.

## **Community Powered Councillors**

Warwickshire councillors from the different tiers of local government have been connected to each other to discuss CPW and consider ways in which the approach could be adopted at a local level. This includes county, district and borough, and parish and town councillors. Opportunities for regular dialogue, workshop sessions, and coalescing around shared agendas, such as through the Highways to Help groundbreaker, have played a particularly important role.

Warwickshire County Council has also taken the initiative to connect with others elsewhere in the country. Working with New Local and through the support of its membership network, in 2022 WCC and New Local jointly hosted an online Community Powered Councillors learning exchange session. Alongside Warwickshire this attracted attendees from, for example, West Lindsey, Worthing, Lichfield, Surrey, Worthing, Vale of Glamorgan, London Borough of Sutton, East Ayrshire, Cambridgeshire and London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. Key themes which emerged included the role councillors can contribute to community power through:

- active listening and the importance of understanding community priorities
- reaching beyond 'usual voices' to involve lesser heard communities
- convening and connecting communities and community groups to each other
- amplifying community powered activities that are already taking place

These sessions revealed that many councillors play both a vertical role, as decision makers and representatives of their communities, as well as a horizontal one, connecting communities to each other and mobilising them around shared priorities. Community Powered Warwickshire has sought to equip and support councillors to further lean into their horizontal role.

### Community of Practice

A community of practice is a group that comes together to share and learn about a common theme or topic. The Community Powered Warwickshire Community of Practice was launched to equip staff with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to apply a community powered approach. Each participant was invited to have a practical project to focus on which would help them apply the learning from the community of practice.

Sixteen staff made up the final group, attending four online learning sessions facilitated by New Local over a period of 9 months. Participants included staff from Highways, Public Health, Education, Communities, Children and Families, and Libraries, among others. Sessions included:

- Sharing of practical projects and challenges that the group were facing in taking a community powered approach
- An activity using a service design tool based around 'personas' to help the group think about different audiences they may want to engage through their work
- An exploration of the ladder of engagement (a framework for understanding different forms and degrees of community participation) with discussion on how to work with communities to move 'up' the ladder
- Examples of community powered case studies from inside and outside Warwickshire

### In summary

The Delivery Plan has offered a practical yet outcome focused way of ensuring progress on community powered ways of working. It has provided a central place for bringing together, documenting, and communicating action on community power within Warwickshire County Council. It has helped ensure progress has been made, for example, in relation to encouraging community and partner involvement, supporting organisational development and learning, and progressing practical community powered initiatives.



## Embedding Community Power in Policy & Strategy

### What was done

Warwickshire County Council has taken opportunities to embed community power as new policies and strategies have been developed, and as delivery frameworks have been shaped. This has been done to help mainstream a community powered approach.

### What has been achieved

The Warwickshire County Council Plan (2022–2027) identifies three strategic priorities and seven focus areas. Community Power is highlighted in the plan as an underpinning approach to support the achievement of these priorities and outcomes:

*‘The Council will harness the power of communities to tackle inequality and social inclusion through a community-powered approach. This requires us to work differently with residents, communities, and partners. We will build on their strengths and assets and keep alive the community spirit, so powerful before and during COVID-19. This will change our relationships and requires new ways of communicating and engaging with citizens and communities. We will change from ‘what will the Council do’ to ‘what do we want to do together, and how could the Council support the community to deliver it?’*

Work has also taken place to embed CPW into several linked plans and strategies with there being both council-led and partnership examples. For example, community power has been embedded into the Countywide Approach to Levelling Up, into the Council’s Creating Opportunities work, Sustainable Futures Strategy and the Integrated Care System Engagement Strategy.

Community Power is also linked into a series of other policies and plans including: Health in all Policies; Integrated Care System Place Development work (South and North); Organisational Development culture programme “How we work best”; in the commissioning and embedding of three new VCSE sector support services; and work around the creation of a Co-production Framework.

### In summary

The mainstreaming activity into policy and strategy has helped to create a strategic context for community power in Warwickshire. It is part of the process of making community power visible across the Council, and to partners, and supports organisational culture change by signalling ‘permission’ to work in community powered ways.

# Creating Opportunities with Communities

## What was done

Warwickshire's Creating Opportunities work has involved close working between Warwickshire County Council and the five district and borough councils in Warwickshire. It brings together the county's community power approach with its commitment to reduce disparities between communities, especially those who live in the places experiencing the greatest inequalities (as measured by the 22 Lower Super Output Areas in Warwickshire).

*"Looking ahead, Community Powered Warwickshire will underpin much of what we do to create opportunity in Warwickshire. It will be our underpinning ethos and test to ensure that we are putting the needs and views of communities at the heart of local decision making."* (Creating Opportunities in Warwickshire: The journey so far, July 2022 – December 2023)

## What has been achieved

WCC has worked alongside the five district and borough councils in Warwickshire (Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby, Stratford upon Avon, North Warwickshire, Warwick) to tackle inequalities and to shape local plans to create opportunities, drawing on the core principles of the county-wide community powered approach.

These principles were co-designed with partners. They aim to ensure communities are involved in local decision making and that statutory and partner organisations work alongside communities to take practical action, and where relevant, enable communities to lead.



### Involve communities in decision making

- ✓ bring communities' voices and experiences into the heart of decision making
- ✓ let communities have a greater say in the big decisions that affect them
- ✓ involve communities early in the process and let them know what gets agreed



### Work alongside communities to take practical action

- ✓ listen to communities' ideas for practical changes that can improve their lives
- ✓ work with communities to put their ideas into action, involving communities in the process
- ✓ be honest, take risks and learn by doing



### Enable communities to lead

- ✓ welcome people who choose to step forward in their community
- ✓ let communities determine the focus of their community leadership role
- ✓ make it as easy as possible for communities to lead, at times this may mean simply getting out of their way

These principles of responding to communities' priorities and involving communities in local decision making are being taken forward in practice through the Creating Opportunities Community Power Pilots. Working closely with District and Borough Councils and with a strong community influence, three pilot schemes are up and running in Barpool North and Crescents, Mancetter South and Ridge Lane, and Lillington East.

## Creating Opportunities - Community Power Pilots

### Mancetter South and Ridge Lane

The Mancetter South and Ridge Lane Creating Opportunities pilot has so far involved extensive community engagement, with 448 households approached and 167 questionnaires completed. This pilot is seeking to involve communities in the decisions that will affect their futures.

### Lillington East

The Lillington East Creating Opportunities pilot is centring around community conversations with over 60 hours of discussions between individuals, groups and professionals already carried out.

### Bar Pool North and Crescents

The Bar Pool North and Crescents pilot is about Creating Opportunities in West Nuneaton. The proposal is in partnership with a local social enterprise, Saints Nuneaton, funded by WCC's Social Fabric Fund to create a community hub and facility for community outreach. Looking to launch in 2024, this development will provide a space for community groups, activities, and local initiatives.

## In summary

The three-principles of Community Powered Warwickshire – involve communities in decision making, work alongside communities, and enable communities to lead - have provided a simple yet potentially transformative framework to guide the implementation of a community powered approach. This framework has been regularly applied by Warwickshire County Council and its partners, including shaping local place plans to create opportunities and informing investment fund criteria (e.g. Social Fabric Fund).

The Creating Opportunities Community Power Pilots are in their early stages but are providing a valuable opportunity to directly listen and respond to community priorities, and an opportunity to test and learn from community powered place-based change.

## Growing Capacity and Investment in Communities

### What was done

Warwickshire County Council recognises that to create the conditions for community power to flourish, growing capacity and investment in communities needs to be an integral part of how the public sector works.

### What has been achieved

Through Community Powered Warwickshire, Warwickshire County Council has shifted resources to support more community-led activity, supporting communities to step forward with their own ideas for change and to take action to address them.

In 2021, Warwickshire County Council launched the **Social Impact Fund** and subsequently awarded funding to 21 projects led by voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and Town and Parish Councils, with a specific focus on financial, digital, health and cultural inclusion, which can help build stronger communities.

In 2023, Warwickshire County Council launched the **Social Fabric Fund**. The fund puts community power at its centre by providing flexible funding that begins with communities' strengths and priorities. It focuses primarily on the 22 places across the County recognised as a priority for tackling inequalities. The fund amounts to £2.5 million, comprising £1.5 million capital and £1 million revenue.

These funds have brought a combined investment of £3.5m in social infrastructure, both of which are delivered by the Heart of England Community Foundation with additional capacity building support provided by Warwickshire CAVA as part of the Social Fabric Fund – a powerful example of WCC collaboratively with its VCFSE sector to shape and deliver a Community Powered Warwickshire.

Alongside the above Funds, the role of communities in tackling climate change has also been recognised. The Warwickshire County Council **Green Shoots Community Climate Challenge Fund** was launched in February 2021, providing £1m in funding to help local groups act on climate change.

### In summary

The capacity building support and financial investments made by WCC have enabled more community-led activity to take place i.e. it has enabled communities and the VCFSE organisations who work most closely with communities to play a greater role in improving outcomes for the people and places of Warwickshire.

The process of developing these schemes has also provided opportunities for wider learning, alignment and transformation towards community powered ways of working. For example, the development of the Social Impact Fund and Social Fabric Fund has enabled WCC's legal and finance teams to engage tangibly with the principles and desired outcomes of a Community Powered Warwickshire, working to ensure that the design of the funds and support reflect this.

# Evaluating Community Powered Warwickshire

## What was done

Warwickshire County Council has developed an evaluation framework for assessing Community Powered Warwickshire. It names five practices associated with being community powered – deliberative, active, enabling, collaborative, inclusive – and identifies indicators for how these features could translate into outcomes for communities (I Statements) and how these outcomes will be supported by the council (We Statements). The framework further identifies how metrics can be used at different scales, from individual projects through to population wide.

## Evaluating Community-powered Warwickshire

What are we trying to be	How you should feel if we get it right	What we (the council) will do to support you
<b>Deliberative</b> – always listening, always talking to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I feel like the council knows what is important to me</li> <li>I feel I have been listened to in the decisions that affect where I live</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will strive to involve you in the decisions that affect your community</li> </ul>
<b>Active</b> – being honest, flexible and creative in response to community priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I feel the council makes a difference to where I live</li> <li>I think the council acts in response to the priorities of my community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will adapt quickly and positively to community priorities</li> </ul>
<b>Enabling</b> – building capacity in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I feel confident and empowered to do things myself</li> <li>I feel I am part of a vibrant and resilient community that supports one another</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will help people and communities to find their own solutions</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborative</b> – working with the community to deliver change and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I feel the council works well with me, my community and local organisations to get things done</li> <li>I feel the council values my experience and what is important to me</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work with people, communities and local organisations to address priorities</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive</b> – ensuring that every community has a chance to be involved and be heard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I feel the council values and listens to everyone in my area, regardless of their background or circumstances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We consider the needs of everyone, and in particular those that are seldom heard</li> </ul>

Tracking community power over time – proposed metrics, to be accompanied by descriptive narrative

Overall quality of life in the community metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Life Survey: e.g. support networks; loneliness; well-being; local area satisfaction; civic participation – using Voice of Warwickshire to gather answers to some of these questions if CLS breakdown not available for Warwickshire</li> </ul>	
Community involvement metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weighting/index of measures, including for example:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of people attending council-led events      % adults doing voluntary work in last 12 months</li> <li>Total amount of money going into community groups      # of community groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Self-assessment metrics Community, & workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular 6-monthly or annual survey (using Voice of Warwickshire) for a) citizens; b) council workforce</li> <li>On a scale of 1-5, where 5 is completely agree, and 1 is completely disagree, do you:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Citizens: E.g. "I feel like the council knows what is important to me"; "I feel confident and empowered to do things myself"</li> <li>Council workforce view of 'we' statements e.g. "we will strive to involve you in the decisions that affect your community"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Project specific community metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be defined at the start of projects (if appropriate, to co-design with communities) – to assess impact against the aims and statements above</li> </ul>	

## What has been achieved

The five core components of the Framework evolved from the core principles and early narrative which was developed for the community power programme and through New Local guiding a series of discussions about evaluating community power with Warwickshire County Council. Following this, Warwickshire County Council has embedded parts of the Evaluation Framework in the Council's Corporate Performance Framework. It has also tested some of the 'We Will' statements in the Council's residents' panel, Voice of Warwickshire.

### **In summary**

Application of community power metrics have started to allow Warwickshire County Council to build baseline data which can be tracked over time and some testing of ideas with communities as initiatives are being developed, enabling community involvement in decision making and direction setting.

### 3. Learning Review

New Local has supported Warwickshire County Council as a strategic partner on community power for three years. As this report indicates, a huge amount has been executed and achieved in relation to a Community Powered Warwickshire over this period.

In this final section, we reflect on some of the key success factors underpinning the approach before moving on to consider what next for community power in Warwickshire.

#### Strengths of Community Powered Warwickshire

Many factors have contributed to the progress and achievements of the Community Powered Warwickshire approach to date. Below we draw out five core strengths.

Five Strengths of Community Powered Warwickshire	
1	A focus on the county, not the council
2	Cross-sector partnership approach
3	Senior leadership support for community power
4	An ethos which underpins policy, strategy, and practice
5	Growing capacity and investment in communities

1. **A focus on the county, not the council** – Warwickshire County Council has not sought to claim ownership of a Community Powered Warwickshire. Whilst it has undoubtedly provided strategic leadership and been the driving force behind it, Warwickshire County Council has sought from the outset to take an outward looking county-wide approach rather than it be an internally focused, institution-led initiative. The work that it has done internally has been to support its own organisational development and culture change to contribute to a Community Powered Warwickshire.
2. **Cross-sector partnership approach** – linked to the county-wide focus, Warwickshire County Council has advocated and pursued a multi-sector partnership approach throughout the development and delivery of a Community Powered Warwickshire. The public sector (including the 5 district and borough councils, Town and Parish Councils, health and other statutory public sector organisations), private sector, and VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise) sector have always been recognised and welcomed for their contribution to the agenda, working alongside



communities. Two Big Conversation partnership events, in 2021 and 2022, each attracted 60–80 attendees and brought together a diverse range of organisations including contributors and attendees from the local NHS, districts and borough councils, voluntary organisations, community groups, businesses such as local developers and social enterprises, WCC staff and councillors, among others. Creating Opportunity, taking a community centred approach to addressing place-based inequality, has involved close working between Warwickshire County Council and the Borough and District authorities.

3. **Senior leadership support for community power** – Community Powered Warwickshire has had the support of senior leaders at political and officer level throughout. The Leader and Lead Portfolio Holder have visibly championed a community powered approach, within and outside of the Council. Senior officers including the Chief Executive, Executive Director for Resources, and Director of Strategy, Planning and Governance have been equally involved and worked collaboratively with Members and their wider teams to shape and steer the work.
4. **An ethos which underpins policy, strategy, and practice** – there has been a clear effort to integrate the core principles and components a community-powered approach into a range of policies, strategies, and procedures across Warwickshire County Council. Community Power is named and its contribution clearly articulated in, for example, the Council Plan (2022–2027), in the County-wide Approach to Levelling Up (2022), and more recently as part of Creating Opportunities in Warwickshire (2024), as well as a range of other policies and strategies. As intended from the start, the application of community power has travelled far beyond the Community Partnerships team within Warwickshire County Council. Community powered approaches have grown from strength to strength and are highly visible across WCC directorates and departments including, for example, Economy and Place, Environment, Planning and Transport, Public Health, and Climate Change, among others. It is equally possible to identify the engagement and active involvement of corporate functions, such as finance, legal, performance, organisational development and HR in community powered thinking and action. The real strength here is that Community Powered Warwickshire is seen an ethos, a way of doing things that has relevance and can lead to better outcomes across diverse areas of service and operations.
5. **Growing capacity and investment in communities** – Warwickshire County Council has recognised that to achieve a Community Powered Warwickshire a crucial step has to include building the capacity and resources available to communities to be able to step forward and contribute, alongside the council. Warwickshire County Council has invested over £3.5m funds through the Social Impact Fund and Social Fabric Fund over the last 3 years, as well as launching the £1m Green Shoots Fund to support community action on climate change. There has been a mature recognition

that communities will vary in their readiness to engage and take action, and that additional time and support may be required for some communities to ensure that there is a level playing field for all. This has been reflected in the aligning of funds and capacity building support to the 22 places in Warwickshire experiencing the greatest inequalities, through initiatives such as the Social Fabric Fund.

### **Future developments**

Warwickshire County Council recognises that despite considerable progress made over the last three years, there is more to do to transition towards a community powered approach. This is to be entirely expected. A wholesale shift in culture and practice requires commitment and consistency over the long-term.

Looking ahead, Warwickshire County Council will be best placed to identify how it should adapt and evolve its approach so that its activity, decision making and practice is increasingly powered by communities.

Our analysis and insights suggest the following areas may be particularly important for Warwickshire County Council to give attention to as it takes forward its Creating Opportunities agenda, underpinned by a community powered approach.

- 1. Extend and deepen a community culture** – there is a strong community culture in some service areas and the Creating Opportunities community power place pilots are community led, providing a strong testbed for a community centred approach to addressing place-based inequalities. It will be important for Warwickshire County Council, and partners, to build on these strengths and the learning which emerges. Further advancing a community powered way of working across all of its service areas and operating approach will ensure it becomes fully embedded in the culture and practice of the organisation.
- 2. Maintain the strategic focus and visibility of community power** – community power is well embedded at a strategic level within WCC and is seen as a key enabler, or means, of tackling inequalities and achieving better outcomes. This is a strength to build on. Without a highly visible brand or overarching strategy in its own right it may though be important to ensure that a Community Powered Warwickshire continues to be visible to members, staff, partners, and communities. This will ensure it avoids becoming a time-limited initiative and instead drives the long-term change in approach needed for a fundamental re-wiring of organisational culture and ways of working. Continuing to bring forward and celebrate examples of community power in action, as is being encouraged through the Creating Opportunities shared platform, is a great way of maintaining this momentum.
- 3. Tackle organisational barriers to community powered ways of working** – the degree to which cultural norms, habits, values and expectations either hold back or support

community powered ways of working within organisations can make a significant difference to the progress that can be made. Warwickshire County Council should remain alert to any staff and Members coming across barriers to involving communities in decision making, working alongside communities to take practical action, or enabling communities to lead. Capturing these barriers and retaining a focus on systematically tackling them will support the continued progress and impact of a community powered approach.

4. **Continue to equip and support staff to work in community powered ways** – the work to develop staff, equip them with the understanding and skills to work in community powered ways, and provide the space for those testing out new approaches to share their practice and learn from each other is an ongoing need which Warwickshire County Council should continue to be ready to respond to. We would anticipate the learning and development needs around community power to be both a long term requirement and one which evolves and changes as Community Powered Warwickshire matures.
  
5. **Further mobilise partners and leverage resources around a shared agenda** – Warwickshire County Council started its community power journey with an outward facing, cross-sector partnership approach. Continuing to expand and deepen place-based collaboration with partners across the public, private and VCFSE sectors will require ongoing attention, time and relationship building by Warwickshire County Council. Leveraging resources to continue to support community powered approaches, including through investment from the private sector or opportunities secured through public sector devolution, should be a key focus moving ahead. The potential benefit is the achievement of what Warwickshire County Council initially set out to do in seeking not only to become a community powered council but a community-powered place in which all sectors are active partners, a Community Powered Warwickshire.