

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BIG SOCIETY INQUIRY
DATE OF DECISION:	21 AUGUST 2012
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:	
Not Applicable	

BRIEF SUMMARY:

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) held an Inquiry into the Big Society agenda from September 2011, reporting back to Cabinet with their recommendations in April 2012. This report suggests the way forward on the recommendations from OSMC.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To approve the highlighted recommendations from the OSMC Inquiry for implementation set out in Appendix 1.
- (ii) To approve engaging in initial discussion with Southampton Connect in relation to taking a lead role in coordinating, overseeing and monitoring outcomes for the city.
- (iii) To approve the statement of principles set out in Appendix 2.
- (iv) To delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Economy, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, to do anything necessary to give effect to the recommendations contained in this report.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. The report recommendations ensure that Cabinet has considered and formally responded to the outcome of the OSMC Inquiry on the Big Society.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED:

- 2. None, as Cabinet is required to consider and respond to outcomes of OSMC inquiries.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out):

Background

- 3. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) Inquiry into the Big Society agenda took place from September 2011 to April 2012 when a number of recommendations were presented to Cabinet. The recommendations are detailed in Appendix 1. These have been considered in the context of the council's financial challenges, work that is already taking place as well as feedback from agencies who were invited to be involved with the Inquiry. This assessment has informed the recommended way forward which Cabinet is now requested to approve.

4. The Scrutiny Inquiry made 11 main recommendations with a number of specific sub recommendations. This report recommends that Cabinet accept all recommendations as written and contained in Appendix 1, with the exception of the following recommendations:
- To establish forums: the rejection of this recommendation is due to resource constraints. However work is underway to map existing forums in the city so that it can inform how we can improve resident involvement in decision making through existing forums.
 - Prioritising communities: it is recommended that this is approved in principle, subject to the results of mapping of community development resources in the city that is currently underway.
 - CSR strategy: recommendation amended to: Investigate employer supported volunteering for council staff and the implications for council policy and practice.

Involvement of Southampton Connect

5. Key partners within Southampton Connect, including Business Solent, City College, Southampton Solent University and Southampton Voluntary Services (SVS), were involved directly in developing the Terms of Reference for the Big Society Inquiry and a number of representatives also gave evidence. In September 2011 the OSMC Chair discussed an outline of the purpose of the Inquiry with Southampton Connect and was given general support. Connect members were invited to provide feedback on the suggested themes of the Inquiry and a number of their ideas were incorporated into the final Terms of Reference.
6. The emerging issues and recommendations of the Big Society Inquiry were presented to Southampton Connect in March 2012, when they were invited to discuss their overall role within the Big Society. In particular, they were requested to consider the opportunity for coordination of the business role within the Big Society, a coordinated communication plan across the city, and to develop a city-wide programme involving young people to harness pride in the city. Southampton Connect was advised that the emerging issues were to be developed into a report from which a formal Cabinet response would follow detailing which recommendations were to be taken forward.
7. Cabinet is now requested to endorse the suggestion that officers hold discussions with Southampton Connect on them taking a lead role in co-ordinating, overseeing and monitoring outcomes for the city.

Statement of Principles

8. The Statement of Principles, in Appendix 2, will provide a foundation from which to support the development of community based projects in the city. It would also provide opportunities to engage in debate on key issues.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

9. There are resource implications linked to the Big Society Inquiry response and in considering the OSMC recommendations, due regard was given to the current financial pressures faced by the council. Therefore most of the recommendations that have been suggested for acceptance by Cabinet can be met from within existing budgets.
10. The exception is the Volunteer Passport scheme which can only be introduced if funding is identified. The Volunteer Alliance has indicated that they will be approaching Southampton Connect with a request for funding from the Service Development Fund.

Property/Other:

11. No immediate property implications are raised by this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

12. Matters referred to in this report are permitted by virtue of section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (the General Power of Competence), which permits a Council to do anything an individual may do subject to any pre and post commencement restrictions, none of which have been identified in this instance. Additionally, the duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is contained within Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Other Legal Implications:

13. None

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS:

14. None

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KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices:

1.	Big Society Inquiry – response to recommendations
2.	Statement of Principles

Documents In Members' Rooms:

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out?	No
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	None	
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