

Big Society Inquiry – Response to Recommendations

Recommendation	Accepted By Executive (Y/N)	How Will The Recommendations Be Achieved?	Responsible Organisation & Officer	Target Date For Completion
<p>1. Communication</p> <p>Work with partners and Southampton Connect on the delivery of a city wide vision with a consistent communication/marketing plan based on 'Our Southampton' branding that supports and celebrates the messages and successes of the Big Society and, is included in the refresh of the Southampton Connect Plan.</p>	Y	Joint work with Southampton Connect , especially the development of the City Portal.	Rosanna Copen, SCC	31 st October 2012
Opening Up Public Services				
<p>2. Localism Act</p> <p>The 2013/14 Council and Directorate plans should identify how this drive towards localism will be implemented across the authority.</p>	Y	This recommendation will be taken into consideration when the council develops and agrees how its response to the Localism Act.	Suki Sitaram, SCC	By March 2013
<p>3. Transparency and Engagement</p> <p>Cabinet, Leaders of Political Groups, senior management and Southampton Connect partnership to pledge to lead the community by example, by making transparent decisions to do things differently, reflecting the ethos of 'Our Southampton', shift thinking and</p>	Y	The Leader has emphasised his commitment to transparency and that this should be reflected in all aspects of the council's work.		

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encourage the ground swell of cultural change to champion the Big Society and localism in Southampton to:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish locality forums to expand the role of neighbourhood planning, making it easier for communities and residents to access and drive public services where they live 	N	It is recommended that locality forums are not accepted by Cabinet, but that mapping of existing Forums is carried out and discussions held with other agencies to identify the possibilities of joint working. The financial situation makes it difficult to justify additional resources to establish new forums as a range of forums already exist in the city. These could be used to involve local residents and partner organisations in decision making. The Police and Health also have their own community engagement structures. The council could therefore consider working with partner agencies to identify how to improve joint working in this area.	Vanessa Shahani, SCC	30 th September 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote better use of web based resources and social media outlets at community level, for example Southampton Placebook and the Volunteer Alliance and other online forums 	Y	The Communities Team has already produced a number of online community resources; on the website and through social networking. These resources provide a reference library for community groups and organisations and include templates, policies, 'how to' guides and case studies. The Facebook page, which has been featured as a national good practice example, has over 680 followers who receive several daily updates about how they can get involved and improve their community. Work is	Vanessa Shahani, SCC	Ongoing

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		also being carried out to map and promote IT access and training to those who don't currently have access at home (it is currently estimated that only 10% of council tenants have internet access). The Volunteer Alliance launched a volunteer portal in November 2011.	Volunteer Alliance	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map and assess current community resources and activity via Southampton Placebook, to feed the single needs assessment 	Y	It is recommended that Cabinet approve this recommendation to promote better use of web based resources at a community level as well as mapping and assessing current community resources.		
Empowering Communities				
4. Resources Rationalise Big Society funding to make access to existing funding streams at the council easier and timelier for local organisations and establish new funding sources to support the Big Society agenda to:	Y	Discussions are underway with Health to pool small grants budgets. Work is also underway to explore ways of improving access to new funding sources.	Vanessa Shahani SCC	31 st March 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to develop additional community funding sources, for example, through the creation of a Big Society Fund or use of Social Impact Bonds to support the launch of new and innovative community 	Y	As above.		

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projects				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify the council's procurement processes by adopting best practice examples in Hampshire, Bristol and Cardiff, as identified in the report. In particular, contracts under the EU threshold should be proportionate, support local delivery, use a standard contract template, give advance notice/planning to enable joint working and bids, and make best use of e-forms / websites to minimise documentation used and required. 	Y	Discussions have been held with the Council's Senior Manager for Property, Procurement and Contract Management. One of the issues facing voluntary sector organisations is using the Bravo Solutions package. A step-by-step guide to using the package has been requested from the providers of this system. This can then be loaded onto the council website. SVS and TWICS have been requested to provide examples of best practice in procurement from the voluntary sector perspective and both are in the process of seeking this information from their networks.	John Spiers, SCC	Need a date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the use of community centres and voluntary sector premises as a first choice for meetings and hubs for mobile working 	Y	By promoting existing local locations for hire through the internet and intranet.	Vanessa Shahani, SCC	31 st October 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the 'Our Southampton' agenda will involve an increase in managed risk-taking and ensure that the Council retains the capacity to step in as provider of last resort. 	Y	As highlighted by feedback from SVS, there will need to be a shared approach to risk-taking as the experience of the voluntary sector is that the council tends to transfer risk disproportionately to them.	Suki Sitaram, SCC	Ongoing
<p>5. Local Businesses</p> <p>Southampton Connect to organise a city wide discussion around how businesses in Southampton can support</p>	Y	Work has started on making these connections via both the Southampton Connect supported Volunteer Alliance Big Society event (on 11 th November 2011) and the Southampton	Southampton Connect to nominate a lead for this	31 st October 2012

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<p>Southampton's Big Society in a more joined up and coordinated way, involving Business in the Community, Business Solent and the Chamber of Commerce. This should also include signposting to encourage and support the setting up of Mutuels, social enterprises and community interest across the City.</p>		<p>Connect Business Support priority project led by the Chamber of Commerce. Southampton Voluntary Services is already planning with SCA on social enterprise support. This work will link with existing work strands.</p>	<p>agenda</p>	
<p>6. Prioritising Communities</p> <p>To work alongside RISE and WICT to harness the learning and experiences of the Community Organisers and identify how existing community resources, both within the Council and with key partners such as faith organisations, can be directed so that shared community posts or community organisers are operating within the least affluent areas in the City to ensure equal opportunities exist for engagement and to build capacity. Establish Locality Liaison Officers as necessary to ensure coverage.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The Communities Team is currently mapping existing community development resources in the city to identify gaps in provision. It is therefore recommended this is approved in principle subject to the results of the mapping exercise.</p>	<p>Vanessa Shahani SCC</p>	<p>31st October 2012</p>
<p>Social Action</p>				
<p>7. Celebrate success</p> <p>Celebrate and reward volunteering by:</p>				

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating how volunteering could be rewarded, offering discounts for council services or local businesses, as part of the Change Programme to expand the City Card 	Y	<p>In their feedback to this report Southampton Voluntary Services (SVS) highlighted that “Reward based initiatives are not volunteering in the usual sense and are more akin to mutualism which is fine but should not be confused with volunteering. Rewards change the nature of freely given volunteering and are potentially counterproductive as it creates an expectation of receiving rather than giving”. Further discussions will be held with SVS before progressing this recommendation and any resulting actions will be taken under delegated powers.</p>	Vanessa Shahani SCC	30 th September 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Southampton Voluntary Services and other partners to establish a city wide annual volunteering awards hosted by the Mayor. 	Y	<p>It is acknowledged that SVS already operate a Volunteer Certificate Scheme, supported by the council, recognising volunteers who have contributed over 100 volunteer hours. Certificates are awarded by the Mayor at an award ceremony twice a year. Establishing another award scheme would lead to confusion and duplication.</p>	SVS	Ongoing
<p>8. Encourage Volunteering</p> <p>Work with Southampton Voluntary Services (SVS) to:</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a volunteering bank to be a one stop shop for volunteering opportunities for businesses, 	Y	<p>It is acknowledged that SVS already provide these services.</p>		

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organisations and individuals;				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a simple website which allows basic description of volunteer offer to match with volunteering opportunities and linked with www.do-it.org; 	Y	Do we need to add any detail?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the business sector to encourage recognition of the skills and experience of volunteering through a City Volunteer Passport. 	Y	This was discussed by the Southampton Volunteer Alliance 26 th June 2012 and development of this idea will require resources. The suggestion was made that a bid be submitted to Southampton Connect for funding to progress the concept.	Volunteer Alliance	31 st December 2012
9. Harnessing and supporting student activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harness the energy and potential of students to support a Big Society approach 	Y	There are existing schemes in both universities to encourage volunteering; for example Southampton Solent University is working to making volunteering compulsory on all courses from Autumn 2012.	Vanessa Shahani SCC	31 st October 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southampton Connect to develop a city-wide cultural programme which includes arts, sports and cultural activities, e.g. as part of the planning for the new Arts Centre in Southampton, to harness civic responsibilities and build a greater sense of pride and place in the city; 	Y	This recommendation links to plans for a Southampton Festival and existing activities.		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with universities to develop street captains in areas with a high student population of students 	Y	Officers will explore with Southampton Solent University whether Street Captains could link into existing projects.		
<p>10. Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Corporate Social Responsibility strategy for the Council 		Southampton Voluntary Services (SVS) welcome the commitment to employer supported volunteering and in progressing this consideration will be given to the issues raised by SVS:	Vanessa Shahani SCC	31 st March 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a brokerage scheme, in partnership with the Southampton Voluntary Sector, to link council employees and councillors with opportunities to become trustees, provide professional skills or mentor voluntary organisations, particularly those operating in the least affluent areas. 	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care is needed to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest, between charity trustees, whose responsibility is to place the best interest of the charities first, which could be contrary to the interests of the council. Employer supported volunteering has organisational cost , which in this case uses public funds, so would need to be well placed and utilised. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage and support volunteering, professional skills and mentoring opportunities through staff being given an agreed level of paid leave for volunteering, starting from senior management. <p>It is recommended that Cabinet accepts an amended form of this recommendation, namely to:</p> <p><i>Investigate employer supported</i></p>	Y	<p>SVS also suggested broadening the scheme to recognise employee’s personal volunteering when considering recognition, training and development and in offering flexibility around TOIL or flexitime to enable their participation. This could be considered as part of the council’s developing workforce strategy.</p>		

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<i>volunteering for council staff and the implications for council policy and practice.</i>				
<p>11. Measuring Success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the University of Southampton Third Sector Research Centre to monitor the development and success of the Big Society in Southampton 	Y	The Third Sector Research Centre is continuing to work on this agenda and links have been made with them; including endorsement for their new Creative Solutions Project.	Vanessa Shahani SCC	Ongoing

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