

## **Appendix 1 – Community Solutions**

### **Community Development Survey Results - August 2017**

#### **Overall**

**Overall there was agreement for the council's proposed approach to community development. For all questions where respondents were asked if they agreed with the approach the majority of respondents supported the approach, there was an average of 82% agreeing or strongly agreeing compared to an average of 4% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. The lowest agreement level was 74% and the highest disagreement level was 9%.**

#### **Q1 Building on what we already have**

**There is a lot going on already and we have heard that we need to grow it rather than start again with new things. This would mean supporting individuals and groups who are already active to do more. It could be a faith group that wants to run more groups, a tenants association that wants to expand and offer more in their local area, an arts group that wants to use their approach to address different issues.**

**It would not be 'one size' fits all such as commissioning a good neighbour scheme in every area for example.**

**All respondents either strongly agree or agreed with this approach.**

**There were 18 comments from respondents. These fit into four broad areas:**

- Community and voluntary groups need support – most of the comments were about community and voluntary groups and volunteers needing support in order to continue their activities, including help with networking, support to scale up and time to develop.**
- Support what's there already instead of starting new things – there is a lot of community activity already happening in the city, including groups that have been working with communities for many years and understand what is needed.**
- Groups evolve in different ways – some respondents were concerned about too much bureaucracy stifling group's growth, groups need to be able to evolve in their own way.**
- Change can be good – while agreeing with the 'build on what we already have approach' some respondents felt that this shouldn't mean we stagnate.**

#### **Q2 Pace of Development**

**This would mean that services would develop at a different pace, building in many cases on what's already working, and some communities would have access to more than others at first.**

To address this we also need to support people and groups who want to start new things, using the examples above it could be to start a tenants association or arts activity but it could be almost anything! We hope to promote innovative ideas that have particular relevance to that place.

Most respondents either agreed (56%) or strongly agreed (37%) with this approach. One respondent strongly disagreed, saying, “Far too much in this city is just talked/planned about and nothing happens!”

There were 12 comments about the pace of development, covering the following areas:

- Duplication / reinventing the wheel – a third of responses to this question were concerned about avoiding duplication with existing work when starting new projects and groups.
- Funding and finance – a quarter of responses to this questions were concerned about the need for funding for both new and existing work and the potential increased competition for funding that new groups bring.
- Capacity building – One response re-iterated the need for capacity building in some areas before new groups can start up.
- Groups evolve in different ways – One response noted the importance of allowing for the diversity of pace and approach as groups will naturally evolve in different ways.
- Do what you say you will – Two responses commented on the perception that there is often a lot of talk but very little action.

### Q3 Overarching view

We think we need to pool resources to directly fund support and infrastructure for community development across the city. This would include providing support to the wide variety of individuals and groups who provide informal and formal activities in local communities and to help get new initiatives off the ground. This would mean one place to go to for advice and support (not necessarily one building), including practical support, linking up with like-minded organisations and developmental support.

The alternative would be to provide this support through a number of agencies or services.

Most respondents either agreed (41%) or strongly agreed (30%) with this approach, though more were neutral (17%), disagreed or strongly disagreed (4% each) than in the previous two questions. There were also two respondents who answered ‘don’t know’.

The comments show a more mixed response to the approach, even amongst those who agreed with it. They covered the following areas:

- One-stop shop – Several respondents interpreted ‘one place to go for advice and support’ as a one-stop shop. While a just over third of responses supported this approach, half of responses were unhappy with it. There were concerns that a single agency would not be able to cover the full range of needs of local groups and that a ‘one place’ approach means a ‘one size fits

all' approach we some felt contradicted the approaches stated in the previous two questions.

- **Multiple locations/services, including digital – just over a fifth of responses felt it would be good for the service to be provided in multiple locations (including digital access), especially through a neighbourhood based approach.**
- **Range of approaches – A third of responses (two thirds of which disagreed or strongly disagreed with the 'one place' approach) felt the service should be delivered through a range of different approaches which reflect the different needs of community and voluntary organisations in the city.**
- **Funding criteria – A fifth of responses were about funding, split fairly evenly between agree/strongly agree, disagree/strongly disagree and neutral/don't know. Respondents agree with the approach in general, but would like assurances that groups would still be able to access a range of funding. Some respondents who disagree with that approach felt that SCC funding should come direct from SCC, not via a third party as this will cost more money.**
- **SCC involvement / unclear about this approach – Following on from the funding criteria comments, 3 responses were unclear what SCC's role in this is, and were concerned that this would mean SCC would not be providing some services (including funding) directly.**
- **Current providers – A couple of responses noted that there are providers already delivering these services.**
- **Capacity building / groups working together – capacity building and the need for groups to work together was again raised as a key issue for local groups.**

Those that disagreed or strongly disagreed felt that having one place to go for advice was counter to the approach suggested in the previous two questions and a range of approaches should be implemented.

#### **Q4 What do we mean by 'infrastructure support'**

This needs to reflect the areas which people identified in the engagement, including: HR advice, recruitment, training and support of volunteers, connecting organisations and groups and setting up formal networks, structured ways of receiving and sharing information, communication channels that are inclusive, help with bid writing and applying for funds, support to start up new initiatives, governance arrangements (such as setting up management committees and providing safe services), promoting the sharing of resources, skills and knowledge, brokering specialist support, sharing and promoting best practice, supporting groups to demonstrate impact, collating evidence to show impact across the city and crisis support for organisations. To do this we may recruit the support of businesses within the city.

Overall there was support for this definition of 'infrastructure support', with most respondents agreeing (37%) or strongly agreeing (39%). Only one respondent disagreed and no-one strongly disagreed, however, a fifth of responses were either neutral or 'don't know' (17% and 4% respectively).

Comments on this question fall into the following categories:

- **Business** – the final line of the question, about recruiting the support of businesses, attracted the most comments on this question (45%). For respondents who agreed/strongly agreed with the approach there was strong support for getting both local small businesses and larger national businesses more involved with the VCSE sector. Those that were neutral/don't know were unsure how this would work and wanted more information. The only 'disagree' comment in this section was a concern this would mean public funding going to businesses rather than VCSE organisations.
- **Accessibility** – Ensuring ease of access to advice, funding and other services for VCSE attracted 23% of comments for this question.
- **Collaborative approach** – A fifth of responses suggested that a collaborative approach is needed, with VCSE organisations coming together to support each other. One response again felt that a single agency would not be able to cover all the areas needed.
- **Other** – other comments were to about expanding current services, noting the difference between community development and infrastructure support and a suggestion to trial this approach in a small way first.

#### Q4b Information system

We should use a range of approaches that support people to know about and to access local services. This may include a directory, face to face information sharing and other social networking opportunities or social media approaches. The aim of these approaches would be to support communities, and their residents, to understand what is available locally in order to help themselves and others. The system would be based upon good examples elsewhere in the country and we would need to fund the cost of keeping any system up to date.

If you would or do use an information system to find out what is going on, can you tell us what kind of things you would look for, what type of system you use and why you would use it?

This question produced the largest number of comments (51). This question asked for a narrative answer only.

#### Currently use

People predominantly use search engines, social media and email newsletters/ mailing lists to both look for information and promote their own information.

#### Directories

The generally people thought directories are a good idea, though how this should be done had a mixed response.

Percentages are based on the number of people who commented on a specific issue out of the total number of people who commented on directories. Not everyone made a comment on every issue.

- Overall 81% of respondents who specifically commented on a directory thought it was a good idea to have one, versus just 10% who thought they either weren't needed or a waste of money.
- 58% of comments about directories felt that an online directory was best, with 13% of comments favouring paper-based or both paper and online versions.

- **36% commented on the need for the directory to be kept up-to-date. However, of those, less than a third of responses acknowledged the need for organisations/individuals to take responsibility and self-update their entries. The other responses referred only to the need for information to be up-to-date.**
- **26% commented on the need for the directory to be easy to access and easy to use. One commented that SID does not currently meet this criteria.**
- **Two respondents commented that directories are resource intensive to maintain.**
- **One respondent felt there is a need for a specific health and wellbeing directory.**
- **One respondent thought the directory should cover the information currently provided through infrastructure support.**
- **One respondent thought directories are a waste of money.**

#### **Q4c Connectors and networks**

**We would include in the service the role of connecting organisations and groups and setting up formal networks to do this. These networks may be based upon specific neighbourhoods, specific areas of interest, or those who work with specific age groups.**

**Please can you share any particular preference you or your group/organisation may have in relation to networks in the city.**

**Connectors and networks produced the second largest number of comments to this survey (46). This question asked for a narrative answer only.**

**The comments covered the following areas:**

- **Topic based networks – the majority of responses (59%) felt there is a need for topic based networks. The suggested topics cover a wide range of issues and ages.**
- **Locally based networks – about a quarter of responses (26%) felt that local area networks are needed to bring communities together. Some respondents (11%) felt both topic based and locally based networks are needed.**
- **Alternative to traditional networks – some respondents (11%) felt that alternatives to traditional meeting based networks are needed to ensure everyone has access to them. It was also noted that informal networks can sometimes work better than formal networks.**
- **General comments and existing providers – some respondents (13%) commented that networks were a good idea, which networks they already use and that existing providers were supporting this need.**

#### **Q5 Volunteering**

**We think we need a city wide approach to recruiting, training and supporting volunteers, we also think we need to find ways of celebrating volunteering across all settings and to encourage people to volunteer more. We would therefore include some co-ordinating/supporting work within a new service though this would not remove the direct link between volunteers and their local**

groups. All of which will build upon the good practice which is already in place in the city.

The majority of respondents either agreed (39%) or strongly agreed (36%) with this approach, some were neutral or didn't know (14%) and a small number disagreed (3%) or strongly disagreed (1%). Some respondents did not give an answer (4%).

However, from the comments received it appears there is some confusion about what exactly this approach means. The comments fell into the below categories:

- **Current providers** – the largest number of comments on this question (38%) were about current providers, in particular querying why the council would duplicate the work they already do. There appears to be a lack of understanding that this work is in fact funded by the council and that this question is asking about how this support should be provided in the future.
- **Unsure about a centralised system** – The next biggest issue raised was uncertainty over centralising volunteer recruitment and training (21%). Many organisations already do this themselves and do not want to hand this over to another organisation. There were also concerns that a central system would poach volunteers from small organisations. There appears to be a misperception that the proposed approach is to have a single route for volunteering in the city that would prevent organisations from recruiting and training their own volunteers. The majority of neutral or disagree responses to this question fall under this category.
- **Import to support and recognise volunteers** – Several respondents (17%) felt it is important to support and recognise the work that volunteers do, particularly emphasising that it is important to remind people that volunteers are not paid.
- **Recruitment and training** – some respondents (14%) felt there needs to be support for better recruitment and training of volunteers.
- **Informal volunteering** – some respondents (7%) noted that not all volunteering is done through formal routes and that is important to support and recognise informal volunteering, where often people don't think of themselves as volunteers.
- **Motivation** – some respondents (7%) noted it is important to recognise that people have different motivations for volunteering.

#### **Q6 Working with local business**

We think the city wide approach would allow closer working with local businesses with the aim of accessing their expertise and in some cases other resources i.e. staff time for volunteering, room use and small funds.

There was strong agreement for working with local businesses, with the majority of respondents either agreeing (36%) or strongly agreeing (41%) with this approach. Some respondents were neutral (14%) and a low number either disagreed (4%) or strongly disagreed (1%). No answer was given by 3%.

The comments received fall into the following categories:

- **Support for working with businesses** – there was good support for working with businesses (31%), though one additional comment disagreed

with it being included here as they feel a current provider would do this better than the council.

- **Difficulty connecting with businesses – several responses (31%) noted the difficulty groups have connecting with businesses and would appreciate help with this. This is tempered by the need to be realistic about what businesses can offer or have the capacity to support and that often what is on offer does not match what groups need (19%).**
- **Types of support needed – some responses (25%) noted the kinds of support they feel businesses could help with, including funding, social media, websites, financial expertise and marketing.**
- **Concerns about motivations and inequality – It was recognised by some responses (25%) that businesses have different motivations for wanting to work with the VCSE sector. Concerns were raised about businesses wanting to make money from this, and also that support isn't currently spread equally across the city.**

#### **Q7 Quality and safety is everyone's business**

**We will work with providers to develop an approach which values quality and promotes confidence for users and referrers.**

**There was strong support for this approach, with the majority of respondents either strongly agreeing (49%) or agreeing (37%). Some respondents were unsure (12%) but there were no disagree or strongly disagree responses.**

**The comments received fall into the following categories:**

- **Accessibility – a key issue for many respondents (42%) was the accessibility of support and in particular the accessibility of language. Many felt the description in the question was jargon and that small community groups who need support with this would struggle to relate it to what they do.**
- **Support for groups – an equal number of responses (42%) noted the need for groups to be supported with this.**
- **General comments – a range of other issues were picked up in individual responses, including which standards would be used, how this would be monitored and an expectation that this should be happening anyway.**

#### **Demographic information**

##### **Gender**

**Male – 21% (15)**

**Female – 76% (53)**

**Other – 0%**

**Prefer not to say – 3% (2)**

##### **Age**

**Under 18 – 0%**

**18-24 – 1% (1)**  
**25-34 – 17% (12)**  
**35-44 – 7% (5)**  
**45-54 – 20% (14)**  
**55-64 – 26% (18)**  
**65-74 – 21% (15)**  
**75-84 – 1% (1)**  
**85 or over – 0%**  
**Prefer not to say – 4% (3)**  
**No answer given – 1% (1)**

**Postcode**

**SO14 – 4% (3)**  
**SO15 – 14% (10)**  
**SO16 – 17% (12)**  
**SO17 – 9% (6)**  
**SO18 – 6% (4)**  
**SO19 – 16% (11)**  
**Outside the city – 14% (10)**  
**No answer given – 20% (14)**