

SCRUTINY BOARD

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW

Report of the Economy and Community Scrutiny Panel

Cabinet Lead: Economy and Community - Cllr Mrs Weeks

Key Decision: NA

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the recommendations following the community development scrutiny review.

2.0 Recommendation

The Economy and Community Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Cabinet that:

- 2.1 Community development work continues to be delivered;
- 2.2 Investigates the option of establishing an integrated community service across the public and voluntary sector; and
- 2.3 An officer led review is undertaken of the Council's community development service; this review to include recommendation (2) above.

3.0 Summary

- 3.1 The Council's Community Development team works with the various communities across the borough to deliver a community development function.
- 3.2 Community development is defined by the Community Development Foundation as a "long-term based process which aims to bring about change founded on equality and inclusion."
- 3.3 The purpose of this scrutiny was to:
- a) Understand the community development function as a whole.
 - b) Understand and evaluate the Council's community development role and that of other public sector organisations.

- 3.4 The scope of this scrutiny focused on the delivery of the community development service and did not include reviewing the use of the council's community built assets.
- 3.5 Having defined the scope of the review, the Panel then outlined the key objectives of the scrutiny:
- Analyse the value of community development in ensuring a cohesive and empowered community.
 - Evaluating the cost to the Council of delivering a community development service.
 - Review the delivery of community development across the public sector.
- 3.6 In order to answer the key objectives, the panel received a presentation from the Community Development team and commissioned an independent series of interviews of individuals and organisations that the Community team has supported. Both of these have helped inform the conclusions of this review.

4.0 Subject of Report

- 4.1 The Community team exists to deliver a community development service across the borough of Havant. The composition of the team can be found at Appendix A. This scrutiny focuses on the role of the Service Manager (Community), the Community Team Leader and the four Community Officers.

What is Community Development?

- 4.2 Community Development is defined by the Community Development Foundation as a “long-term based process which aims to bring about change founded on equality and inclusion.” This definition is implemented through seven key standards:
- understand and practice community development
 - understand and engage with communities
 - take a community approach to group work and collective action
 - promote and support a community development approach to collaborate and cross-sectoral working
 - support community learning from shared experiences
 - provide community development support to organisations
 - manage and develop community development practice

These standards provide a framework for good quality community development, learning and practice and are based on extensive consultation within the community development field nationally. Working to these standards ensures that community development is promoted in a consistent way.

The role of the Community team

- 4.3 The Service Manager's role is to lead the service by setting its strategic direction in line with the Council's Corporate Strategy and the cluster Business Plan; this includes developing and implementing policies, strategies and plans. The Service Manager is the main contact with senior officers of partner organisations in the public and voluntary sector.
- 4.4 The Team Leader's role is to lead, develop and deliver the roles and activities of the Community team, including working in partnership, to achieve the objectives of the Council's Corporate Strategy and the cluster Business Plan. Responsible to the Service Manager (Community) she leads on all aspects of community development, participation and engagement, as well as leading on particular thematic areas on behalf of the Council.
- 4.5 The Community team uses the Community Development standards to shape the delivery of the service locally:
- (1) Understand and practice community development
The Community Team Leader ensures that the staff receive appropriate training in community development; this is an on-going process and the team are currently engaged in a series of locally delivered training sessions.
 - (2) Group work and collective action
In order to get to know local organisations and key individuals within the community, each Community Officer is assigned to a particular area of the borough – this is detailed on the structure chart at Appendix A. This local knowledge, and the trust that is built between the community and the Officer, enables the Officer to work with the community to undertake research and consultations which in turn informs the Council of the needs and aspirations of its communities. Recently, the officers have been supporting communities to deliver Community Led Plans. This is particularly useful for services such as the Planning Policy team when they are looking to negotiate community gain from housing or other developments.
 - (3) Group work and collective action
The Community Officers work with community representatives to support them to run local events and activities and support communities to campaign for change. New residents on the West of Waterlooville development were supported to form the Parchment Place Residents Association to address residents concerns.
 - (4) Promote and support collaborative and cross-sectoral working
Led by the Service Manager and Team Leader, this is a fundamental part of the community team's work as they support partnership working and co-ordinate networks and partnerships. The team work in partnership both internally with other service areas as well as externally. Recently the team has worked with partner organisations to bid for public health funding to develop a series of initiatives targeted at improving the health and wellbeing of Havant borough's communities. With over £90,000 of funding secured, these projects

will be delivered by the partners and overseen by the Community team.

- (5) Support community learning from shared experiences
The team provides opportunities for learning and skills development for individuals and groups in the community. When new community groups are established, the community team support individuals to develop the skills to become effective members of the group. This support into volunteering can enhance an individual's wellbeing and often provides the confidence for them to move into paid employment.
- (6) Provide community development support to organisations
The Community team support a large number of groups and organisations in the borough, often working with up to 80 different groups at any one time. These can vary from residents associations, community associations, charities, social enterprises, churches, groups of local volunteers or any collective whose aim is to benefit local residents. Support is provided in a variety of ways including providing advice on organisational structures, funding and resources. The aim of the team is to enable groups to be sustainable into the future, making them independent of any support.
- (7) Manage and develop community development practice
The Community team coordinates a borough wide community network which involves community officers from other public and voluntary sector organisations that work within the borough. The aim of that group is to share best practice and community priorities, and ensure that the work of the individual officers offers a cohesive service to the community.

Community development functions delivered by other organisations in the borough

- 4.6 Other public sector and voluntary sector organisations working in the borough employ community development officers. Portsmouth City Council, Hampshire County Council, Radian Housing Association and Community First HEH are amongst those organisations that deliver community services.
- 4.7 The Community team has been working with Hampshire County Council and Community First HEH to define the community development role each organisation plays to ensure there is no overlap in service delivery. To facilitate that work, the HCC Community Officer for Havant borough is co-located in the Plaza within the community team.
- 4.8 The Service Manager (Community) is continuing to work with voluntary and public sector organisations to clarify roles and responsibilities in this area.
- 4.9 Given the financial constraints of the public sector, and the impact that has on the voluntary sector, there may be an opportunity, following the work on clarifying roles and responsibilities, to move to a single point of delivery

for community services. Before this can be pursued, the Cabinet Lead for Community has agreed that an officer review of the service should be undertaken to clarify what the areas the service covers and what it aims to achieve.

5.0 Resources

- 5.1 The Community team consists of four dedicated Community Officers, three of which are funded by HBC with the fourth being funded by developers' contributions arising from the development at the West of Waterlooville MDA. The Service Manager (Community) and the Community Team Leader provide the leadership for the community development work, but their time is also allocated to other parts of the community service, such as leisure and health.
- 5.2 A number of other services, such as HR, Finance and Corporate Support charge their time to the community service and are identified as overheads to the service.
- 5.3 The attached spreadsheet (Appendix B) identifies the staffing costs (including on-costs) incurred in 2013/14 for delivering the community service. These costs include those charges made by other services within the council towards the delivery of community development.
- 5.4 There is a Council funded revenue budget of £10,700 which is used to enable community work. Other income to deliver projects is sourced from external funding, and that can vary considerably. In 2013/14, for example, the community team, in partnership with voluntary and community organisations, secured c£59,000 for projects within the borough.
- 5.5 The Council awards a grant to Community First HEH for the deliver of their services to the voluntary sector. Part of that funding contributes to their core costs which includes a Community Development Officer post which works closely with the Council's community team.

6.0 Research

- 6.1 The Panel members invited the Community team to present the work of the team and give examples of specific applications of their work in the community. This was followed by a question and answer session.
- 6.2 A series of interviews were undertaken by an independent interviewer. A DVD of those interviews has been produced and will be shown at the Scrutiny Board meeting.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The role of the Community Officer is instrumental in ensuring cohesive and active communities in the borough.
- 7.2 The work of the community team is valued by voluntary, public and community organisations as well as individuals within the community.

7.3 There are a plethora of community officers working in the community and there is the potential for overlap and duplication of activity to take place. In order to address that it would be prudent to consider the delivery of one service across all sectors.

8.0 Implications

8.1 Resources:

The recommendations in this report offer the opportunity to make better use of existing officer resources and provide a cohesive service to the community.

8.2 Legal:

None arising directly from this report

8.3 Strategy:

The community development service contributes to the Council's objectives of economic excellence and providing excellent public services

8.4 Risks:

None arising directly from this report

8.5 Communications:

The recommendations of this scrutiny will be communicated to local voluntary and public sector organisations involved in community development activities.

8.6 For the Community:

Community development services supports the development of active, engaged and empowered communities which can articulate their needs and aspirations thereby influencing the delivery of wider public services.

8.7 The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been completed and concluded the following:

- The delivery of community development has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of all aspects of the community
- Community development work is targeted at communities with the most need for support, therefore strengthening the voice of the most deprived areas of the borough
- Supporting groups in the community provides opportunities for individuals to gain additional skills and experience, thereby improving their opportunities for employment.

9.0 Consultation

9.1 Local public and voluntary sector organisations, and individuals within the community were approached for their views of the services delivered by the community team.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Community team structure

Appendix B – Financial analysis of the cost of the Community development service

Background Papers:

Nil

Agreed and signed off by:

Legal Services: 04/11/14

Executive Head of Governance & Logistics: 24/10/14

Relevant Executive Head: 29/10/14

Portfolio Holder: 29/10/14

Contact Officer: Claire Hughes
Job Title: Service Manager (Community)
Telephone: 023 9244 6633
E-Mail: Claire.hughes@havant.gov.uk