

## BIG SOCIETY PANEL

MONDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bateson (Chairman), Natasha Airey, George Bathurst, Hashim Bhatti and Philip Love

Officers: Wendy Binmore, Harjit Hunjan, Andrew Green, Andrew Scott, David Scott and Kevin Mist

### APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Jesse Grey and Asghar Majeed.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

### MINUTES

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 12 October 2015 be approved.**

### REVIEW OF COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID PROCEDURES

Andrew Green, Community Partnership Co-ordinator introduced the report and explained that the Community Right to Bid was established three years ago under the 2011 Localism Act. Local authorities were required to maintain a list of 'Assets of Community Value'. If or when a building came up for sale community groups were given an additional six months to prepare a bid. Nominations had been dealt with by the Community Partnerships Team. Members noted further details of the report which included the following:

- Recent changes to the legislation meant that nominations of drinking establishments would affect permitted development rights. In view of those changes the Lead Member suggested that responsibility for Assets of Community Value should be passed to 'Development Management' (Planning).
- However, following consultation with Planning it was now proposed that the process should stay with Community Partnerships but that Planning would be involved in the process. The arrangement would be reviewed in 12 months time.
- Where an owner appealed against a decision a Listing Review had to be carried out by a senior officer not involved in the original decision. It was proposed that the Corporate Management Team should nominate who carried out Listing Reviews.
- Appendix C explained what lessons had been learned from previous bids.
- The Community did not always have a good grasp of the legislation and sometimes, expectations were very high.
- Councillor Bathurst requested the Community Partnerships Team to look at the criteria around decisions made as the scheme was about giving the community the opportunity to make a bid.
- The team were only judging if the nomination did or did not meet the requirements and if it did meet them, the asset should be listed.
- There was a test case going through the scheme where a National Trust property had been nominated but was held inalienably so that it could not be sold. The team were seeking legal advice regarding whether a property must be listed if it met the criteria irrespective of whether it was likely that the community could bid for the property.

- Page 16 of the report listed financial implications. There was a small administration fund that was no longer available from Central Government so the council would have to meet the costs itself.
- It was a Manifesto Commitment to support the national pub loan scheme and discussions were taking place with the local CAMRA group around potential collaboration.
- Owners of buildings could claim compensation if they felt losses had been incurred. Potential compensation claims were initially underwritten by central government up to £20,000 but this provision is no longer in place so the full cost of any future compensation claim would have to be met by the Council.
- Legislation allowed eight weeks for the Council to make a decision on whether or not to list the property.
- Occasionally, people wanted to mount a bid where there was no need, which could add a lot of bureaucracy that there was no need for (e.g. when a community group was interested in purchasing or leasing a property that the Council itself owns).

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That:**

- 1. Responsibility for the Register of Assets and associated procedures should remain with the Community Partnerships team but with closer involvement from Planning Development management; the position is to be reviewed in 12 months time.**
- 2. Responsibility for Listing Reviews (where the owner of a property appeals against a decision), should be undertaken by a senior officer nominated by CMT with support from Shared Legal Services.**
- 3. The Panel should note the Community Right to Bid Policy at Appendix A and the procedure at Appendix B.**

BIG SOCIETY PROJECT UPDATES

Devolution to Parishes

Members were referred to page 1 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- Further workshops planned with parish councils.
- Feedback from workshops would be summarised with outcomes to be presented in a report with an action plan for Cabinet.
- Nick Davies, head of strategic commissioning for adult social care and housing had met with parishes regarding devolving some adult services.
- Sunningdale parish council were actively engaged with a street cleaning contractor to identify local issues and amend cleaning frequencies.
- David Perkins, Head of Neighbourhood & Streetscene Delivery to attend the next Big Society Panel to provide further details of progress on devolution of services to parishes.

Adopt A Street

Members were referred to page 1 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- There were currently 1067 volunteers registered on the Adopt A Street database and the numbers continued to rise.
- The target numbers had been revised upwards for March 2016.

- It had been a bit of a struggle to register volunteers for the Adopt A Highway scheme and the Community Partnerships team had asked the Highways team to highlight some streets that could be adopted such as Dedworth Road.
- Another area the team were struggling to recruit volunteers was secondary schools. The team were writing to secondary schools and informing them that the scheme could be incorporated as part of the Duke of Edinburgh awards.

## **Participatory Budgeting**

### Neighbourhood Budgets:

Members were referred to page 2 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- 15 schools were taking part in the scheme.
- Less votes had been cast for this round than previous rounds
- **Action:** Policy and Performance team to establish why voting numbers were lower this round and report findings to the next Panel meeting.

### Greenredeem PB Scheme:

- The top five groups awarded funds (£1,000 each) were:
  - Alzheimer's Dementia Support
  - Foodshare Maidenhead
  - Norden Farm – Lantern Parade
  - Windsor and Eton Sea Cadets
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Maidenhead (Methodist) Guides 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.

### Member Budgets:

- 19 Councillors had spent some or all of their funds with another three or four in the process of allocating their budgets.
- The Policy team confirmed they would write to members that had not spent or allocated their budgets to remind them of the deadline.

## Transparency

Members were referred to page 3 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- Car Parking scorecard had been added to the website which details the performance of car parks and revenue received from car parks.
- **Action:** Cllr Bathurst to meet with Andrew Scott to discuss transparency in further detail.

## Ways into Volunteering

Members were referred to page 4 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- The 2015 Voluntary Sector Awards event, organised with WAM Get Involved took place on 22 September 2015 in the Desborough Suite and was attended by approximately 70 guests. Guest speaker Roz Savage paid tribute to the amazing work of the Volunteers and organisations in the borough.
- There were 3418 volunteers supporting council services.
- The target for registering volunteers was revised upwards to 4,000 by March 2016.
- A volunteering fair was held at the Nicholson Centre on 14 November 2015. Volunteers from 20 groups promoted their volunteering opportunities.
- The Advantage Card App was on the agenda for the Policy Committee, the App could help increase volunteering.
  
- **Action:** Appendix C to be added to the minutes (see end of minutes).

### Recruitment to Parishes

Members were referred to page 5 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- Three vacancies remained since the elections in May 2015.
  
- ❖ **Action:** David Scott, head of governance, performance and policy to confirm the correct process for filling parish vacancies – update if a parish council has a vacancy that they wish to fill.  
**\*Update:** The correct procedure for them to follow, should have the following added:

A Parish will publish a Notice of Vacancy to advertise the casual vacancy. There would only be an election to fill the vacancy if 10 or more electors from the parish requested it (to RBWM) within 14 days of the PC displaying the notice. If no requests were received, the parish council must go down the co-option route.

The specific bit of legislation outlining this is Rule 5(5) of The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules 2006:

Regarding how to co-opt, it is the decision of the parish council about how they reach the decision to “co-opt a person to fill the vacancy”. There are no rules about who they must choose if they have more than one person who has expressed an interest in becoming a councillor, but the decision-making process needs to be transparent and the decision taken should be that of the majority of the council present and voting.

There are rules determining who can fill the vacancy – they must meet the qualification criteria (registration, residence, land, employment in the parish) and they shouldn't be disqualified from being a parish councillor, the same as if there were an election. The parish should have checked all of this before they did the co-option.

NALC (The National Association of Local Councils) has guidance to parishes about how to co-opt. I was planning to remind them about this when I send them the briefing note later this month about what they should and shouldn't be

doing. As a place holder, you could say to Valerie that all parishes will be getting guidance from RBWM about best practice and the steps to follow when they have a vacancy, and there will be references to NALC for advice about how to make co-option decisions as this is a woolly subject and there is no set rules.

### Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Members were referred to page 5 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- Gigneys restaurant in Windsor had offered coffee mornings on a regular basis if there was a need.
- Radian would potentially use Gigneys coffee mornings as a meeting for some of their lonely and isolated residents as well as advertising it to those working with the elderly.
- There was the potential to get different restaurants and cafes hosting coffee mornings on different days so there could be a meeting place for lonely people every day of the week.
  
- ❖ **Action:** Community Partnerships team to talk to coffee shops to invite them to hold coffee mornings for lonely people.
- ❖ **Action:** Full report on how coffee mornings were progressing for next meeting.

### Bright Idea Challenge Prize

Members were referred to page 6 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- i. There were fewer entries than 2014/15 but there had been some key changes to the competition to emphasise delivery of the winning ideas rather than simply coming up with them.
  - ii. Five or six ideas had been shortlisted
  - iii. There were 63 entries for the current year, of which seven were from young people under the age of 18.
  - iv. Implementation of some 2014 projects were still underway with the Leihomas (or substitute grandmothers) project being adapted to fit in with Children's Services safeguarding parameters.
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- ❖ **Action:** A full report on the remaining ideas still running from 2014/15 to be brought to the Big Society Panel in March 2016.

### Start Your Own Business

Members were referred to page 8 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- Three courses were being run for the year 2015/16
- Two of the courses were planned for Windsor and Maidenhead with support from Housing Solutions (January 2016) and the Royal Borough (March 2016).

- Cllr Burbage along with Grow Our Own and the Enterprise Cube provided residents with an idea of how the course could enhance and encourage new business ideas within the borough.

### Pledgebank

Members were referred to page 8 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- There was one pledge set up through Pledgebank but that did not come to fruition.
  - Marketing and advertising was being developed through the use of social media in 2016.
  - There was a further pledge set up but, that was disqualified for being inappropriate.
  - MySociety pulled out of the scheme and no longer run Pledgebank nationally.
  - It was agreed in the light of the low take up, there would be one more attempt to revitalise the scheme and then a review would take place.
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- ❖ **Action:** Investigate whether the Pledgebank scheme could be introduced to school PHSE or Citizenship lessons.
  - ❖ **Action:** Cllr Natasha Airey and David Scott, Head of Governance, Performance and Policy to come back to Panel in January or March 2016 with a plan of how to introduce Pledgebank to schools in the borough.

### Developing Social Enterprise

Members were referred to page 9 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- The Social Enterprise Working Party met on 27 October 2015 to consider a request from the solar energy group Maid Energy that, in view of changes to government fuel tariffs that would come into effect from January 2016, the Working Party should either release additional funding earlier than previously agreed or, invest in the recently launched community share offer.
- It was agreed that subject to certain assurances, including written confirmation that the launch would be underwritten by another Co-Op, the Working Party would consider investing £10k in the community share offer.
- There would be a piece in the November 2015 Around the Royal Borough, featuring the Maidenhead Cycle Hub to promote the Social Enterprise fund.

### Loneliness

Members were referred to page 9 of Appendix A for a tabled breakdown of the current actions / next steps, SMART objectives and the Key Risks / Issues / Barriers.

Members noted the key points of the update included:

- The Loneliness Steering Group met in September 2015 and a sub group had been established to identify local initiatives in the relevant areas for taking the project forward.

- The Discovery Zone were training people from the Older Persons Forum to use smart phones – 90 people had so far been trained.
- The Community Partnership Team and WAM Get Involved were co-ordinating and promoting activities for Silver Fortnight.
- Carebank had been approached regarding proposals for establishing a local good neighbour scheme.
- Cllr Love suggested getting older people to trace their family roots online in libraries using the Ancestry website. The activity could be promoted through the Men in Sheds group.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That:**

- i. **Members noted and commented on the progress of the projects.**

**Appendix C**

<b><u>Volunteering Fair - 14th Nov 2015, Maidenhead - Feedback from Stall Holders</u></b>		
<b><u>Questions Asked:</u></b>	<b><u>Responses:</u></b>	<b>No.</b>
1. Overall did you find the event useful?	Yes	10
	No	0
	Other - Not really, due to weather	1
	Other - Not really	1
	Other - A few contacts made	1
	Unstated	1
2. Would you take part in another big society event in the future?	Yes	11
	No	0
	Unstated	1
	Other - 'Possibly'	2
3. What If anything, would you change?	Venue (shop not welcoming/cramped/low footfall)	11
	Better signage	1
	Weather	1
	Time of Year (summer)	1
	More Orgs/more footfall	1
	Be able to hand out leaflets	1
4. Did you find it useful in promoting your services/activities	Yes -	13

to potential users/volunteers	No -	0
	Unstated -	0
	Not really	1
5. What, if any, feedback/comments did you receive from visitors to your stand?	None	0
	Unstated	5
	Good/Positive feedback/enquiries	3
	Interesting', 'Awareness raising' 'Useful'	3
	Want to get involved	1
	Not many visitors	1
	Comment on other event	1
6. Any other feedback/comments?	Thank you!	4
	Useful but could have been more visible	1
	Better location than Town Hall	1
	Being in shop was restrictive	1
	Would be good to do once a month!	1
	Well organised considering weather!	1
	Unstated	6
"We had a total of 14 enquiries for info on our services and volunteering opportunities" (Alzheimers Society)		
"Thank you for the event, got 4 leads!" (Salvation Youth Trust)		
<b>Feedback based on the analysis of 14 stall holders.</b>		

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 8.20 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....



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	Be able to hand out leaflets	1
4. Did you find it useful in promoting your services/activities to potential users/volunteers	Yes -	13
	No -	0
	Unstated -	0
	Not really	1
5. What, if any, feedback/comments did you receive from visitors to your stand?	None	0
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6. Any other feedback/comments?	Thank you!	4

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