

## BIG SOCIETY PANEL

THURSDAY, 24 MARCH 2016

**PRESENT:** Councillors Christine Bateson (Chairman), Asghar Majeed (Vice-Chairman), Natasha Airey, Hashim Bhatti, Jesse Grey, Philip Love, Claire Stretton and Edward Wilson.

Also in attendance: Cllr Claire Stretton and Edward Wilson

Officers: Wendy Binmore, Harjit Hunjan, Andrew Green, Russell O'Keefe, Andrew Scott, David Scott and Mark Taylor

### APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor George Bathurst.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

### MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 27 January 2016 be approved.

- ❖ **Action:** The Community and Business Partnerships Manager to speak to Ben Smith, Head of Highways and Transport and request he attends the Big Society Panel in May 2016 to discuss the Delivering Differently project progress.

### LIBRARY SERVICE SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEERING REPORT

Councillor Claire Stretton and Mark Taylor, Head of Libraries, Arts and Heritage Services introduced the report to Members. The key points highlighted were:

- All volunteers were supervised.
- Volunteers allowed libraries to continue to operate whilst preventing reductions common in some other authorities.
- The library service had 280 volunteers currently helping to run the service.
- Nearly 11,000 hours of service had been carried out in the year 2015/16.
- Hours of service equated to £86k which meant the Council did not have to spend that sum to enhance the service.
- Recruiting volunteers to the library service was one of the first projects carried out under the Big Society banner.
- The service tries to match the needs of the volunteers with the needs of the service.
- Those volunteers who don't match the library services requirements were referred onto other Council services within the Borough.
- Volunteers say their experience is beneficial for them, it helped people who were returning to work, boosted their confidence and added to their CV. That experience was felt by both older and younger volunteers.
- Volunteering for the library service could also be incorporated into the Duke of Edinburgh Awards.
- The Council invested time in training volunteers and that was a benefit the volunteers as well as the Council.
- Effort was input in supporting volunteers and retaining them.

- Volunteers were thanked once a year.
  - It was important to note that the part time volunteer coordinator had a background in volunteering herself and also has a PHD in the field of volunteering.
  - The Borough recruit all their volunteers for the library service in house, whereas other Council's used volunteering services similar to WAM Get involved to recruit theirs.
  - The library service was in discussion about how they retain the amount of knowledge and skill the volunteers build up.
  - The service recruited volunteers through their own web presence, monthly newsletter and posters.
  - The library service asked volunteers what they wanted to do and what they wanted to get out of volunteering.
- ❖ **Action:** Mark Taylor, Head of Libraries, Arts and Heritage Services to provide a breakdown of all the ages of the volunteers for the next Big Society Panel meeting in May 2016.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Panel notes the involvement of Volunteers in Libraries and Museum delivery and that they will continue to provide a significant contribution to the Libraries, Arts and Heritage Service.**

### GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD BUSINESS SCHEME

Councillor Edward Wilson gave a summary of the scheme to Members and the main points of the scheme included:

- The scheme was a small pilot scheme.
- Cllr Wilson had no idea how many residents would vote so he was pleasantly surprised with the amount of votes received.
- The comments and feedback received were excellent.
- The winner was out cleaning the front of his shop and also the shop next door at the weekend which showed his level of commitment to the neighbourhood.
- Other businesses in the area were now making positive changes as a result of the scheme.
- Around the Royal Borough was distributed to all Dedworth businesses with the winner featured in it.
- Other businesses wanted to know how they could get involved.
- Residents liked the scheme.
- The Community and Businesses Partnerships Manager had asked other Councillors if they wanted to replicate the scheme in their wards.
- Three other Members had shown interest in doing the scheme in their wards.
- It was not easy to get people involved and Cllrs had to work hard to make it work.
- If the scheme was sustained, there was a lot to be gained in local communities.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Committee:**

1. **Noted the success of the Good Local Business Neighbour competition pilot in Clewer and Dedworth.**
2. **Requested that the Community Partnerships Team works with other Ward Councillors to extend the Good Local Business Neighbour competition to other areas across the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.**

### BRIGHT IDEAS UPDATE 2015/16 - WINNING ENTRIES

Andrew Green, Community Partnerships Coordinator introduced the report for the Bright Ideas Competition Winners 2015/16 and the main points of the report included:

- The 2015/16 winner was a community garden/allotment project.

- The site for the community garden had been found and the site would be maintained with involvement from local schools.
- The second winning idea was the installation of a swift tower and that would be in place in time for the birds breeding season in May 2016.
- The third winning idea was for personalised shopping bags which encouraged the use of re-usable shopping bags and reduced reliance on plastics – the scheme was going well and they were currently looking at personalising the shopping bags.

Cllr Stretton stated the scheme had worked so well due to the amount of work put in by Officers. The criteria was based on ideas that were implementable. Cllr N. Airey stated she had sat on the judges panel since the first year the scheme was implemented and felt it was great to see the scheme evolve and to see how ideas could be implemented. She added it was great to see more focused junior ideas also. Cllr Stretton confirmed that there were also a number of ideas that although did not win, would be implemented too such as Story Circles.

The Community and Business Partnerships Manager confirmed that although the scheme had been fine tuned since its first year, entrants now had a more realistic idea of what was involved and that they would have to help implement the idea should they win. Cllr N Airey suggested including whole schools in the scheme and perhaps try and make it part of a PHSE lesson.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Big Society Panel noted and commented on the report.**

#### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE APPLICATIONS 2015/16

Andrew Green, Community Partnerships Coordinator summarised the report for Members and highlighted the following key points:

- There were six applications to be considered.
- The Working Party met in February 2016 and again on 22 March 2016.
- There had been a new development on 24 March 2016 – funding which was to be awarded to Family Friends was to be deferred and they would have to reapply as they had received two other streams of funding since applying for the Social Enterprise funding; therefore, they did not have the capacity to run the project. They confirmed they would resubmit a new application in 2017.
- People to Places were recommended to receive £18,500 for training.
- Stand Out for Autism – a scheme where parents came together to offer holiday schemes for children with autism – they were recommended to receive £15,000. Any income they received would be put back into the Social Enterprise to provide more training so they could expand.
- What Works Wellbeing – recommended to receive £15,500 – their aim was to facilitate positive outcomes for individuals, including disadvantaged groups such as unemployed or people with disabilities.
- 4motion Dance Theatre – a visit was to be carried out to ensure they were set up correctly and sustainable in order to receive funding of up to £36,920. The money would be kept back for them till they are set up as a Social Enterprise. Councillor Stretton confirmed she would attend the visit to the group as she was interested in understanding how the group would deliver at a community level.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That:**

- 1. No award should be made to Adult Dyslexia in the current round but they could resubmit at a later date.**
- 2. Family Friends Parenting Café was withdrawn and they were able to resubmit an application at a later date.**
- 3. People to Places be awarded £18,200**
- 4. Stand Out for Autism be awarded £15,000**

- 5. **What Works Well** be awarded £15,500
- 6. **A decision in relation to 4Motion Dance Theatre should be held over pending more information and officers to visit them with Cllr Claire Stretton.**

BIG SOCIETY PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

The Panel noted the milestone project report and identified a small number of specific actions as follows:

- **Action:** Ben Smith, Head of Highways and Transport to attend the next Big Society Panel meeting in May 2016 to share progress with Members on the Delivering Different Project.
- **Action:** The Community and Business Partnerships Manager to write to all private schools regarding Adopt a Street and try and get them involved.
- **Action –** Andrew Scott, Civic Team Manager to attend meeting with Cllr Bathurst regarding the website refresh and to provide an update to Members at the next Big Society Panel meeting in May 2016.
- **Action –** A meeting had been planned for the Loneliness Steering Group in April 2016 and Adult Services had been interested in partnering with the Community Partnerships Team. The outcome of the meeting to be shared with Members at the next Big Society Panel meeting in May 2016.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That:**

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

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 8.15 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....