

SCRUTINY COMMISSION FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES	Agenda Item No. 4
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Report of the Service Director for Adult Services & Communities		
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CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME – INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This report is being presented at the request of the Scrutiny Commission

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To note the content of the report and request timely updates from the programme's lead officers

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

3.1 Investing in our communities contributes to the following priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy:-

- Creating opportunities – tackling inequalities
- Creating strong and supportive communities
- Delivering substantial and truly sustainable growth

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 The way that the council have previously delivered services, coupled with financial pressures, means that we can no longer meet the increasing demand placed upon the Council. The new People and Communities Strategy, attached at **Appendix 1** highlights that demand for services is increasing and the traditional way of the council delivering services is no longer achievable. It emphasises the need to explore ways of doing things differently in communities.

4.2 The council has also recognised the significant role that parish councils can have in the lives of Peterborough's diverse communities. Parish councils have long been independently providing services to their communities as the first tier of local government, and they have revenue raising powers to fund projects and the provision of services for the benefit of local residents.

4.3 In recognition of this, the council adopted the Parish Charter on 25 November 2015. This document was co-produced with Peterborough's parish councils and represents a mutual agreement to improve joint working between the council and parish councils so that services are delivered more efficiently and meet the needs of the local community.

- 4.4 Additionally, the Customer Experience (CE) Programme is a council initiative which targets a reduction in costs, an increase in revenue, and the meeting of future needs through managing existing and growing demand more effectively.
- 4.5 The Programme includes a focus on community investment as a means of achieving these outcomes. It aims to enable, inspire and motivate parish councils, community and voluntary services and groups and harness their enthusiasm, and that of individual volunteers, to ensure that the best outcomes are realised for Peterborough, the council and our partners, and the individuals and groups involved.

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 To achieve these objectives, the CE programme has designed an integral 'Investing In Communities' (IIC) programme to develop and test the council's proposed community investment approach.
- 5.2 Initially, this will involve a series of pilot initiatives (see section 8 below for more detail) as well as the undertaking of a mapping exercise to inform the development of a community and voluntary sector (CVS) marketplace. This exercise will identify what services are available as well as what gaps exist. This information is important to understand as the programme aims to support existing, emerging and enquiring community groups or individuals who wish to explore the delivery of services and help to manage the demand for services.
- 5.3 In addition to the roles and services traditionally understood to be within the power of parish councils, the CE programme will identify new preventative services (befriending, falls prevention, volunteer safety schemes etc) that could be delivered by community groups either voluntarily or through commissioning arrangements.
- 5.4 This work supplements the more traditional local service delivery options for parish councils including managing community facilities, grounds maintenance (including gritting roads and sweeping pavements), management of allotments and introducing traffic calming measures.
- 5.5 Beyond these short term pieces of work, the programme aims to develop and implement a long term, collaborative and stronger infrastructure of community investment to harness the motivation and enthusiasm of both community groups and volunteers at the right time, in the right place, at the right cost, by the right people, to ensure that the best outcomes are realised for both the council and our citizens. This will be achieved through the following projects:

Innovation Partnership – This project will create a formal partnership between the Council and voluntary sector agencies. The partnership will co-design and co-commission services to be delivered from across the voluntary and community sector that are evidence based and that meet an agreed and identified need.

Enterprise Pathways – This project will create clear support for voluntary sector organisations, community groups or parishes to test out their viability and capability, develop their governance, business plans, general business procedures, finance/budgeting, and procurement procedures.

Service Enablement Pathways – This project will support groups to develop their skills to deliver, manage or commission services devolved from the public sector. This would include access to themed resources, industry related quality assurance/ safeguarding support, and access to specific procedures relating to an individual profession or industry.

Volunteer Pathways – this project will create a clear co-ordinated pathway of support for volunteers to help them gain the skills and abilities they need as well as signpost them to appropriate supported volunteer opportunities

5.6 The anticipated benefits of this new way of working include:

- New opportunities for community and voluntary groups building capacity, resilience and confidence
- Improved quality of life and living environment
- Appropriately skilled and supported community groups to deliver services
- Delivery of services at a local level to respond to identified need
- Reduction in demand for council and other services
- Increased numbers of volunteers and volunteering opportunities
- Improved support and training for volunteers
- Stronger, safer and more prosperous communities
- Improved reputation of the city

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An implementation plan will take into consideration the experience and knowledge of parish councils and the voluntary/community sector groups. Support programmes will be tailored accordingly as it is acknowledged that not all groups will be willing or able to currently respond to this call for action. The pilot initiatives referred to in section 8 will work with groups in areas of most need or those which have expressed an interest in being actively involved with the programme. This will enable the programme leads to test this new approach.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 A formal consultation period is not relevant for the introduction of this programme but experts from within the voluntary sector will be actively involved in testing this new way of working.

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1 Four pilot initiatives will be immediately developed by a cross sector working group and implemented asap as follows:

8.1.1 **Primary Prevention** – working closely with voluntary sector groups the overall aim of this pilot is to reduce the demand for specialist services by developing a preventative rather than reactive approach to supporting vulnerable people. The pilot will focus on addressing loneliness and isolation amongst older people, carers, people with a mental illness or other users of adult social care services. The key objectives are:

- To establish community led support networks and befriender schemes to address the issues of isolation and loneliness
- To explore and identify ways in which volunteers can be best engaged to support vulnerable people in their community
- To test pathways (service and enterprise) in order to implement replicable, sustainable self-help groups across the city.

Initially it is proposed to target areas where there is an evidenced need or where local groups, including Parish Councils, have expressed an interest to be proactively involved. Rural areas will be prioritised and all Parish Councils will be encouraged to get involved and support this initiative.

8.1.2 **Selective Licensing** – the overall aim of this pilot is to promote and enable digital access and use for the proposed scheme within the community and establishing landlord and tenant support forums.

Peterborough City Council is considering introducing a scheme called “Selective Licensing”. This will apply to private landlords of residential properties in several areas of the city. If Selective Licensing is introduced, it would mean that all private landlords with residential property in designated areas of the city would need to apply for a licence for each property

before they can be let to tenants. In order to become a licence holder a landlord would have to meet a certain standard.

The scheme is yet to receive final approval but it is proposed that it will go live in May 2016.

The provision of IT equipment and support should ensure that people can self-serve and gain the support required to register in the community rather than contacting the Council direct or require enforcement action.

The development of a tenants' forum will represent the tenants and leaseholders of Peterborough to discuss housing issues that affect all tenants. The aim is that this forum will develop targeted activities which will reduce the need for tenants and leaseholders to contact the Council or its partners.

8.1.3 Assistive technology – the overall aim of this pilot is to develop community based support networks for those individuals who have assistive technology installed in their home but don't have family or friends at hand to act as first responders.

The Council has already signed up to a two year pilot to connect 100 homes, installing a total of 600 sensors. The system includes a smart controller in each property, motion/ temperature/ light sensors, and wearable devices. Tablets are also available.

The system is known as Alcove and usually includes connection to a care line monitoring service with three layers of support:

- First line is existing social support network of friends and family
- Second line is neighbours and community
- Third line is health care professionals or third party organisations such as a call centre

A working group has already been established and the purpose of the pilot is now to identify individuals that will be asked to pilot the Alcove system.

The desired outcome is that people feel more supported and have trust in assistive technology. The pilot will ensure that people can have the Alcove system installed in their homes which should enable people to remain in their homes longer with greater independence and dignity. It should also reduce the need for interventions from specialist services at crisis point.

8.1.4 Development of social enterprises – This pilot will focus on developing community based services that support young people as a result of requests for enabling support from voluntary and community groups.

The key outcomes that the pilot aims to achieve include:

- To reduce the demand on services and increase the prevention of young people coming into services at crisis point
- To enable young people at risk of becoming involved in crime or ASB to become more active members of their community, i.e. to become 'good citizens' contributing more to their communities than they take away
- To establish robust, sustainable organisations that can deliver an increase in activities that support at-risk young people, and to develop and test the service, enterprise and or volunteer pathways
- To build strong partnerships with communities, agencies and services to increase their capacity to meet the needs of vulnerable young people and their families

Four groups have expressed an interest in developing micro / social enterprises with a focus on working with young people. Each group will be at a different stage of their development at the time the pilot commences in March.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

9.1 People & Communities Strategy

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1 – People and Communities Strategy

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