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| STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | Agenda Item No. 6 |
| 21 JULY 2010 | Public Report |

Report of the Head of Neighbourhoods

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CITIZEN POWER PROGRAMME

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an initial overview of the new Citizen Power programme in Peterborough, to allow Members the opportunity to provide initial scrutiny of the programme, and to enable Members to determine which aspects of the programme they wish to scrutinise in more depth throughout the course of the year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to comment on and scrutinise the overall Citizen Power programme, and to agree which aspects they feel they would like further information on in order to provide a greater depth of scrutiny and challenge during the course of the year. Members are also asked to consider what aspects of Council business the Citizen Power programme needs to relate to in order to maximise the benefits of the programme for the stronger and supportive communities agenda.

3. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

The Citizen Power programme directly underpins all aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy insofar as it seeks to engender a meaningful and sustainable sense of community and civic activism, pride in our city, and ways of developing and delivering services that better meet the expectations and needs of our citizens.

4. BACKGROUND

The Council has entered into a unique collaboration with the Royal Society for the Arts (RSA) and the Arts Council to develop and deliver the Citizen Power programme. Initially the programme will run for two years.

The collaboration emanates from the earlier Perception Peterborough project, during which it was established that a new way of empowering our citizens was needed in order to engender a spirit of pride and identity in our city.

The Citizen Power programme aims to establish behavioural change amongst residents and service providers that results in communities taking a far greater interest in, as well as an active role in, the decisions and issues that affect them.

The programme is part-funded by the Council and the Arts Council, and is financially underwritten by the RSA who are actively seeking additional external investment to support and expand the programme.

Currently, the programme has seven distinct projects within it:

- **Sustainable Citizenship**
Exploring ways in which local people can develop their own solutions to environmental change and innovation
- **Building Recovery Capital**
Designing new substance misuse services driven and directed by service users
- **Peterborough Curriculum**
Peterborough designing their own school curriculum, connecting what young people learn in school with the place where they live
- **Civic Commons**
A new forum bringing together citizens, leading local figures and high profile speakers to discuss topical issues and inspire local civic action
- **Arts and Social Change**
Exploring how creativity and arts can be used to build attachment, participation and innovation
- **Making Social Media Social**
Making Citizen Power transparent and building new online networks
- **Civic Health Audit**
A fresh approach to evaluating civic health and local performance

More detail about each of these projects will be presented to Members during the meeting, but is also contained in the Scoping Study previously circulated.

5. KEY ISSUES

The Citizen Power programme provides an excellent response to the Coalition Government's 'Big Society' strategy, which aims to ensure local participation, control and choice and seeks to enhance the community leadership role of elected Members.

The programme is nationally unique and is attracting significant levels of interest from many other local authorities as well as a number of high profile national organisations.

It will help us to deliver new ways of working, and will ensure that many of the service redesign principles that will be an inevitable part of our ongoing efficiency work are properly understood by, and embedded within, our communities.

6. IMPLICATIONS

The Citizen Power programme will have far-reaching local as well as national implications. The programme is proactive and will deliver tangible outcomes that encourage and enable civic activism and involvement. It will help shape national policy, and will continue to put Peterborough 'on the map'.

7. CONSULTATION

Consultation with key partners and stakeholders has been an inherent part of the development of the Citizen Power programme, and we are working towards a local launch event to be held on July 19th. Further and more intense local consultation is now needed as part of a structured communications plan to ensure that the programme delivers what is right and appropriate for our city.

8. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It is anticipated that the consideration of this report coupled with the presentation to be delivered during the meeting will result in Members fully understanding the scope and potential offered by the Citizen Power programme.

9. NEXT STEPS

It is recommended that further and more detailed updates relating to specific components of the overall Citizen Power programme be brought to the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee during the course of the year to review progress and identify issues and opportunities.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not applicable

11. APPENDICES

None

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