

**Title of meeting:** Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport

**Subject:** Update on Get Involved! Volunteer Project

**Date of meeting:** 14 December 2012

**Report by:** Head of City Development and Cultural Services

**Wards affected:** ALL

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**1. Requested by**

- 1.1 Stephen Baily – Head of City Development and Cultural Services
- 1.2 Author of the report is Rob Davies (project partner from MERL)

**2. Purpose**

- 2.1 To inform Members of the Get Involved!, a project funded by a £50,000 grant from ACE (Arts Council England) which will improve existing practice and increase the number of opportunities for volunteers to support the Portsmouth Museum Archives and Visitor Service ( PMAVS)

**3. Information Requested**

- 3.1 The ACE funded project entitled “Get Involved” is a skill sharing project between the Museum of English Rural Life (MERL), part of the University Museums and Special Collections Services (UMASCS) at the University of Reading and Portsmouth Museums Archives and Visitor Services (PMAVS).
- 3.2 MERL intends to draw on the expertise of PMAVS staff regarding community outreach, their most recent example being the Dickens Community Archive project, *A Tale of One City*. MERL will share its experiences and good practice with PMAVS on volunteering and achieving the Investing in Volunteering Standard, which it gained in April 2012.
- 3.3 The project is led by Rob Davies from MERL and John Stedman from PMAVS, both their roles have been backfilled within their organisations enabling them to work on the project. The project has substantial funding to facilitate initial changes to volunteer programmes and to set up structures that won’t need further financial support. The funding also allows for professional training, equipment and supplies.
- 3.4 PMAVS are in the process of signing up to the Investing in Volunteers Standard, the standard will provide a structure to their work within the project, this will include

everything from the volunteer documentation, communication, forward planning, further supporting volunteers and staff who work with volunteers. The Project Manager has extensive experience of putting organisations through the standard, not only has he put MERL through it but also supported and advised other museums who underwent the process.

- 3.5 A draft Volunteer Policy, Ex-Offenders Policy, Health and Safety Policy, and Data Protection Policy have been drafted and are in the process of being finalised. These in turn will be circulated throughout PMAVS and Human Resources.

The new policies and practice will compliment the current PCC and Service volunteer policies; their purpose is to ensure the volunteer programme at PMAVS runs efficiently and keeps within the main umbrella volunteer policy.

- 3.6 A new opportunity which PMAVS wishes to explore as part of the project is the development of volunteers in public facing and outreach roles, as currently there are very few roles of this nature in the service.

A structure will be developed within the volunteer programme that will enable the recruitment, training, supervision and long term management of public facing volunteers. These roles will include a tour guide team, events volunteers and outreach volunteers.

- 3.7 New avenues of the volunteer demographic are currently being investigated and contact has been made with the organisation Purple Door who will be the main contact with the University. A formal process to recruit student volunteers is being developed.

- 3.8 An evaluation of the current volunteer programme is currently underway; this investigates the current volunteer demographic. This data will be used to evaluate the success of the recruitment of a new volunteer demographic. There is already an informal report on the current volunteer demographic, which is being used as the basis for new target groups.

The project aims to recruit 60 new volunteers and undertake up to 6 new volunteer projects.

- 3.9 Training will be provided for staff who work with and manage volunteers, as well as staff who will potentially work with volunteers. These sessions will feed into the project, identifying areas that will need further support and work. A provisional date has been set and will be finalised with staff. There will be training sessions and toolkits for training staff, volunteers and trainers, to ensure future sustainability once the project is completed.

- 3.10 The project intends to represent the surrounding community within its volunteer body more clearly, using set projects to reach out and encourage groups who would not normally volunteer within the museum, to do so.

**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

A meeting between MERL and PMAVS took place on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2012, PMAVS staff who worked on the *A Tale of One City* shared experiences and methods of working with community groups which worked for them.

- 3.11 One area of the project that has still to be resolved, and for which we have funding, is to include another partner service from the council in the project; a service that works with residents who might benefit from the sort of volunteering opportunities that PMAVs can provide. The project could then develop volunteering / learning packages with both partner services with input from MERL.

The Get Involved! Projects runs for six months, ending in April 2013.

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Signed by: **Stephen Baily**  
**Head of City Development & Cultural Services**

**Appendices:           None**

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>
None	