

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE & LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday, 24 November 2015 at 4.00 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Jennie Brent (in the Chair)

Councillors David Tompkins
Scott Harris
Lee Hunt
Julie Swan
Matthew Winnington

Also present Cllrs Simon Bosher, Steve Hastings & Ryan Brent

1. Apologies for absence (AI 1)

All panel members were present. Further apologies had been forwarded from invited guests Janet Maxwell (who was on her way back from London), Professor Galbraith University of Portsmouth and Peter Mellor PHT.

2. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting - 10 September 2015 (AI 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Review 'Widening Student Opportunities in the City' (AI 4)

Councillor Jennie Brent as Chair welcomed everyone to the event which aimed to help identify volunteering opportunities which were already successfully working in the community and how these could be expanded.

(i) Bernie Topham, Chief Operating Officer - University of Portsmouth

Bernie Topham was pleased to take this opportunity to address the panel and participants and was representing Professor Graham Galbraith who was on duties overseas. This directorate recognised the importance of students having volunteering opportunities in the city and she was also accompanied by representatives from the Students Union (Brendan and Waqar who would speak later) and Julie Hughes from Purple Door. The university is keen to be a key player in the city and is consulting widely on their new strategy

Background statistics for the University of Portsmouth (UoP):

- 22,000 + students, including 3000 international
- Approx 18,000 full-time undergraduates
- The 25th largest university by numbers enrolled
- Income – over £200m per annum
- Economic impact on the city of Portsmouth – in excess of £200m per annum - student expenditure estimated at over £113m

It was reported that the majority of students came from a one half hour drive time (although there were a growing number of international and overseas students) a high proportion from local colleges with the largest coming from South Downs College.

Why is volunteering important?

This was not only good for the community but it helps develop students' employability skills and confidence. This university strategy will contain a commitment that all students have career enhancing opportunities and the UoP Directorate want this to have a 100% take up - there is a variety of choice for regular or one off commitments. It is important in how students present themselves to future employers not just a boost on their CV but also links in with the social responsibility agenda and shows a broadening approach. This is valued by employers:

80 % of HR Executives said they would be more likely to hire a graduate with skilled volunteer experience – Deloitte 2015

The Purple Door deal with volunteering experiences and have recorded 700 students volunteering in addition to those taking part through their own courses such as sports and recreation and the Students Union run their own volunteering programmes. Sport Coaches go out into the community and there is also a dance programme linked to the community. The faculties work to provide opportunities at building into the curriculum real life experiences. These include:-

- Criminology - Students acting as special constables; UoP has good links with the Police
- Journalism with links to Pure FM and other media opportunities
- The Shakespearean Festival involvement and the Shakespeare Sonnet Competition
- Science Without Borders
- Architectural studies have links with local churches
- CCI students work with retired service personnel
- Business School links with small businesses to give support and develop skills
- Dental School - Kings College project in the community
- Pharmacy students work with the Guildhall Walk-in Centre and the Healthy Living Pharmacy.

How do Students Benefit?

- Students develop new skills such as communication, teamwork, confidence and self-esteem.
- This is also a positive way of getting references and can lead to direct employment opportunities.
- The university looks for a structured experience but also looks to give back to the community.

Existing Links with PCC - these include:

- Placement opportunities lead to personal development through work with PCC's Human Resources Department for a structured development and the chance to interact with other council departments
- Learning about Local Government gives a broad experience and can lead to permanent employment with talent being retained in the city.
- Examples of collaborative work includes the Seafront Strategy and pier restoration, and the Carers' Strategy.

Questions

Regarding further engagement Bernie Topham reported that there would be more liaison with PCC and developing links with Victorious Festival as well as the Volunteering Fair. There are a wide variety of 185 different volunteering roles and Julia Hughes from Purple Door was asked about the most popular types of request, which would include volunteering in the Historic Dockyard. Julia Hughes would make contact with Honorary Alderman Attrill as PCC's Learning Disability Champion.

(ii) Clare Martin, Director of Community Projects, Pompey in the Community

Pompey in the Community is a charity affiliated to Portsmouth Football Club. It has expanded from its initial coaching department and works with 2 to 96 year olds and with local schools. Over the last year it was estimated that the coaching in term-time reached up to 7500 participants per week with 35,000 in the wider area. They also provide learning, education and health promotion through the Pompey Study Centre. Projects included:-

- Your Street Project funded by Hampshire Police & Crime Commissioner, to reduce anti-social behaviour and engage in positive activities - such as sports at Bransbury Park
- The Rugby Volunteering Project
- Inclusion - Volunteering Pathways with 1354 individuals last year
- Southwest Trains volunteers

Clare gave case studies of success stories of individuals who had come from difficult backgrounds who had succeeded, e.g. Tyler who had started through a refereeing course and who now worked in the junior league as a referee and Louis who had become a Beyond Sport Ambassador.

Health programmes - these included advice on men's health (a hard to engage group) on match days, if physical activity and working with the CCG regarding early dementia.

Other innovative projects included: adult social needs football, cerebral palsy football, amputee football sessions (1 of 5 nationally) and the walking football project, which is run by two students. The Pompey Powerchair team had been promoted to the National League.

The National Citizens Service (NCS) scheme in Portsmouth was explained, for which Pompey in the Community are the sole providers in Portsmouth. This is a four-week course which is free to those receiving free school meals otherwise at a cost of £35. The first week was set in Dorset for outdoor activities and then a week at Fort Purbrook where participants had to self-cater and then later go into the community, undertaking fundraising projects including raising money for the Homeless Shelter, renovation and decorating schemes (such as brightening up play centres and gardens), sponsored walks, work with Friends of the Museums, a collage at Stamshaw Community Centre, raising funds for the homeless and providing them with suits so they could attend interviews.

After the four weeks NCS participants could be a graduate co-ordinator who could offer further volunteering opportunities. The PFC players were also involved in encouraging graduate opportunities. There is also the International Citizens Service giving opportunity to participate through an interview and fund-raising, with previous participants going to a Capetown township to help in Children's Homes and Aids educational projects.

The Pompey Centre now had cooking classrooms to teach young people to cook so they could go on the self-catering courses. There is also involvement in a Recovery Kitchen which is helped through donations from Tesco.

A problem identified for the NCS scheme is the initial engagement, with not all schools knowing of the scheme and Portsmouth in the Community would like to get more youngsters involved.

Questions - In response to members questions the following issues arose:

- Regarding capacity issues it was reported that a co-ordinator now records volunteering hours properly so this would help with expanding the volunteering opportunities.
- The Pompey Centre is advertised on social media and linked to the Portsmouth Together website.
- There were also examples of participants joining apprenticeship schemes with the Pompey Centre who have now been taken on as paid staff, as well as volunteers helping to run schemes.
- It was stressed that to get people involved initially in projects this may not be seen by the participants as 'volunteering' but as asking for help, then this can

later progresses into more formal volunteering, as supported by the Cabinet Office's Social Action Agenda.

- The NCS scheme is for years 11 and 12 for 16 to 17 years old, although there is a limit up to 19 for disabled and exception categories.
- Portsmouth in the Community also has a scheme for learning disabled groups to be accompanied to the ground (but not yet for individuals).

(iii) Brian Bracher, Chief Service Officer - Portsmouth Together (PT)

Brian passed on the apologies of Janet Maxwell as the Director of Public Health who is the Chair of the Portsmouth Together Board, who had hoped to attend this event. Other members of the steering group were also present with a key the partner being the university: Bernie Topham was on the Board and Julia Hughes of Purple Door is on the Steering Group on which the Students Union is also represented.

The Portsmouth Working Together website links to and from the University of Portsmouth and Students Union. A students' volunteering week takes place in February each year, details of which were circulated to 120 organisations last year. There had not been a proper website in place for volunteering opportunities due to lack of funding and Portsmouth Together had filled this gap and there had been over 1300 enquiries since the website had launched on 1st October 2014. It was known that potential students looked at the website from abroad when they were considering Portsmouth University as a possible destination, so they were looking into volunteering experiences. Brian was also meeting with the Students' Union lead on Community Engagement to discuss further publicity of volunteering carried out by UoP students in Portsmouth. Facebook and Twitter are also used for the advertising of volunteering opportunities.

The Cabinet Office now use the term 'Social Action' to better explain the full range in which people and businesses can give their time. The Portsmouth Together Steering group is developing a 'Portsmouth Social Action Framework for 2015/20', which encompassed a huge range for opportunities. The PT team is trying to cover the key areas to co-ordinate work in the city to encourage volunteering.

Examples of collaborative work offering opportunities and mutual benefit included:

- * The **Code Club** in primary schools' afterschool clubs. Portsmouth Together are in touch with Purple Door and the libraries so that 200 children in the city are now involved.
- * The university had also helped to provide count champions for the **Numeracy Challenge**.

Brian Bracher also worked closely with Clare Martin at the Pompey Centre regarding volunteering opportunities. He would be meeting Highbury College

teachers in December regarding the benefits of volunteering and had also been to local college volunteering fairs.

PCC Work Placements: Brian circulated six pages of examples, which had been compiled speaking with co-ordinators from different departments where student placements were taking place, these included:

- Bookfest - helping the Library Service in distribution of publicity and evaluation of the event, other research with students working on the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection
- Recycling project on the 'BIG Move in' reusing equipment between students
- Volunteering placement in Community Safety - a masters student went on to get a job as a police analyst
- The Apprenticeships Officer has placed 8 UoP students in 2015 in a range of services for work placements
- Community Centre 4 student volunteers following the UoP Volunteers Fair at Hillside & Wymering Centre
- Trading Standards - over 8 years have worked with 3rd year UoP law students - completed 100 hours work experience in place of a dissertation, assisting in consumer protection activities and interventions, participating in national campaigns such as Rogue Traders Week, assisting officers in underage sales work
- Portsmouth Museums have 16 higher and further education student volunteers, 3 of whom are long term placements working on collections. UoP History students have helped with research the WW1 exhibition 'Lest we Forget' (in 2014). For the D-Day Museum project there will be work with students from 4 UK university. 2 UoP students worked on the History of Children's TV exhibition

There is a need to ensure a quality experience is offered benefit for both parties.

Areas to expand - Public Health were looking for more placements and a lot of research work was taking place within Sports Psychology and Geography. There were also opportunities to be expanded with Adult Social Care and there were early discussions taking place on how students could help here such as expanding social care practical experience in the dementia and learning disability areas. Brian stressed there was a need to manage expectation regarding timing as the students were not available over the summer or at exam times.

On behalf of Janet Maxwell it was reported PCC is keen to engage further with Portsmouth University and the colleges as there was recognition that lots of faculty leads do have contacts at the city council but there is no single point of contact except for formal work placements.

There had been some written feedback from local company PA Noticeboard that smaller employers were not being invited to the recruitment and volunteering fair organised by Purple Door; Brian was looking into this.

Questions were then taken from panel members, which covered:

- * the need for DBS¹ checks (which cost £10 for a volunteer) - this is not always needed it is dependent on the type of work that they were undertaking; but there is clear guidance regarding safeguarding issues.

- * Is there future funding to make these efforts sustainable? Brian reported that the funding for Portsmouth Together ran until June from the Cabinet Office Cities of Service; this also funded the website which was valuable in helping those in the city find out about volunteering in the city.

Members were concerned about what would happen if the funding for PT was not found and there was a need to look further at the Third Sector. It was also reported that Love Your Street was harnessing support of neighbours in the community. He also mentioned the 'Feeding of the 5000' event in the Guildhall Square in December which had received lots of enquiries. So there were some very passionate volunteers out there but there is a need to co-ordinate and harness this.

(iv) Tom Lloyd - Portsmouth College

Tom Lloyd, Director of New Business Development, Enterprise & Employability, Work Placements, Volunteering and Sports Academy, had come from a sports background and had been asked to look at apprenticeships at the college where 50-60% of the students went on to higher education. He is therefore looking at the provision of exit routes for the students.

"Mission Statement: To embed a provision into students study programmes that actively enhances their work readiness skill set and presents them with a pathway to Employment, that also allows them to achieve to the level their ambition desires"

The aim was to develop the study programmes to prepare for life after college either at university or work placements etc. The college is currently undertaking the E4 programme with the university and is also working closing with Southdowns College. The programme included an enterprise academy (which also had involvement from Councillor Dowling) seeking to raise aspirations, encouraging students to set up and run their own business with "Apprentice" style tasks. One of these students had won a regional Chamber of Commerce award through the 'Ignite' phase of the E4 programme in starting up their own businesses. The intention was to find professional mentors.

Employability - 'PEP'² talks were given and the university gave insights regarding funding, and a day in the life of a student. There was also help on work preparation (CV writing, interviewing techniques, neuro-linguistics).

¹ DBS - former CRB disclosure of criminal records check

Experience - There were two strands: generic and teaching placements. For teaching experience there is work with the university in schools, teaching assistants programmes. There were 10 pilot schools in the city, and this encouraged a pathway into primary education. It was noted that there had been a lot of male participants in this. The generic placements were relevant to their field such as media students going to Express FM etc. The college ensure that this is available to all students through the timetable.

Exercise - As a sports academy there are team sports (mens and womens football, mens and womens basketball, badminton and rugby), personal fitness programmes and multi-sports options to encourage coaching skills.

How can PCC help? This could be through the delivering of the PEP talks and provision of mentors and tapping into the bursaries with work already taking place with Matt Birch, the Sports Officer on this.

Tom reiterated the value of the placements with some volunteers going on to paid positions and the college had a wide range of **apprenticeships** (including animal care, barbering, hairdressing, business administration, childcare, exercise & fitness, marketing, sports development).

Questions: the following issues were raised:

- On supported internships as advocated by NHS England to employ those with learning disabilities, the college was giving consideration to this, with a dedicated member of staff looking into this and at provision of work experience for the Horizons programme. There was also linkage with the NHS on a dementia programme.
- Political Engagement - involvement in politics is covered in the "Youth Speaks" programme (with debating competitions)
- Getting volunteers into the hospitals was more of a challenge than for the sports programmes, but there is a governor on the board at the hospital which helped with the placement of health and social care students. It was reported that the funding to have the placements at the hospitals was included as part of their study programme based funding.

(v) The Students' Union - Brendan McCarthy & Waqar Younas

Brendan McCarthy, Student Experience Manager, explained that all students were a member of the Students' Union which has elected representatives and they host extra-curricular activities such as sports clubs for competing, societies, media groups etc. He introduced Waqar Younas, their Young Volunteer of the Year who gave a presentation to the panel.

² PEP at Portsmouth College = create your **P**ackage, enhance your **E**mployability, follow your **P**athway

Waqar Younas is the President of VIP (Volunteering in Portsmouth) which is the Student Union's largest voluntary group which tries to offer one-off events around timetables to be flexible and encourage involvement. The VIP mailing list has 1,000 students on it (last year there were 800 participants). Recruitment takes place at the Fresher's Fair and over 800 hours of volunteering had been accrued over the year so this year they were aiming to deliver 1000 hours.

The focus for volunteering is educational, community based and charitable. There is work with schools, national and local charities and churches across Portsmouth (including Solent Junior School, The Rowans Hospice, Buckland United Reformed Church and Food Cycle). Whilst events are mainly in Southsea, where most of the students were based, there is the intention go further north in the city.

Events organised by VIP - these included a seasonal parties for children with 300 children attending the Christmas party, scavenger hunts which were used to teach participants about the environment and one-offs such as school discos and school summer fairs (if students were still available as some stayed on in the city to volunteer for these).

Environmental projects included beach cleans which were very popular and Waqar wanted more contacts for such projects. 10 students had helped PCC out at with tree planting in the north of the city. Other projects include Southsea Greenhouse, with redecorating and planting projects and the setting up of a garden polytunnel.

Works with Older Persons work with Personal Choice at the Oasis Centre with students helping out at the lunch club there. There is also involvement in cake decorating competitions, tea dances and cultural lunches. The biggest event is the Christmas party with 20 volunteers and 75 participants at the Oasis Centre and 3 societies help perform with singing and dancing, to use all the talent available.

Community events included Good Deed Day with a marquee being set up in Guildhall Square with face painting etc. Soup kitchens are regular events giving once a week interaction with the homeless. Students also take part in the Great South Run, sponsoring Dementia UK and help Food Cycle with the redistribution of food from supermarkets to the homeless. Students were also participating at the Feed the 5000 event.

This year's Christmas party at the Mountbatten Centre would be for 400 children with 15 students volunteering. On 9th December a Christmas party for 100 older persons would take place, with 4 societies performing. There were also events to help the RSPCA - with redecoration of kennels at The Ark in Stubbington, and work with the animals there

These volunteering opportunities are facilitated with the help of others, such as Purple Door especially with placements for sports and recreation, after school clubs, coaching (sports, dancing and cheerleading) and during the RAG (raising and giving) week £220,000 had been raised.

There was also **outreach work** including first aid provision at the Guides and science outreach with sixth formers being invited to under experiments at the university laboratories.

Questions - the following additional information was given in response to members' questions:

- The Fresher's Fair is a good opportunity to publicise the VIP opportunities and VIP have a website.
- There is mentoring involvement in the city of numeracy project.
- University Societies are a way of harnessing talents, giving experience such as writing for a paper, presenting on radio, captaining in sports clubs etc and 6000 students are members of societies.
- Regarding funding of these opportunities this is mainly by the university with some external funding from local businesses and the VIP does receive sponsorship.

Feedback from Participants (via round table discussions)

1 - Cllr Swan reported on the following ideas raised:

- The need for a single point of contact for volunteers and a central database and hub - with the need to match individuals to suitable opportunities
- Promotion of opportunities through websites and social media (including Twitter) to reach students, and regular contact (e.g. emails) about new opportunities (e.g. at local community groups, the Code Clubs to help build children's digital skills).
- A possible barrier for organisations is the need for insurance for under 16s and it was noted that DBS checks are £10 for a basic volunteers checks but £60 for enhanced ones.
- There is the need to build on the work done by Portsmouth Together
- It is important that young people don't get disillusioned if they can't get into schemes at a young age. Could the NCS/Social Responsibility opportunity (for 15-17 year olds) be rebranded to encourage involvement and promote fun - and encourage less formal involvement in early stages to show how volunteer hours can be mutually beneficial by asking the question "can you help?"
- The value of volunteering in helping the city grow and develop was recognised.
- There is a need to look at how students can help with Adult Social Care.

- Consideration should be given to building pathways for volunteers to progress into paid work if they want to continue and the offering of training/qualifications to enhance future career prospects.
- The UoP's Students Union Volunteering in Portsmouth (VIP) scheme deals with a lot of 1 off events and is trying to reach more parts of Portsmouth, as they tend to focus on Southsea; ward councillors could invite them to participate in local events e.g. Fratton Family Festival.

2 - Cllr Tompkins gave the feedback from participants:

- Highbury College encourage participation in group volunteering, which helps build the confidence of those who may not otherwise volunteer on their own and this will then get them into the habit of volunteering.
- PCC's Museum Service have 100 volunteers, and whilst this has an impact for training up there is a great benefit to the service and many of these stay on for several years to help the service. This includes 20 students who are mainly from the University of Portsmouth.
- John Attrill as PCC's Learning Disability Champion had his own experience of help from a volunteer, and he also mentioned the 'Adopt a Railway Station' scheme where volunteers spruce up stations.

3 - Cllr Winnington gave the themes which had emerged from discussions:

- There needs to be a better structure across the city for volunteering with improved co-ordination and a single point of contact
- Participants were impressed by how much volunteering is going on in the city already
- There is a concern that if Brian Bracher's role goes (with planned funding coming to an end in June for Portsmouth Together) PCC will need to consider its importance and impact on outside parties
- There could be improved co-ordination between PCC and the University of Portsmouth
- Alison Hesselberth at PCC already has good contacts with businesses for placements
- An idea was raised about encouraging young people's volunteering by an 'air miles' system, with prizes (such as free tickets) and a Young Volunteer of the Year Award.

4 - Cllr Hunt raised the following thoughts from participants:

- They reiterated the importance of co-ordination and communication channels for volunteering with the accompanying duty of care to ensure safety
- Brian Bracher had reported that there is a Youth Social Action Conference in the Spring of 2016 for 16-20 year olds

- It was evident from this event that volunteering is embedded at the University of Portsmouth, but colleges has the potential to widen participation
- The importance of Brian Bracher's role at PCC and Portsmouth Together was recognised
- Umbrella Day - bringing together those involved in existing good practice to exchange ideas to further harness the student resource
- It was suggested that volunteering groups are brought together at a Volunteer Fair, inviting the University, PCC services (such as museums, libraries), the NHS, Victorious, Great South Run, BAR.

At the conclusion Councillor Jennie Brent, as chair, thanked everyone for their positive contributions, including the written evidence that had been circulated to members.

The meeting concluded at 7.00 pm.

Councillor Jennie Brent
Chair