



# **Community Ownership**

## Update Report

**James Sandy**

**Communities engagement**

**October 2013**

This update outlines progress in relation to the response report by Head of Customer, Community and Democratic Services, Head of City Development and Cultural Services and Head of Corporate Assets, Business and Standards agreed by Cabinet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2013, which recommended the following:

- Based on current levels of interest recommendation 3.1 (relating to the establishment of a Community Ownership Unit) can be absorbed into 2013/14 budgets and existing resources by initially bringing together the unit 'virtually'.
- The vision at present is therefore to give a Community Ownership Unit a PCC web presence, named email box and to have a number of named individuals working together on an 'as needed basis' with the lead being taken by the Community Engagement Manager.
- This virtual unit would therefore perform the 'one-stop shop', 'sign-posting' and liaison roles envisaged by the panel and described in its recommendations.
- As interest grows it is unlikely that we will be able to resource a virtual team and it may then become appropriate to move a number of officers to work together full time on community ownership. *We will keep the work of the team under review to allow for timely and appropriate responses.*
- The Panel's recommendations are therefore supported and will be put into action by a number of Council officers from within existing budget and policy frameworks. It should be noted however that they will require significant officer time and effort.

This report details progress to date in relation to those specific actions within the panel's recommendations and an outline of a future work programme focused on community ownership.

This report incorporates comments received from those members identified as the virtual team, as well as the city development manager, head of corporate assets, business & standards and the head of procurement.

**Response to panel recommendations:**

**That by 30 August 2013, the council establishes a Community Ownership Unit for Portsmouth (conclusion 2.5 and 2.6) which comprises officers with experience and expertise of community engagement, planning and development, asset management and legal services.**

The following officers have been identified as the community ownership 'virtual team':

- James Sandy, Communities engagement manager, Customer community & democratic services (CCDS).
- Pete Roberts, Communities engagement officer, Customer community & democratic services (CCDS).
- Vicky Piper, Team leader, City development and cultural services (CDCS)
- Tom Southall, Head of property & landlord services, Asset Management
- Paul Griffith, Senior Solicitor, Legal Services
- Chris Richards, Community projects officer, City development & cultural services (CDCS).
- Mandy Lindley, Third sector partnerships & commissioning manager, Intergrated commissioning unit (ICU)
- John Millard, Corporate communications officer (CCDS)
- Julian Pike, Deputy Head of finance & S151 officer
- Category Business manager, Procurement\*

\*Following advice from the council's procurement manager, information and advice will be provided by the relevant **Category Business Manager** dependent on the specific issue area or service involved (a copy of the category management matrix is attached). Whilst this is likely to be more applicable to the 'community right to challenge' work it is sensible to identify contacts in light of the potential links between assets and services that may arise.

Specific actions within the recommendations have been responded to accordingly:

**Provide a 'one stop' fair source of support and information within the council to community groups on issues of community ownership.**

A dedicated email inbox ([communityownership@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:communityownership@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)) has been created and web presence within council's 'community news' has been allocated. This has a direct link from the homepage and appropriate links to relevant content on the city council's website. The formal guidance and advice pages will be progressed in parallel with increased use of our [Portsmouth:Local blog](#) and the Portsmouth Community Engagement [Linked-In](#) group (by invitation). This approach will allow the council's facilitation role to be balanced with the need for independent dialogue and debate.

**Take the lead on producing a set of clear criteria to facilitate accountable and transparent decision-making on community ownership decisions.**

There is a need for this work to have a designated cabinet portfolio to enable a direct reporting path on future issues and work programme. The panel is asked to consider to which portfolio the work could be best aligned.

Following discussions with the Chair of the panel it is agreed that a councillors' reference group could usefully support this work going forward.

An officers' working group has been established with membership from those in the virtual unit. It will meet on an ad-hoc basis with regular updates in relation to the outlined work programme.

The council's current policy documents are listed below:

**Community right to bid**

[http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/Community Right to Bid Guidance.pdf](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/Community_Right_to_Bid_Guidance.pdf)

<http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/living/27822.html>

**Register of assets of community value**

[http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/Register of Assets of Community Value.pdf](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/Register_of_Assets_of_Community_Value.pdf)

**Community right to challenge**

<http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/business/26072.html>

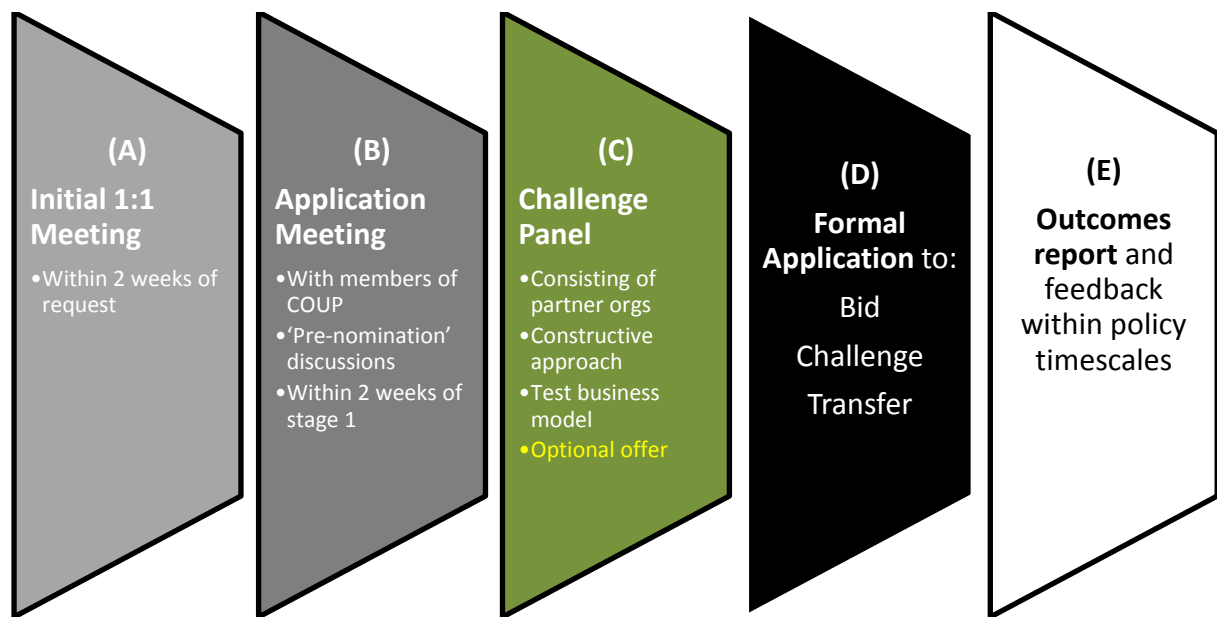
Elements of the **Neighbourhood Planning** process are also relevant

<http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/living/26079.html>

**Provide open and honest information to community groups including information about the level of support those making applications to the council can expect.**

Developing an accessible process/flow system to help make the current documents and criteria more accessible. This will be linked to the planned programme of events (see below).

The process will continue to be developed through the community focused events.



**Figure (1)** Community Ownership Advice Process from September 2013.

## Process Stages

### a) Initial 1:1 meeting

We will meet with you discuss your proposals and ideas, gathering further information on your requirements with a view to feeding back and identifying local expertise.

### b) Application Meeting

Members of the virtual unit will meet to advise on the draft application and business case.

### c) Challenge Panel

This offer is open to those who would like to test their business case and model with a panel of experts drawn from partner organisations in the city. The focus is on support and development. The panel will challenge all aspects

of an application with a view to providing constructive criticism and identifying improvement areas and linkages to other programmes or projects.

**d) Formal Application Stage**

An evaluation and assessment will be formally considered in relation to the relevant policy- 'community right to bid', 'community right to challenge' or 'asset transfer' (links on page 4).

**e) Outcomes report**

Timescales vary depending on the particular policy or 'right' exercised. The outcomes report aims to capture the stages of the process and create a record of experience for future projects and to help refine its operation. The report will also inform the unit's feedback to Councillors and assist monitoring & evaluation.

**Ensure that appropriate monitoring arrangements are in place to make sure that assets transferred into community ownership deliver benefits to the local community such as through leasing arrangements, service level agreements, funding agreements etc.**

Quarterly monitoring reports to heads of service, Cllrs reference group and EDCL Panel on the level of interest and 'cases'.

Contract management arrangements will be developed in accordance with relevant council policies, as they apply.

**Ensure that as the number of community ownership projects and partnerships with the council increases, the council continues to fulfil responsibilities to the local community through the provision of assets and services however they are delivered.**

This recommendation is on-going and through this programme of work we will aim to produce an annual report based on its achievements and identified areas for improvement.

We will also annually review the governance and accountability arrangements outlined above to ensure they are in line with increased service change (delivery, design and withdrawal) and the internal officer structure.

**Nurture links between community groups operating in the city in order to encourage inter-group partnership working, information sharing and problem-solving.**

A programme of COUP (Community Ownership Unit Portsmouth) events will commence **from October 2013** and will comprise:

- **A monthly networking session** with a short presentation from a partner agency and an 'open floor' section to allow groups and individuals to explore ideas and to test council processes.
- Fortnightly community ownership focused questions on **a dedicated LinkedIn group**.
- **Ad-hoc 'challenge panels'** drawn from partner organisations to help constructively test and develop new community ownership ideas.
- **An 'open book' signposting and advice process** that provides an outline of appropriate support which is available from partner agencies in the city.
- **Volunteer and internship opportunities** aimed at building additional capacity for community groups.



# COUP!

## ***"Can community ownership revolutionise your neighbourhood?"***

Tuesday 8th October 2013 5-7pm

Freda Swain Business Lounge, Portsmouth Guildhall

**Guest Speaker: Phil Tulba, Social entrepreneur**

Phil is currently a Director of Free Stream Ltd, a consultant with Independent Third Sector and Social Enterprise, and a Trustee & Director of Adrenaline Alley- Europe's largest BMX & skate park and award winning social enterprise.

He has previously been a social entrepreneur in residence for an NHS primary care trust (PCT), led regional and national social enterprise programmes and worked in marketing and web design.

This is the first of a series of Community Ownership Unit Portsmouth networking sessions.

The welcome bit

The discussion bit

- 20 mins Perspective
- 15 mins Q&A

The ideas bit

- Delegates 'Mood boards'

Help! Help! Help!

- Air your problems and issues

Networking & Close

Catering: Bar will be open from 5pm.

**Supported by:**





Suggested future session themes:

- **Grappling with community assets?** - Opportunities, exemptions, transfers
  
- **Not me Guv'!** Liabilities, risks and challenges
  
- **You want to do what?** - Testing community support, need and the local market
  
- **Benefits of community ownership-** Savings, income generating, regeneration?
  
- **The perfect salad?** - Developing a mixed economy of models-choices and options
  
- **Fog on the Solent?** - Accountability, governance, criteria and process
  
- **Who is going to do it all?** - Building community capacity, confidence and enthusiasm
  
- **Time & Money-** Shares, grants, loans and banks

## **That the new Community Ownership Unit supports Community Action Hampshire and Business in the Community in their efforts to establish a talent bank of volunteers offering professional and business skills to community organisations**

A summary of the initial feedback from relevant organisations in the city and their potential contribution:

### **Community Action in Portsmouth (CAH)**

- Have raised concerns regarding the 'independence' of a facilitation role within the city council as it may not be independent from the governance of the authority, which potentially owns the asset(s) in question.
- Signposting to available resources and providing the right level of support and expertise to help develop proposals may need resourcing.
- There is a need for a clear and transparent process to accessing financial assistance and the processes through which groups need to apply.

### **Business in the Community**

- Supportive of links between business connectors and projects.
- Expertise and business volunteers

### **University of Portsmouth (Student enterprise)**

- Keen to develop links to the proposed programme of activity through potential speakers and contributors.
- Looking at opportunities for students to support community groups through either curriculum linked projects or volunteering.
- Will promote to relevant staff within the University to identify academic links, complementary events and the work of purple door & student enterprise.

### **Parity Trust**

- Act as facilitators who can help connect community groups, individuals and ideas to finance, grants and loans- 'Gateway to capital'.
- Help to refine and test robust proposals and business plans.
- Attend and present at networking events.
- Connect to wider regional and national activities and products.

### **Innovation Warehouse**

- Link to business start-up offer and incubation space.
- Peer-to-peer offer would link well to the mutuals agenda.
- Enterprise networks, physical space and meet ups to link to planned monthly activities and challenge panels.

## **Guildhall Trust**

- Offer of free use of the Freda Swain Business Lounge for monthly events.
- Link to the wider programme of the trust's community focused activity.
- Involve trust members and chief executive as sessions progress.

From September meetings are planned with the following organisations in the city:

- Southern Co-operative
- Highbury College
- Portsmouth College
- Cathedral Innovation Centre

**That the council endorses the development of a policy on mutualisation and the opportunities for a community group, third sector organisation or employees to submit a bid to run council services under the Community Right to Challenge (Localism Act 2011) taking into account the evidence this panel has heard**

The following information has been agreed by the strategic director for support services and is now available on PCC Intralink.

### **Setting up a staff mutual**

#### **What is a staff mutual?**

Public service mutuals are organisations that have left the public sector but continue to deliver public services. Staff normally play a significant role in the ownership and operation of the organisation, although there are a number of different types of staff mutuals that can be set up.

There are many potential benefits in setting up a mutual, e.g. the potential to reduce costs or more independent decision making, but equally there are many issues that staff need to be aware of including the risks, the need for finance and the need for independent legal advice.

The Council is aware that some staff may be interested in exploring whether they wish to set up a staff mutual. Although there are no specific internal mechanisms in place to support staff who wish to do this, this page has been set up to help staff find the right support externally.

The Cabinet Office website is one of the best places for staff to go to get help and these links are shown below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/start-a-public-service-mutual>

<http://mutuals.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/what-support-available#>

<http://mutuals.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/>

In addition there are a number of private sector and co-operative organisations that will provide support to people thinking of setting up a mutual. A quick internet search will provide lots of helpful links.

**That the council monitors expressions of interest received under the Right to Challenge, particularly in relation to more profitable services.**

Internal link <http://intranlink/Services/8289.html>

External link: <http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/business/26072.html>

Community Right to Challenge

The following documents are available:

- Guide for manager
- Expression of interest evaluation form
- Expression of interest template

**That the council encourages its elected members to work together to act as brokers and facilitators for community ownership projects in partnership with the Community Ownership Unit and that a copy of "Empowering communities: making the most of local assets - A councillors' guide"(a Local Government Association publication) is circulated to all members and is included in the induction pack for new members.**

The report was circulated to all members on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2013 and actioned as requested by democratic services.

Future updates and information will be published via MIS (Members Information Service).

Copies of relevant documents and research will be available from the communities engagement team and signposted via the Portsmouth: Local blog.

## Appendix (A) Business Partner Matrix

Category Management Matrix					
CORE CATEGORY	SERVICE AREA	CATEGORY LEAD	CATEGORY MANAGER	PROCUREMENT BUSINESS PARTNER	EXAMPLE ELEMENTS
<b>PEOPLE</b>	Adult Social Care Strategic Commissioning Children's Social Care & Safeguarding Health, Saftey and Licensing Public Health Education Customer , Community & Democratic Services	Rob Watt	Simon Nightingale	Alistair Little	Social Services IFA's Residential Care Domicillary Care SEN Support
<b>PROPERTY</b>	Housing and Property Services Corporate Assets, Business & Standards	Owen Buckwell	Meredydd Hughes	Ed Baah-Owusu	Maintenance/Repair Grounds Maintenance Buildings Leases
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	City Development & Cultural Services  Transport and Environment	Simon Moon	Barni Fry	Fiona Austin	Tourism, Libraries, Museums, Parks, Grounds Maintenance, Arts & Leisure, Planning, Events  Corporate Assets, Business & Standards Vehicles, Parks, Parking, Coastal, Transport, Street Environment, Build Environment

<b>UTILITIES</b>	<b>Energy &amp; Water</b>	Owen Buckwell	Steve Ashby	Ed Baah-Owusu	Gas Electricity Water Oil Sustainability Carbon Management
<b>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</b>	HR, Legal and Performance Finance Revenues and Benefits Human Resources Consultancy & Agency Staff Banking & Insurance Advertising & Media	Jon Bell	Jeanette Smith	Alistair Little	Consultancy Recruitment Finance Corporate Services Agency Staff Banking Advertising & Media
<b>IT &amp; COMMUNICATIONS</b>	Information Services	Mel Burns	Nick May	Alistair Little	Telephones Computers Hardware Software Licences Publications Print (MFD's)
<b>COMMODITIES</b>		Jon Bell	Greg Povey	Martyn Dodd	Catering Stationery Consumables Furniture Printing Post Clothing Cleaning Materials
<b>PORT</b>				Alan Dickson	All Port related
<b>REGENERATION</b>				Richard Lock	