

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 3rd March 2014

Subject: Team Portsmouth - City of Service

Report by: Janet Maxwell, Director of Public Health

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek the support of Cabinet to further develop and implement Portsmouth's service plan following the successful application to be one of the UK Cities of Service.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet are recommended to note Portsmouth's successful application to be a 'City of Service' and agree that this will be a valuable opportunity to demonstrate the impact volunteers can have in meeting some of the city's most pressing challenges.**

3. Background

- 3.1 In September 2013 Portsmouth was one of 26 cities invited to get involved in a Nesta-run pilot inspired by the US Cities of Service movement. Nesta is an independent charity that provides grants, investments, research and networking opportunities to develop new ideas in service delivery. They are working with the Cabinet Office to manage a £14m innovation fund as part of the Social Action Fund launched in April 2013.
- 3.2 The City of Service concept was developed by Mayor Bloomberg as Mayor of New York City. It now involves 170 mayors from cities across America who work together to engage citizens to address city needs through 'high impact volunteerism'. The focus is on ensuring that people are only asked to volunteer through this programme for things that will have a clear and measurable impact to their local area. A series of 'blueprints' are now available of things that have been proven to work in the US and which Nesta are keen to test in England. One aspect of the work that was found to have played a crucial part was having dedicated leadership provided by a 'chief service officer' and supported by senior politicians and other partners.

- 3.3 The Bloomberg Foundation is now working with the Cabinet Office and Nesta to develop a similar model in England. Following a competitive bidding process, four 'partner cities' (Portsmouth, Plymouth, Bristol and Kirklees) have been chosen. Each will receive up to £150k over 2 years to support a chief officer post, and up to £30k of seed funding, as well as peer support, technical support and mentoring from a serving chief officer from one of the US cities.
- 3.4 Portsmouth submitted a bid in November 2013, with approval from Cllr Mason who agreed to be the 'ambassador' for the bid, and David Williams. In order to meet the bid's criteria, two local challenges were identified which could be addressed (in part) through mobilising volunteers. A total of four service initiatives were included, adapting the 'blueprints' from the US Cities of Service programme to reflect existing priorities in the city. These are shown in the table below.

<p>Challenge A - Creating positive learning experiences: how communities can expand their expectations of themselves and those around them through impactful volunteering.</p>	<p>Challenge B - Building resilient communities: how volunteering can keep your neighbours and neighbourhood safe, healthy and independent.</p>
<p>Service Initiative 1 'Coaching and Mentoring':</p> <p>We will identify those pupils in years 10 and 11 who are most at risk of not achieving the results at GCSE that they need in order to achieve their goals and provide them with mentoring support from local volunteers. Our aim is to trial this in one secondary school in the city that serves some of our most challenged communities</p>	<p>Service Initiative 3 'Love Your Street':</p> <p>Team Portsmouth will mobilise volunteers to address a whole range of social issues that impact on local people's wellbeing. E.g. mobilising local neighbourhoods to improve the physical environment around them, or helping people in older terraced housing to address the thermal comfort and energy efficiency of their home, supporting neighbours with loft clearance etc.</p>
<p>Service Initiative 2 'Numeracy Challenge':</p> <p>To raise levels of numeracy in the city, residents will be encouraged to assess their current level of numeracy using an online evaluation tool. At the end of the assessment, the individual will receive information on their level of numeracy and advice and guidance on how to improve it. We will recruit and train volunteer mentors to support people with online assessment and learning.</p>	<p>Service Initiative 4 'Volunteer Neighbour Navigators':</p> <p>Through the mobilisation of local volunteers we would create a band of Neighbourhood Navigators who would help vulnerable residents to safely access and explore their community. We would like initially to run a small project in a neighbourhood / geographic area where we know that a number of vulnerable adult residents would benefit from using assistive technology but are unable to be supported by relatives in response to call outs.</p>

- 3.5 The challenges are at various stages of completeness, but were explicitly developed with the aim of providing additional momentum and support behind programmes which already had local support. The schemes will begin in neighbourhoods in different parts of the city but will aim to be rolled out more widely if successful. We are also keen to explore ways in which the City of Service funding can similarly be used to add momentum to other service initiatives, while recognising that the funding must be used within the conditions on which it is granted.
- 3.6 A multi-agency steering group led by the DPH has been established. Sub-groups have been set up to further develop the plans for each service initiative. This will include identifying additional resources to support delivery by refocusing existing planned spend and leveraging in new resource from partners. Plans are in place to engage a wider range of stakeholders over the coming months. The City of Service Plan (and the national programme) will be launched in June 2014.
- 3.7 A Chief Service Officer (CSO) will be recruited, using the money specifically granted to the council by Nesta for this purpose. The CSO will lead the development and implementation of the City of Service Plan and will leverage in additional resources e.g. corporate sponsorship to enable piloting the initiatives to demonstrate their impact.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 Portsmouth's successful bid will provide an opportunity explore how mobilising volunteers can deliver against some of the city's key challenges. The chance to be part of this national and international programme will give added weight and profile to the city's efforts.

5. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

- 5.1 A preliminary EIA has been completed and indicates that a full EIA will be required on the City of Service Plan as it is developed, but is not required at this stage.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 No legal issues at this stage. Any proposals to devolve services will require legal guidance in relation to delivery models, contracting, and transfer arrangements

7. Head of finance's comments

- 7.1 A grant of £180k has been secured to deliver the project. It is currently anticipated that this amount is sufficient to enable this to be achieved. However, payment of the grant (which is paid in instalments) is subject to various conditions and milestones being achieved. These include preparing and publishing a plan, securing match funding and delivering and evaluating performance against the plan. Any failure to achieve these could result in some of the grant funding being withheld. This financial risk / potential shortfall in funding would then be borne by the council. (If this were to arise, a decision on which portfolio's budget would then be impacted, would have to be made).

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Signed by:

Janet Maxwell, Director of Public Health

Appendices:

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:

Title of document	Location
Team Portsmouth City of Service Application	W:_SHARED\City of Service

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: