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Title of meeting:	Cabinet
Subject:	Member Champions Annual Report
Date of meeting:	22 March 2022
Report by:	Senior Local Democracy Officer
Wards affected:	N/A

1. Requested by

As part of the revised Member Champions Protocol agreed at the Community & Central Services Decision Meeting held on 5 January 2022 there is a requirement for Member Champions to submit an annual update to Cabinet on their work during the preceding municipal year.

2. Purpose

To update Cabinet on the work of Member Champions during the 2021/22 municipal year.

3. Information Requested

The below reports have been submitted by the Member Champions for information.

Heritage - Cllr Lee Hunt

Portsmouth has a wealth of heritage and memories from Saxon and Viking times through to the 'Brutalist' era emerging in mid-20th Century popular in the 1950s and 60s.

The increasing pressure to build more and more homes and our evolving economy sees much-loved buildings like public houses and heritage assets telling the 'Story of Portsmouth' under threat; many such pubs have already converted to homes. There is very little in the National Planning Policy Framework set by Government to prevent this trend. It is likely to accelerate.

So far I have not experienced a clash between the roles of 'Heritage Champion' and Chair of Portsmouth's Local Planning Authority but with more and more applications to re-use buildings this is likely to change.

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As 'Heritage Champion' it's pleasing to see the £multi-million improvements and the conservation work planned for Victoria Park and to see the improvements coming to Cosham's recent heritage at KGV after many years of a derelict site. The way people use and adapt our parks and open spaces is very much part of Portsmouth's way of life - her heritage. Change is not always easy so great care must be shown when it comes.

I have continued to look at our city's 1950s and 60s heritage which are the 'Cinderella' of conservation - too easily dismissed in the rush for redevelopment. Over several years I have kept an eye on the Norrish Central Library promoting its iconic 'Brutalist' design as a unique feature in the townscape after the controversial demise of The Tricorn. I previously sought assurances that it could not be demolished and received assurances it is covered within the Victoria Park Conservation area; however, with so much pressure on converting buildings like Debenhams and Knight & Lee and with libraries delivering more and more services online I am seeking advice about listing the building to protect it further. It is a comfort the City Council is its owner; however, many Councils under different political leadership have put their libraries into Trusts over which there is much less accountability. I will report back further.

It was pleasing to receive and promote the Landing Craft as part of the D-Day story. It is important to better understand the sacrifices that African and Asian people made within the story of D-Day and wars and the LTC ... a subject I pressed in my former Cabinet role and have recently asked for a further update as Heritage Champion.

Social Media is massively important nowadays so I contribute and listen on pages like 'Portsmouth Past And Present' that help to lobby on behalf of Portsmouth's heritage and to sometimes straighten out misunderstandings.

Armed Forces Liaison - Cllr Gerald Vernon - Jackson

I have continued to build on the links with current serving members of the forces in Portsmouth by meeting serving members of the Royal Navy and the Army but also support the cadet groups and voluntary organisations that support veterans.

This year we will be remembering the 40th anniversary of the Falklands Campaign and the 80th anniversary of the Cockleshell Heroes plus having a major parade to celebrate Armed Forces weekend.

Third Sector City of Service - Cllr Stuart Brown

- Received confirmation of appointment on 5th January 2022
- My main goal is the creation of a City Recognition Scheme for Volunteering (exact name still a work in progress).
- The purpose of this Scheme would be to better recognise Portsmouth people who give their time freely through volunteering.

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- Details are still being finalised, but I envisage a simple web-portal, whereby organisations can register that they are an organisation that people volunteer for, and individual people can create a profile and log their voluntary activities against the organisations they volunteer for.
- This system would then allow us to produce certificates of volunteering at certain thresholds (50 hours, 100 hours etc).
- Volunteers without internet access could also log their hours via the HIVE, or through the organisation they volunteer for.
- We would also have an annual Volunteers Recognition event to highlight success stories, and people achieving significant volunteering milestones.
- I have consulted with some fellow Members, organisations who rely on volunteers, and people who give their time as volunteers to gauge interest in this sort of programme.
- Finding general support, I met with the Cabinet Member for Community & Central Services to discuss how we might implement this. Both of us agreed that buy-in and involvement of the HIVE was essential.
- We have now met with Sandie Davis of the HIVE to progress this. HIVE have agreed to host the web-portal and running the 'day-to-day' of the programme (although hopefully it will be largely automated), with the aim of delivering a pilot programme with specifically selected organisations for the second half of 2022, developing into a full-blown programme open to everyone, starting in 2023.
- I will soon be meeting with Drew Westcott, who manages digital projects for the HIVE, to discuss the technical side of how the platform would operate.

- Benefits of this programme will include:
 - (i) Getting baseline data on how many voluntary hours are given across Portsmouth.
 - (ii) Organisations being able to see how many voluntary hours they use
 - (iii) Promoting volunteering more widely, and hopefully encouraging more people to volunteer
 - (iv) Most importantly, recognising the contributions that every volunteer makes to the life of the City.

- Next steps:
 - (i) Meet with HIVE IT team to discuss how the portal would operate
 - (ii) Get a prototype web platform completed
 - (iii) Initial organisations to be identified and approached for the Pilot scheme
 - (iv) Progress meeting in early March to identify key partners and next steps.

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- Opportunities
 - (i) Possibility for businesses to sponsor the programme altogether, or to sponsor the Recognition 'ceremonies' when they happen.
- In addition to this, I intend to speak to the HIVE and corporate comms to check what comms and specific volunteer recognition is planned from PCC for National Volunteer Week (1-7 June) - and if none, to put something co-ordinated together.

Women, Children & Domestic Violence - Cllr Kirsty Mellor

I am pleased to have been granted this member champion role, in which I hope to raise awareness and take an active role in tackling the serious issue of violence against women and girls.

In the short time since my appointment I have:

- Raised the issue of how particular council services deal with residents who are experiencing domestic abuse, for example private sector housing
- Met regularly with Superintendent Clare Jenkins (district commander for policing in Portsmouth) to catch up on how the local police are dealing with VAWG issues
- Supported the creation and development of a new grassroots VAWG network
- Attended Donna Jones' VAWG regional taskforce as PCC representative
- Submitted motion on VAWG to full council
- Worked with council officers around training for elected representatives
- Fed into the Safer Streets project
- Supported women in socially deprived areas to access education
- Promoted women led community groups
- Helped support the Is This Love awareness campaign.

Nature - Cllr Kimberly Barrett

This is a brand new Champion role that was appointed during this last year as it was recognised that nature is very important to the council across multiple directorates and sectors of the council. The champion role was requested by the local Friends of the Earth Group to the leader of the Council in an email and the suggestion was in reference to point 2 of their 50 point Climate Action plan to try to identify a councillor at a cabinet level in regards to the ongoing climate emergency and nature targets.

Over the year in my role as Nature Champion and also as the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Green Recovery, we have pushed forward with a number of reports, actions and targets in regards to nature based projects and these are outlined below:

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- Greening Strategy - The greening strategy was adopted in March 2020 by cabinet and supported many programmes of work across the city such as the Climate Action Strategy, the emerging Local Plan, the air quality strategy and the local transport plan but things have progressed since then so it was decided that it would be updated and presented to the cabinet to make sure it aligned with the different strategies across the city and to make sure that it was in line with the 2030 net zero target we have as a council. The updated Greening Strategy therefore set out four key areas providing the framework for the progress update and work programme over the next 12 months.
- Green and Healthy Streets Co-ordinator - It was recognised that greening the city and increasing tree canopy cover was a big priority for the administration especially with areas of low deprivation across the city, air quality issues and it being a densely populated city. In the early part of 2021, a co-ordinator was brought in and has been applying for grants and funding, coordinating tree planting, offering advice for community projects and being a key contact point for greening across the city. This has been a hugely successful and has meant that we have won funding to plant significant amounts of trees and shrubbery. The co-ordinator secured £79,000 from 'Trees for Cities' which has allowed for significant amounts of whips, trees and shrubbery to be planted across the whole city, has meant that community groups and schools can 'green up' and take ownership of their own spaces and has also meant that we can plant trees in conjunction with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.
- Nature Emergency Motion - A nature emergency motion was submitted at Full Council in February 2022. Myself (Cllr Barrett) and Cllr Ashmore worked in partnership with people from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to make sure it was robust and that the council could hit the targets set. It was recognised that alongside the Climate Emergency, a nature emergency is also emerging and that the Council needs to look at setting a similar 2030 target. This would be to increase biodiversity and greening across the city as well as looking after our existing green and open spaces and also encouraging residents, schools and community groups to 'green the grey' wherever possible. A report is set to come back in the early summer to show what we have done, what we are doing and what we can do as a council.
- Education - I have started to touch base with a number of schools across the city who are interested in learning about their natural environment and who either already have or are in the process of setting up eco councils. I have visited a few schools and have also put them in contact with officers at the council, ward

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councillors and outside bodies to try to support them in increasing or creating nature areas. This is ongoing and more schools are coming forward.

- Working with local groups - I have spent time with local community and campaign groups in both my Nature Champion role and my cabinet role to listen to their concerns and see how we can take steps forward working alongside each other to help where possible. These are groups of people of all different ages from school age children to people in their 80's and have resulted in conversations and discussions such as installing swift boxes on properties to asking the planning department to put in conditions such as hedgehog highways and hedgehog gaps to de-paving areas, rewilding areas and looking at the sewage discharge in Langstone Harbour and how we can make a difference. So lots of work and suggestions that I can then take back to the council and speak to the different departments to see what can be done.

These are some of the things that I have done since becoming the Nature Champion and there are a lot of exciting projects coming up across the city over the coming year that I cannot wait to see come to fruition. I also look forward to continue working with Friends of the Earth, HIWWT, the climate action board and many schools and community groups.

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Signed by (Director)

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