

<b>Item No.</b> 11.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 1 November 2016	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Southwark Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2017-2022	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Councillor Barrie Hargrove, Communities and Safety and Councillor Richard Livingstone, Adult Care and Financial Inclusion	

## **FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR BARRIE HARGROVE, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND SAFETY**

I would firstly like to thank all the high-level contributors to this strategy. This is an important landmark in the relationship between the public and voluntary and community sector, a tri-partite strategy between the Southwark council, Southwark's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Southwark's voluntary and community sector.

Secondly, and no less importantly, I would very much like to make special mention of the 200 or so individuals for their contribution at the four open invitation events. Showing Southwark across the sectors at its best, this document is a faithful representation of the discussions, experiences and ideas shared.

Even if the very serious cuts to public service funding were not forcing all of us to make efficiencies, we would nevertheless have still initiated such a process which captures and enhances all that is best about the voluntary and community sectors. After all, we saw the need and are putting into practice the council plan commitment to enhance the work of the voluntary and community Sector.

We recognise the many additional benefits that the voluntary and community sector can bring to service delivery; the ability to be innovative, be flexible, leverage in extra funding, enable volunteering, operate at the grass-roots and with hard to reach communities and individuals. At the same time, there is a shared recognition that in establishing services for the people of Southwark, there is a compelling need for better alignment with council and CCG priorities.

The many advantages to this new approach are clearly set out in the strategy, and require no repetition here. Suffice it to say, ahead lies an opportunity to transform service delivery, build up community resilience and improve life-chances of the many individuals with whom we come into contact.

We are Southwark. We have a proud history, a solid sense of community and a great ability to transform and renew. As partners, the CCG, the voluntary and community sector, and the council, we will make this work.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the cabinet endorses the new Southwark Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) strategy.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

2. This new strategy is a three-way collaboration involving the VCS, the council and the NHS.
3. It has been co-produced by the three sectors working together through an active community engagement process from April to October 2016. The result is a strategy that sets out a vision and clear priorities for its delivery.
4. The VCS in Southwark is a diverse sector that consists of registered charities as well as many unincorporated community groups. There are 1125 registered charities. The council provides funding to 106 charities as well as many community groups providing services for residents.
5. To ensure that all sections of the VCS could contribute to the development of the strategy, a series of four open invitation listening events was held which attracted over 200 people. The listening events took place in an atmosphere of good will. There was also recognition of the need to find new ways of making the most of diminishing budgetary resources.
6. Participants explored and established through a series of workshops the main challenges and opportunities facing the borough and identified priorities through which the sectors working collaboratively could overcome barriers to achieve these.
7. The collaborative approach to producing the strategy sets in place an expectation that this is how relationship between the three sectors will continue in the years to come.
8. The council has historically worked in partnership with the VCS. The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) involvement in the development of the strategy is evidence of a newer strategic approach from health service commissioners to increase engagement with communities. This supports evolving partnership commissioning arrangements with the council.
9. The new strategy also addresses recommendations contained in the Early Action Commission report that was published in 2015.
10. The focus of that report was on putting prevention and early action at the heart of service delivery. More specifically the Early Action Commission identified four goals that deliver better outcomes. These were “resourceful communities”, “preventative places”, “strong, collaborative partnerships” and “systems geared to early action”. The new strategy refers directly to a number of these goals and the report is a policy catalyst for improving on the delivery of these goals.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

11. The new strategy has been developed as Southwark has refreshed the council plan 2014 to 2018 at its 2016 midpoint. The council has worked jointly with the CCG to set out a fresh Five Year Forward View of health and social care to 2021. The VCS strategy identifies key areas of alignment with council plan and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Five Year Forward View Priorities.

12. The strategy sets out a new deal between the VCS and its public and private sector partners, where impact is measured by the contribution made to establishing and sustaining strong and flourishing communities.
13. The vision for this strategy is to create a sustainable, confident and resilient VCS that works in collaboration with public and private partners to create a safer and fairer Southwark. It will:
  - Enhance the work of the VCS with an emphasis on improving quality and outcomes for residents that reduce and prevent future demand on high cost, high demand services
  - Sustain and build strong, cohesive communities where no one group or community is left behind.
14. These outcomes will be delivered through four priorities:
  - Better partnership working to improve outcomes for residents
  - Improved commissioning and grant-giving to focus on outcomes and be more cooperative and community-led
  - Better use of community assets as a route to revitalise neighbourhoods and create preventative places
  - More resilient communities that are connected and resourceful.
15. Within the strategy are actions which will add value to the council plan and CCG Five Year Forward View priorities. These include:
  - Agreeing a set of core outcomes for the benefit of the whole community against which impact is measured and aligned against council and CCG plans
  - More responsive and joined up ways of working using existing structures to harness the power of and knowledge of local communities to help reduce the impact of reductions in local authority and NHS resource
  - Changes to the council and CCG commissioning approach.
16. The strategy is described as a new deal with duties and obligations on both sides. This can be summarised as follows. There is an expectation from the VCS of improved collaboration and co-production on the part of the council and CCG. The council and CCG expectation is that in return for funding the VCS will be accountable for the delivery of agreed outcomes and will be able to demonstrate impact. The joint development of the core outcomes for the benefit of the whole community will provide more clarity about what is to be delivered.
17. The strategy is not a commissioning approach but contains commissioning policy direction and principles. A report to cabinet in December will set out arrangements for how the council working with the CCG will improve the co-ordination of commissioning and how council wide/CCG oversight of commissioning intentions is to be delivered.
18. The implementation of the strategy will be monitored through a reformed council/CCG/VCS Liaison group which will have a shared annual work plan and will be the accountable body for its delivery.

## **Policy implications**

19. The strategy links to other strategies with respect to the local VCS. These are:
- Council plan 2014 to 2018 (summer 2016 refresh)
  - Southwark CCG and Southwark Council Five Year Forward View of health and social care
  - Southwark Health and Wellbeing Strategy
  - Southwark and Lambeth Early Action Commission Report
  - Implementation of the Southwark Mental Health Social Care Review
  - Establishment of the Partnership Commissioning Team between NHS Southwark CCG and Southwark council, and Coordination of Commissioning within the council
  - Changes to the Southwark Community Safety Partnership and the Southwark Safeguarding Adults Board
  - Refresh of the Housing Strategy
  - Southwark Advice Strategy

## **Community impact statement**

20. The VCS and organisations funded through council grants programmes and in particular through the community capacity and environment and ecology programme play a vital role in supporting the delivery of the council's public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010. Part of their role is to ensure that communities that may face exclusion because of discrimination have access to support and services that enable them to fully participate as citizens.
21. The new strategy is intended to have a positive community impact as it will set out a policy for the VCS that addresses community and residents' needs. It has been co-produced with representatives from organisations that meet the needs of Southwark's diverse communities. Analysis has been carried out of the profile of those attending the listening events to ensure that the development of the strategy is informed by as broad a range of representative participants as possible. Attendees came from a wide range of organisations. These are of varying sizes and with varying primary service user groups, funded and unfunded, faith groups and community activists.
22. Participants worked together to identify and agree on the most important challenges facing communities and the best ways of addressing these through a cross sector collaborative approach. The first priority is to improve outcomes for residents through better partnership working.

## **Resource implications**

23. There are no specific additional resource implications emerging as a result of the new strategy. If the delivery of any of strategy objectives give rise to resource implications these will be identified and approved as appropriate.

## **Legal implications**

24. The legal implications in relation to this report are set out in paragraphs 28 to 32 below.

## **Financial implications**

25. This council's engagement in the delivery of this strategy is made within the council's budgetary framework.

## **Consultation**

26. The strategy has been developed following four listening events attended by over 200 people.
27. There has also been consultation on the development of the policy and policy drafts through the Health and Wellbeing Board, Children's and Adults Board, the Forum for Equalities and Human Rights, the council's departmental commissioning network and the council/VCS Liaison Group.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Director of Law and Democracy**

28. Under the council's constitution (part 3C), the approval of policies and procedures governing the council's relationship with the voluntary sector is reserved to the cabinet for collective decision making. The cabinet is therefore empowered to approve this strategy.
29. The council is a "best value" authority for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1999. It is under a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Secretary of State has issued guidance to assist local authorities to perform this duty and specifically requires that councils should be responsive to the benefits and needs of voluntary and community sector organisations, as well as small businesses. The guidance also requires that consultation undertaken by the council on the performance of its functions should include local voluntary and community sector organisations. The background information section of the report describes the consultation exercise undertaken to inform the development of the strategy.
30. The proposed strategy touches upon a number of the council's functions, and the cabinet should note in particular:
31. One of the strategy's aims is directed at the better use community assets as a route to revitalise neighbourhoods and create preventative places. The development of an approach to enabling the transfer of the council's assets would need to be consistent with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 relating to the "community right to challenge". By this provision the council is under a duty to consider expressions of interest from voluntary and community bodies (among others) to operate services currently provided by (or on behalf of) the council.
  - The aim of harnessing the use of outside spaces which are owned and maintained by the council would also need to be consistent with the council's powers relating to the provision and management of public spaces, and byelaws made by the council relating to their use.

- The aim of improving commissioning and grant-giving processes should take account again of the council's best value duties. Regarding grants in particular, the council has a general power to incur expenditure in the interests of, and where that will bring direct benefits to, its area (which includes making financial contributions to charities and non-profit making bodies carrying out public services, subject to a prescribed limit). The council has, along with the other London boroughs, a specific power to make a scheme for making grants to voluntary organisations whose activities will benefit the whole of Greater London or any part of it (subject to a prescribed limit on the total amount of expenditure to be incurred).

32. In making its decision, the cabinet must have regard the public sector equality duty (section 149 Equality Act 2010), which places a duty on the council, in the exercise of its functions, to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not, and foster good relations between persons who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not. The cabinet is referred to the community impact statement section of this report.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	VCS Strategy overview (circulated separately)
Appendix 2	VCS Strategy 2017 - 2022 executive summary (circulated separately)
Appendix 3	Common Purpose Common Cause, VCS Strategy 2017 – 2022 (circulated separately)

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Barrie Hargrove, Communities and Safety and Councillor Richard Livingstone, Adult Care and Financial Inclusion	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities, Housing and Modernisation	
<b>Report Author</b>	Andy Matheson, Senior Commissioning Officer, Communities Division	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	20 October 2016	
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<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES /CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
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