

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 22 September 2016	Decision Taker: Cabinet Member for Communities and Safety
Report title:		iwill Campaign for Youth Social Action	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Communities	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the cabinet member for communities and safety agrees to sign the iwill Campaign for Youth Social Action pledge on behalf of the council, and agrees the work explained below on how the council will turn this pledge into reality.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. iwill is a national campaign supported by the Step Up to Serve NGO. It is motivated by the idea that as a nation we currently fail the millions of young people who want to give their time and energy to good causes but haven't got the right opportunities and support. The campaign aims to make involvement in social action (e.g. fundraising, volunteering and campaigning) a normal part of life for 10-20 year-olds by the year 2020. See appendix A for the iwill Pledge Guidance paper.
3. Representatives from the iwill campaign attended the Volunteering Strategy steering group in October 2015 and explained the campaign to the group. The steering group agreed to take this campaign into Southwark communities, and this report explains how the council will lead on this, at least initially.
4. The iwill campaign has already achieved a lot across the UK. For example the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) is organising and supporting young people to be volunteers in care homes. This is proving successful, and so NCVO have developed a guide to how to do this in other parts of the country, so that this can be replicated again and again.
5. The actions that result from youth social action must benefit both the young people participating and the other people they meet and help. This is exactly the approach that the Southwark Volunteering Strategy takes, and that the council, Community Southwark, and many more organisations put into practice. Those actions must also be "youth led", so that the young participants agree and manage, as much as possible, everything that they are doing.
6. There is a lot of optimism about youth social action, partly because a MORI survey found that 42% of young people have done some "meaningful social action" in the last 12 months. It is currently lower in London (33%), and the MORI report says that more female, more affluent, more religious, and slightly more white British young people participate than other groups of young people. This won't happen in Southwark as we are committed to supporting all sections of our local communities, and we expect our outcomes to more than match the rest of the country.

7. Another fact that will guide our approach is that it is teachers, family and friends who are the most important people who are best at encouraging young people to participate. We will therefore need to get all of those people on board with the iwill campaign.
8. Step Up To Serve and the iwill campaign provide a lot of resources, communications tools and templates, and advice to public, private and voluntary sector organisations, so that they can all sign up to support youth social action.
9. In July a planning meeting was held with representatives from iwill, Community Southwark and Council staff to look at who should be invited to the event that is scheduled for 17 October and how they can contribute to the pledge.
10. It was suggested that a mixture of groups and organisations from different sectors should be invited to the workshop and be involved in table discussions, mapping out what social action work they are currently undertaking or involved in and how more young people can get involved.
11. The following groups and organisations were identified as those who should be informed of this pledge because they work closely with young people in Southwark or because they already have a scheme in place to enable young people to get involved in social action through their organisation: Southwark schools and young people, Faith groups (faith directory), Sage, Kings College Hospital, PWC, V-Inspired, Team London, The Challenge (NCS), Community Southwark, Health Watch, Big Lottery, London Bubble, Bermondsey Community Kitchen, Tenants & Residents Associations, Fly Consortium, Creation Trust, Millwall FC, Young Vic Theatre, Tate Modern, Construction Youth, Southwark Council (Southwark Information and Advice team, SEN, CALM project, Youth Services)

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The iwill pledge

12. The iwill pledge that has already been signed by a very wide variety of public, voluntary and private sector organisations is:

“We will support the iwill campaign to increase youth social action by:

- ***working with young people to develop a plan to achieve an increase in youth social action in local communities, supporting young people to organise projects, and monitoring our progress***
- ***making it easier for all young people to find opportunities to take part in local social action and removing barriers to participating***
- ***working with our partners - businesses, voluntary and community groups, schools, colleges and others to promote quality social action for all young people and to enable more high quality social action opportunities***
- ***being creative, ambitious and innovative in our approach and by challenging how we work so that young people are actively involved in our organisation and the community.”***

13. The pledge is helpfully specific about who we will work with outside the council, and appropriately ambitious about how we will want all young people to have social action opportunities.
14. We recommend that we sign the standard pledge as it demonstrates the council's commitment to the iwill campaign.
15. We can use the opportunity of the Southwark #iwill event on the 17 October to sign the pledge; and by doing so we will raise awareness of the Southwark iwill campaign.

Turning the pledge into reality

16. We are aware that Southwark is a place where young people are already participating in social action, and we agree with the iwill campaign that these opportunities should be made available to all young people. We are finding out what is happening already, and that will also help us see where the gaps are.
17. An example of social action that we will find out more about is work being done by Dulwich Helpline (now called Link Age Southwark) whereby pupils from local five schools did fundraising for Link Age Southwark, volunteered at groups of over 60 year old residents, as well as running their ever-popular computer classes. Young people hosted a spring party for over 80 Link Age Southwark members; and pupils from six schools raised almost £4000 for us by performing at a Jazz evening. This happens everywhere in Southwark and once we collect the information we can publicise the good news about what young people already do.
18. By doing this outreach we will also be publicising the iwill campaign, and telling council teams and non council organisations about the opportunity they have to support the campaign, and the help they can get to be part of the iwill campaign. We can also start to put into action the need for us to work alongside young people to develop the action plan to implement our pledge. We can ask young people how they want to get involved in the campaign and that can include a steering group of young people, some advisory workshops with young people, and lead roles can be developed for young people to fill. We also need to think about involvement by young people in the campaign after the summer ends and how they can be part of the challenge of turning the iwill campaign pledges turn into reality.
19. The event on the 17 October will bring together the people from teams and organisations that we meet and who can participate in the campaign, young people who are already doing social action, and people from Step Up To Serve. We will start work on an action plan based on collaboration and building on existing successes. We can also work up a measuring, reporting and governance structure at the workshop, perhaps through the Volunteering Strategy steering group.

Policy implications

20. Youth social action will help the council succeed in many of fairer future promises. In particular we need the active engagement of young people in ensuring we have better schools; and young people who experience social action successes will be better motivated and more confident at school.

21. Moreover, we will have safer communities, as youth crime can be reduced when all young people are offered opportunities to participate in social action. There is also a clear positive impact on our promises about education, employment and training, in that many of the people who will benefit from this promise will be the same young people who have been motivated and supported to be more confident due to their youth social action opportunities. We are also discovering that it is vital for successful regeneration that young people participate in consultations and engagement work about these programmes. Finally an Age Friendly Borough will become more likely once all young people are given social action opportunities.

Community impact statement

22. An evaluation of iwill in 2015, based on the New Economic Foundations “social return on investment” questions found that perceptions of young people improved 41% due to iwill, awareness of the community group hosting the social action of young people increased by 61%, and the perception of the quality of a local community increased by 32% due to iwill. And as well as all of that; iwill young people left behind many physical reminders of their contributions in the form of improved physical spaces, as much youth social action takes the form of the renovation of indoor or outdoor social spaces.
23. The evaluation found that for every £1 invested by organisations in supporting youth social action the social return was threefold, at £2.99. In other words youth social action improves the life chances of people aged 10-20 years, and improves life for the rest of the community; sometimes in some very direct ways when social spaces are improved, and just as often due to how people feel about the community that they are a part of.

Resource implications

24. All work done to turn the iwill pledge into action will be done within existing resources.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

25. None

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

26. None

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix A	iwill Pledge Guidance

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Gerri Scott, Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation	
Report Author	Stephen Douglass, Head of Communities	
Version	Final	
Dated	22 September 2016	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		22 September 2016