Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Chief Executive
to
People Scrutiny Committee

On 30th January 2018

Report prepared by:
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Connecting communities to avoid isolation - update
A Part 1 Agenda Item

1.   Purpose of Report

To update the Committee on the in depth Scrutiny project – 'Connecting communities to avoid isolation'.

2.   Recommendations

That the report be noted.

3.   Background

3.1   At the meeting on the 11th July 2017, the Committee agreed that its in depth project for the current municipal year would be on the following topic – 'Connecting communities to avoid isolation' (Minute 170 refers). The membership of the project team is – Councillor Nevin (Chairman), Councillors Boyd, Buckley, Butler, D Garston, Walker, Borton, Endersby and Davies.

3.2   The project plan was agreed by the project team in October 2017 and endorsed at the Scrutiny Committee on 10th October 2017 (Minute 374 refers).

3.3   The project team has held 5 meetings in total, including a facilitated workshop session on 22nd November and an evidence gathering session on the afternoon of 12th January 2018.

4   Scrutiny Review

4.1   The scrutiny review is exploring issues around connecting communities and isolation focussing on the enabling role of the Council, partners and also the role of elected members. The agreed project plan states:-

The central aim is to reduce social exclusion and avoid isolation to increase individuals, families and carer's wellbeing in promoting physical and mental health. This will promote opportunities to connect and mobilise both individuals and communities, encouraging positive relationships with a range of diverse organisations to encourage integrated working.

The project will be instrumental in building a strong and connected community developing assets within a strengths based approach and learning from communities lived experience. Effective partnerships will be supported by appropriate signposting, professional transparency embracing person centred values to enhance co

production and empower people to be actively engaged in 'the life of the town'.
Through creating innovative opportunities individuals can take control of their own
lives within a safe creative and unique community.

4.2   The project team had an evidence session in October and heard about the
        community engagement work being done locally (for example the intergenerational
        work at Earls Hall School) and also about the development of an interactive map,
        which identifies relational opportunities in the community. The project team also
        heard about work being done by Leeds City Council, who set up "Neighbourhood
        Network Schemes" over 20 years ago and the positive outcomes from that.

4.3   The project team had a workshop session in November and explored applying an
        asset based approach in Southend (looking at for example the west central area and
        east central area localities) and then spent time preparing for the session in January.
        The project team had previously indicated they would like to speak to a number of
        people / organisations as part of the review, as set out in the project plan. In the light
        of discussions at the workshop, the project team agreed the key organisations /
        people they would like to invite to the session. The following attended the session on
        12th January:-

        • Traci Dixon and Stuart Long, South Essex Homes
        • Alison Semmence, SAVS and Matt King, Trust Links
        • Reverend Hannah Bucke
        • Councillor Lesley Salter, Chair Southend Health & Wellbeing Board
        • Maurice Sweeting, Chair Education Board and Gert Sheepers, University of Essex
        • Karen Bayliss and Verbena Barker-Newyear, EPUT

4.4   The session was run in a world café style and facilitated by officers from the Service
        Transformation Team. Some notes from the session are attached at **<u>Appendix 1</u>**.

4.3   A more detailed report from the scrutiny review will be reported to the April meeting
        of the Scrutiny Committee.

5.   Corporate Implications

5.1   <u>Contribution to Council's Vision and Critical Priorities</u> – Becoming an excellent and
        high performing organisation.
5.2   <u>Financial Implications</u> – there are costs associated with organising in depth projects
        relating to officer time but this will all be contained within existing resources.
5.3   <u>Legal Implications</u> – none.
5.4   <u>People Implications</u> – none.
5.5   <u>Property Implications</u> – none.
5.6   <u>Consultation</u> – as described in report.
5.7   <u>Equalities Impact Assessment</u> – none.
5.8   <u>Risk Assessment</u> – none.

6.   Background Papers

        Notes from project team meeting, emails to witnesses.

7.   Appendix

        Appendix 1 – notes from session – 12th January 2018