

Creative Councils – Wigan Council

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report updates the Community Wellbeing Board on progress made by Wigan Council with their Creative Councils project and raises discussion points for consideration by members.

Cllr Keith Cunliffe, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, and Stuart Cowley, Director of Personalisation and Partnerships, will present Wigan's project.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the project update and to discuss points arising from the presentations to be made by Wigan Council.

Action

Officers will reflect Members' suggestions in the design and delivery of future support to councils, communications and lobbying activity derived from the Creative Councils programme.

Contact officers: Mike Short / Teresa Payne

Position: Senior Adviser / Adviser

Telephone: 07799 038432 / 07879 640823

E-mail: mike.short@local.gov.uk / teresa.payne@local.gov.uk

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Background

1. The Creative Councils programme is a joint programme between NESTA and the LGA. The ambition is to work with a small group of creative, pioneering councils and their partners throughout England and Wales in developing, implementing and spreading transformational new approaches to meeting some of the biggest medium and long-term challenges facing communities and local services.

Programme Progress to date

2. Six Creative Councils from an initial pool of seventeen in Phase 1 were selected to go forward under Phase 2 of the programme and these are receiving financial and non-financial support to help them progress their work. Wigan are attending to present their progress and raise discussion points for consideration by members.
3. Wigan are creating a new economic model for social care to meet their service and financial challenges, by harnessing underutilised and untapped resources within the local community through volunteering and the development of micro-enterprises.
4. **Monmouthshire** and **Cornwall** attended the Improvement Innovation Board on 17th September 2012
5. Monmouthshire is implementing 'Your County Your Way', a cultural transformation programme within the council to listen and respond more creatively to the needs of its communities. Central to this approach is an internal training programme, 'the Intrapreneurship School', which seeks to introduce council employees to the concept of innovation and what it means for service delivery.
6. Cornwall is implementing 'Shaped by Us', a technology platform and open innovation approach which makes it easier for local communities to put forward creative ideas to solve the county's biggest challenges, a number of which will be co-produced with the council.
7. **Derbyshire** attended the Children and Young Persons Board on 21st January 2013
8. Derbyshire are developing 'Uni-fi' a bespoke package of support aimed at developing aspiration amongst young people in care. This will include a guaranteed entitlement to financial support on leaving care to be spent on the pursuit of self-selected goals, which might include further education or training.
9. **Rotherham** attended the Economy and Transport Board's 'Town Hall Debate' meeting on 22nd April in Manchester and **Stoke** are to attend a future such meeting.
10. Rotherham are developing 'Rotherham Ready', a council-backed social enterprise that works with the teachers of students aged 4-19 to engage them and their schools in the

development of an enterprise-based curriculum, ensuring young people have skills relevant for the future.

11. Stoke are developing their goal to become an energy sufficient 'Great Working City', pushing the boundaries of energy regulation and localism by moving towards local ownership of energy supply and re-imagining the role of the council as a strategic broker of resources.

Wigan's Creative Council project

12. Wigan Council set out to create a new delivery model for social care as a key component of working differently with residents to build self-reliant confident communities. It is a core element of the "Building Self-Reliance" programme within Wigan Council's Corporate Strategy.
13. They aim to meet unprecedented financial and service challenges by enabling adult social care customers and their families to make use of previously underutilised and untapped resources within the local community. The programme would develop new connections to volunteering and stimulate the development of micro-enterprises.
14. Like all local authorities, Wigan faces the challenge of how to meet rising needs and expectations with diminishing funds. This challenge is particularly acute in the provision of adult social care: the combination of an ageing population and Council budget reductions necessitates savings of over £10m in 2013/14 as part of an overall Council financial savings programme of £80m in the next three years.
15. At the same time, early research in the local community found there are a wide range of underutilised and untapped resources:
 - 15.1 a real appetite among service users and their families – with the right support and information - to take greater control of the ways in which their needs are met;
 - 15.2 a capacity for entrepreneurship - both among older people, who have been displaced from conventional, secure employment and among younger people who have never had it;
 - 15.3 a willingness among the population to provide volunteer support – even in neighbourhoods under stress where many people are only just coping; and
 - 15.4 a set of community leaders who can stimulate, shape and steer efforts to meet needs within their neighbourhoods.
16. The new delivery model has at its core the aim of building a new relationship between people with social care needs, the professionals who support them, and the wider community. At its core is the concept of creating "new conversations" to build local social and economic capital. The programme aims to do this through four key workstreams:
 - 16.1 empowering service users and their families by redesigning their engagement with professionals, through a new local delivery team;
 - 16.2 Developing the supply side of the social-care economy through supporting micro- and nano-enterprises to form and enter the market;

- 16.3 Further developing the supply-side via a step change in the level of volunteer activity within social care – to be achieved through the creation of a powerful set of incentives and rewards around the use of Community Credits; and
 - 16.4 Designing, building and operating a set of mechanisms (both low-tech and high-tech, bridged by access points within community centres) to align supply with demand, including e-markets and a community reward scheme aligned to personal budgets.
- 17. A key component of the programme will be the establishment of broad-based, robust governance arrangements that enable local people to shape and drive the model as it evolves.
 - 18. As a first step they are implementing the new model in Scholes – an area of Wigan which has high social-care needs and an acute set of broader social and economic challenges. The area is typical of many neighbourhoods with a tradition of strong neighbourliness and community resourcefulness.
 - 19. The Council's early work with local people and community leaders has been key in developing the proposal. This relationship and the community leadership was core to the planned delivery arrangements. There is a well-developed project plan for how the project is being implemented in Scholes over a twelve-month period from May 2012, before starting to roll out the model more widely across Wigan from the summer of 2013.
 - 20. There is full sponsorship from the political and senior leadership of the Council. The proposal is embedded in the centre of their programme for fundamental reform - the Corporate Strategy; and it is linked to the priorities for health and social care redesign being developed in their Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
 - 21. They have assembled a strong team of partners. These include local health and social care professionals, the School for Social Entrepreneurs, Community Catalysts, the New Economics Foundation and most importantly, a set of community activists within Scholes to work alongside the Council in making this model a reality.
 - 22. Successful delivery of this project will generate a series of neighbourhood-level, authority-wide and national benefits:
 - 22.1 Better met existing social-care needs in Scholes and in the process, creation of a wholly different set of professional relationships with residents and communities;
 - 22.2 Community capital within the neighbourhood and across Wigan as a whole;
 - 22.3 An innovative suite of solutions, amenable to wider rollout in other local authorities - to the problem of how to meet rising needs with declining public finances; and
 - 22.4 Evidenced approaches to the use of rewards and incentives to enhance the offer of personal budgets within neighbourhoods with high social care needs and challenges.

Points for discussion

23. As a result of their journey, Wigan have identified an approach that could enable greater improvements in outcomes for adult social care and which can support the learning from this project to enable positive national changes. They would welcome the views of Members on both their progress and how best they might further engage the local government sector on similar projects.

Conclusion

24. This is an exciting and interesting programme that offers many lessons in how best to innovate for the local government sector.