

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

**Subject:** A Framework for working with our citizens and communities  
**Committee:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> July 2014  
**Cabinet Member:** **TBC**  
**CMT Member:** Carole Burgoyne (Director for People)  
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**Ref:** TBC  
**Key Decision:**  
**Part:** I

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### Purpose of the report

An aspiration of Plymouth's Brilliant Co-operative Council is to create a fairer city where everyone does their bit. This includes Plymouth being a place where *'people can have a say about what is important to them and where they can change what happens in their area'*<sup>1</sup>.

Plymouth has a track record of working with, and within, communities with some notable successes<sup>2</sup>. However, the feedback from discussions at Cabinet Planning, and more recently from the Fairness Commission, indicates that engagement is fragmented and partial and community empowerment activity does not address the fundamental issue of enabling citizens to be in control of their own communities.

This paper provides a draft new framework of working with our citizens and communities. Within two parts, it makes the distinction between:

1. our single agency role in listening and responding to our customers around the provision of our services and city wide agendas; and
  2. the lead agency role we have in creating a more sustainable model of engagement whereby citizens take control of their own communities.
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<sup>1</sup> The Democratic Value as expressed in the adopted Corporate Plan.

<sup>2</sup> Please see Appendix I for examples

## **The Brilliant Co-operative Council Corporate Plan 2013/14 -2016/17:**

Our approach to co-operative engagement and community empowerment will:

### **Pioneering Plymouth**

- strive to open up new ways of working alongside our citizens and partners, piloting new ideas to support communities to be in the driving seat to discover pioneering solutions to complex local issues.

### **Growing Plymouth**

- support our communities and citizens to build on and release their skills and capacity to fully contribute to the future prosperity of the city. This will include encouraging a community focus in the use of citywide assets; using knowledge and intelligence alongside customer insight from consultation and engagement to support better service planning, enterprise and design across all key agencies in the city. This will in turn deliver social value.

### **Caring Plymouth**

- ensure there is a voice for all, investing in communities of interest, identity and geography to promote independence and choice for citizens either individually or collectively through the use of Social Capital<sup>3</sup> for example: relationships, commitment and volunteering.

### **Confident Plymouth**

- aim to instil confidence and pride within our city and its communities, by enabling customers to have a say in decision making and putting citizens at the centre. Our communities will be vibrant, engaged and willing to use their skills and experience as ambassadors of the city and their communities.

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## **Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land**

With changes in staffing, restructuring and transformation within the council, the current model of engagement or community interaction resourced by a small council team and volunteers from across council staff is not sustainable. Resources will need to be focused and structured differently.

The transformation programmes on 'Customer' and 'Co-operative Centre of Operations' will re-align resources to support some of this proposal. However, to radically change our approach it will need both the resources and 'buy in' of partner agencies to harness our combined capacity to deliver, co-ordinate and commission co-operatively together.

A set of work streams aligned to deliver this framework will also include options on community budgeting to incentivise and empower local initiatives through citizens and elected members. This needs to be combined with the Community Asset Transfer Policy to achieve maximum impact.

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## **Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:**

The co-operative communities' framework will support the policies and plans which are already in place and will support the Fairness Commissions Final recommendations which have a particular reference to community empowerment and control.

*"There is a deeply entrenched sense of disempowerment and passivity in Plymouth, particularly in the communities which are most disadvantaged. This is no coincidence. It is born of decades of communities feeling done to rather than doing. Decades of public authorities, often unwittingly, exacerbating that sense of exclusion by relating in ways which*

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<sup>3</sup> Social Capital – The networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively.

serve their own purposes but ignore the real needs and desires of the people they purport to serve. By decades of those people waiting with decreasing hope for 'them' to do something to help."

Fairness Commission Position Statement  
December 2013

## Equality and Diversity

Fundamental to this new framework will be practices, processes and actions to ensure all citizens in our communities have an equal opportunity to a voice, in ways that work best for them.

## Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

1. Our Council adopts the co-operative engagement principles and framework as the basis for a different model of working with and supporting citizens and communities in Plymouth. These should be applied when anyone on behalf of the council plans, develops, delivers or supports service and community engagement activity.
2. Our council works with key partners to jointly develop practical responses to the framework, sharing resources and delivering collectively.

## Alternative options considered and rejected:

To continue with the current uncoordinated and fragmented approach to engaging with our our communities with reducing resources which will not meet cooperative principles or objectives fully, or address the findings of the Fairness Commission.

## Published work / information:

### Background papers:

Title	Part I	Part II	Exemption Paragraph Number							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

**Sign off:** comment must be sought from those whose area of responsibility may be affected by the decision, as follows (insert references of Finance, Legal and Monitoring Officer reps, and of HR, Corporate Property, IT and Strat. Proc. as appropriate):

Fin		Leg		Mon Off		HR		Assets		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report? Yes / No* please delete as necessary													

## I BACKGROUND

Plymouth needs to create a new relationship with its citizens, so that they feel they are encouraged and supported to be less passive customers of our services and more active and involved in their communities. The ambition is for the council to support citizens and communities in creating a welcoming 'vibrant waterfront city where **an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone**'<sup>4</sup>. In doing so, the council needs to be clear about its roles.

While Plymouth has some good examples of work within communities both current and in the past, it is not comprehensive enough, nor does it sufficiently enable us to achieve our long term outcomes. Our current model of working in communities is not sustainable if the focus is on a small team and volunteers taking the lead on this important role.

Some examples of how our current systems do not meet with the co-operative approach are set out below:

### Internal council issues

- In 2013 a survey indicated that only 32% of respondents agreed that the council listens to its residents when planning and prioritising services;
- Our 'Have your say' sessions are not representative of all communities, and focus largely on a reactive response to a customer experience, rather than informing local decisions or shaping local facilities and services;
- Councillors do not feel supported in their role as community leaders. They have access to very small pots of money to engage with their residents - rather than opportunities to lead conversations on priorities and resources to deliver real local solutions;
- Staff working or engaging with neighbourhoods in our current arrangements (e.g. Neighbourhood Wardens, NLO's etc) spend time remedying customer dissatisfaction with basic service delivery, and chasing responses to non-delivery which deflects their capacity from engagement work;
- Data on local needs / assets together with customer insight is not routinely collated or regularly used across service or thematic areas to support and inform local decisions systematically. It is not in accessible formats to help communities get an understanding of local issues. Its potential for community asset mapping is therefore lost. This is vital for Co-operative Joint Commissioning;
- Use of social media and interactive digital technology is used infrequently to engage with communities, and limits our interactions;

### City wide issue

- Citizens feel they are removed from the decision making process and there are barriers to community involvement activity and volunteering. People want to get involved but practicalities and bureaucracy gets in the way (Fairness Commission Position Statement 2013). This is supported by the 2013 survey which found that 85% of respondents do want to be more involved in the decision that affect them, their communities and the city;

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<sup>4</sup> Britain's Ocean City vision

- Consultation is not fully co-ordinated either within the council or with partners, and the learning / intelligence from this is not widely or consistently shared and used in a 'smart' way to inform service development, design or delivery;
- Community activity by the council and its partners is not joined up in a focused and co-ordinated way, and therefore duplication of effort can be evident, with communities potentially confused on who is leading or responsible for what;
- Following a 'Summer of Listening', the Fairness Commission identified that although there is a breadth of volunteering and engagement opportunities across Plymouth and support for schemes that give people the power to influence, *"Barriers to involvement in community activities was the third most frequently mentioned area of unfairness. Although community activities were identified as being positive in supporting interaction, residents felt that there were limited opportunities for community engagement, and that they lacked clear routes for participation in local matters and decision making."* (Fairness Commission Position Statement, December 2013).

To address this, discussions at a CMT focused on the:

- purposes for engaging with, and within, our communities;
- perceived expectations of the citizens and communities in Plymouth around reasons for engaging with the council;
- council's role in participation at various stages of the community development process
- a framework to illustrate the co-operative approach that the council could undertake in the future.

There was also an acknowledgement that a conversation with key agencies within the city was needed in order to agree a city wide approach to sustainable community empowerment<sup>5</sup> and how we can best use pooled resources to achieve common outcomes. This is in recognition that if agencies, including the council, focus on developing isolated community initiatives we will not achieve the step change we need to release capacity and skills so that our communities are self –organising, self-fulfilling and therefore, sustainable.

## **2 DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK**

This paper provides a draft new framework of working with our citizens and communities. Starting by looking at the purpose of engagement with citizens, a visual representation of the framework emerged. Within two parts, it makes the distinction between:

1. our single agency role in listening and responding to our customers around the provision of our services and city wide agendas; and
2. the lead agency role we have in creating a more sustainable model of engagement whereby citizens take control of their own communities.

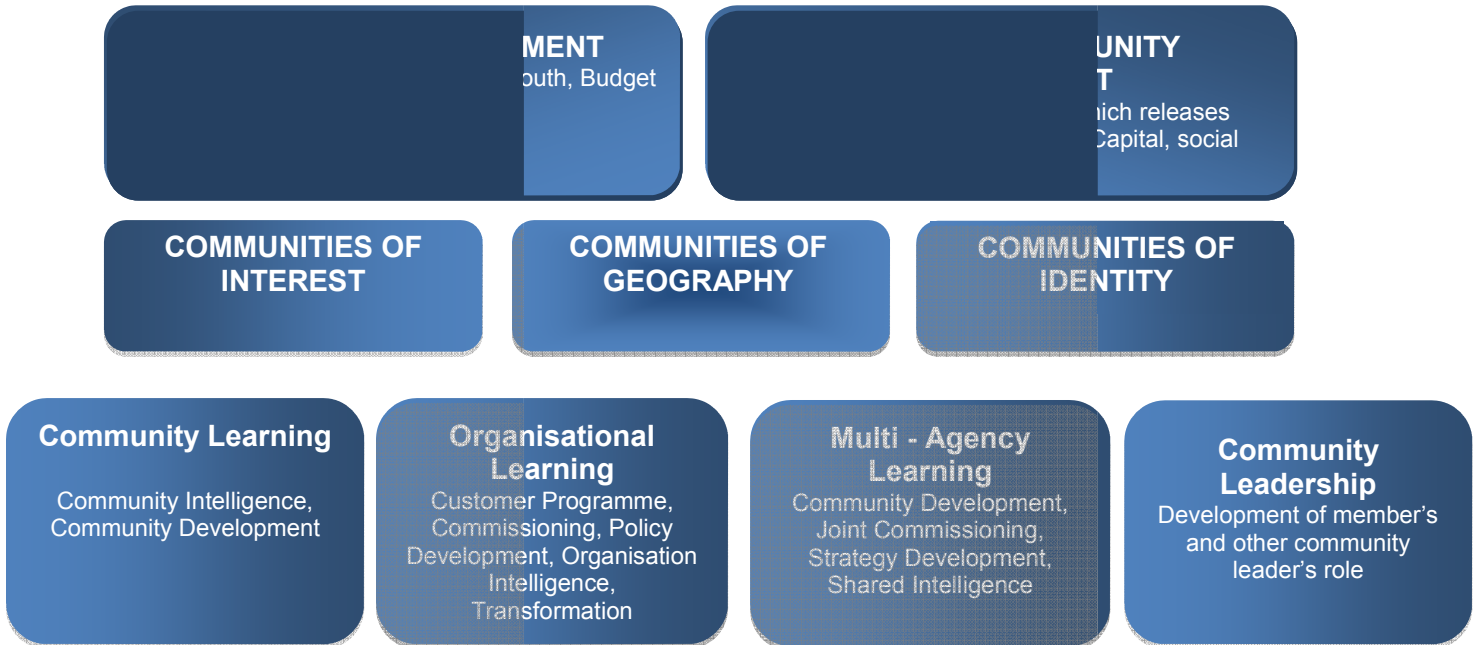
Where 'community' is a system within which we intend to engage and empower citizens, three main sub systems must be considered. These are identified as communities of geography, interest and identity. A blanket approach across all these communities will do nothing to improve our current situation, neither will a set of council or partner agency initiatives that do not fully engage and harness the energy, resources, direction and commitment of citizens and our partners working together. Figure 1, below, illustrates, from the council perspective, our dual role around these communities and how learning must be fed back into all key agencies within the city.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Empowerment' of a community being a particular level of participation that cannot be achieved by one single agency

It could be said that no community is hard to reach. Rather it is our inability to engage in ways that suits citizens and their communities, which means we are unable to hear them.

**outstanding**



*N.B. An individual is likely to be part of all sub sets of 'communities'  
i.e. geography, identity and interest.*

Through creating new, better and appropriate channels and opportunities, by which citizens can voice their views about the services they receive, engagement can concentrate on supporting the conditions for building new connections and relationships within communities.

This approach must support changing the perceptions customers have, build more trust among agencies working with them and enable citizens to self-select as community champions to support their communities to self-organise and self-fulfil.

To do this there is a need to understand the 'journey' of community development and to social movement. Fundamental to this are our values, principles and behaviours and how we relate to our citizens. These are explored in the next sections.

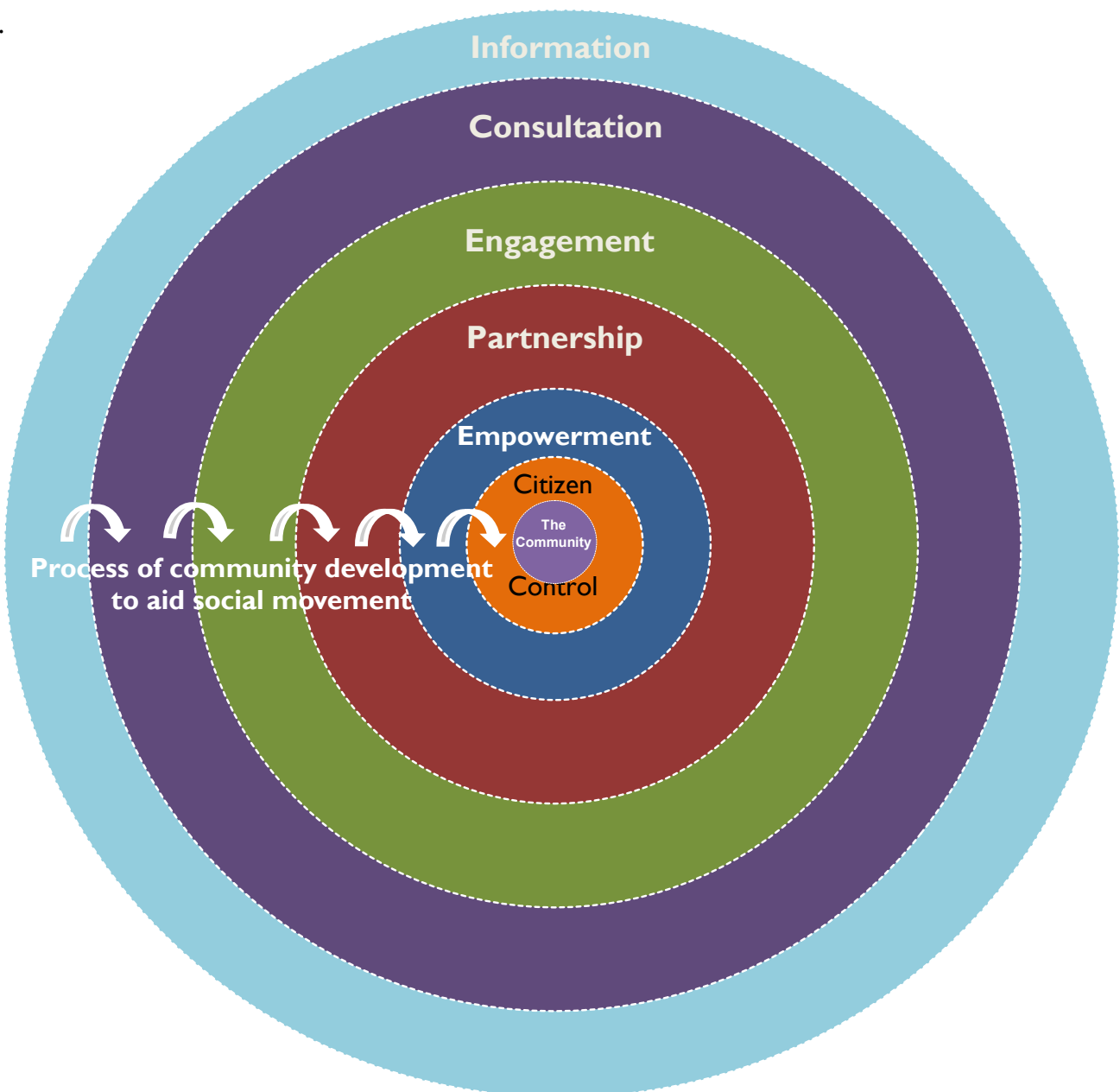
There is an essential requirement for this framework to be embedded within the council's transformation programs. There are obvious connections to all programmes but particularly clear links with the Co-operative Centre of Operations and Customer and Service Transformation programme and Integrated Health and Wellbeing.

### 3 JOURNEY TO EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

There are many interpretations of participation scales. CMT identified with a scale based on Arnstein's 'Ladder of Participation'. Movements up the 'ladder' illustrate the process of community development to aid social movement. We would like to move away from a hierarchical 'ladder' to a model which puts communities and community-led initiatives at the centre and public agencies acting in support of self-selecting citizens who enhance the capacity of their community.

We have acknowledged that Plymouth needs to create a new relationship with its citizens so that they feel they are encouraged and supported to be less passive customers of our services and more active and involved in their communities. It is the process of community development to aid social movement that will support this fundamental change in our relationship with citizens. We must however also acknowledge that individuals will choose to participate at the level they choose to commit themselves. This may not be for themselves to lead the change, but more increased involvement from more community members will undoubtedly support this process.

Fig 2.



It is also acknowledged that we need to build on what works and collectively focus our own and partner resources in a way which effectively supports all our citizens and communities. Below is a table showing the levels of ‘citizen involvement’ alongside current achievements ‘as is’ and potential achievements within the new approach ‘to be’. There are pockets of multi-agency good practice across the City that the council is involved with. These can be found in appendix I.

Table I

High Impact – Most active involvement	DEFINITION <sup>6</sup>	CURRENT EXAMPLES (AS IS)	POTENTIAL (TO BE)
<b>Citizen Control</b>	Citizens have full control of their community. They handle the entire job of planning, policy making and managing a programme with no intermediaries between it and the source of funds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plymouth Energy Co-operative</li> <li>- Adult Social Care Transformation</li> <li>- Integrated Commissioning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elected members facilitating local conversations and initiatives supported by community budgets See appendix I – accountability model</li> </ul>
<b>Empowerment</b>	Citizens holding a clear majority of seats on committees with delegated powers to make decisions. Public now has the power to assure accountability of the programme to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CEDT (Four Greens)</li> <li>- Whitleigh Big Local</li> <li>- Greenspace Trust</li> <li>- Time banks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Mutuels</li> <li>- Co-operative schools and Education Trust</li> </ul>
<b>Partnership</b>	Power is redistributed through negotiation between citizens and power holders. Planning and decision-making responsibilities are shared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1000 Club</li> <li>- Neighbourhood Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community plans and community budgeting</li> <li>- Cooperative engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement</b>	Allows citizens to advise or plan but decision making remains within organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plymouth Plan</li> <li>- Some HYS meetings / Local forums</li> <li>- Commissioning for personalisation: Day Opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multi-agency engagement to inform cooperative commissioning</li> </ul>
<b>Consultation</b>	Attitude surveys, neighbourhood meetings and public enquiries. One way flow of information. No channel for feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have Your Say (Most)</li> <li>- Budget Consultation</li> <li>- Children’s Centre /Library Consultation</li> <li>- Health and Wellbeing Consultation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A collective / co-ordinated approach to consulting different communities across agencies - knowledge converted to intelligence -to inform decision making and priority setting locally</li> </ul>
<b>Information</b>	A most important first step to legitimate participation but there is only one way flow of information and no channel for feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Press releases, newsletters, web casts, use of social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of social media to spark interaction</li> <li>- Use of online fora</li> <li>- Multi-agency communication</li> </ul>
<b>Low impact – less active involvement</b>			

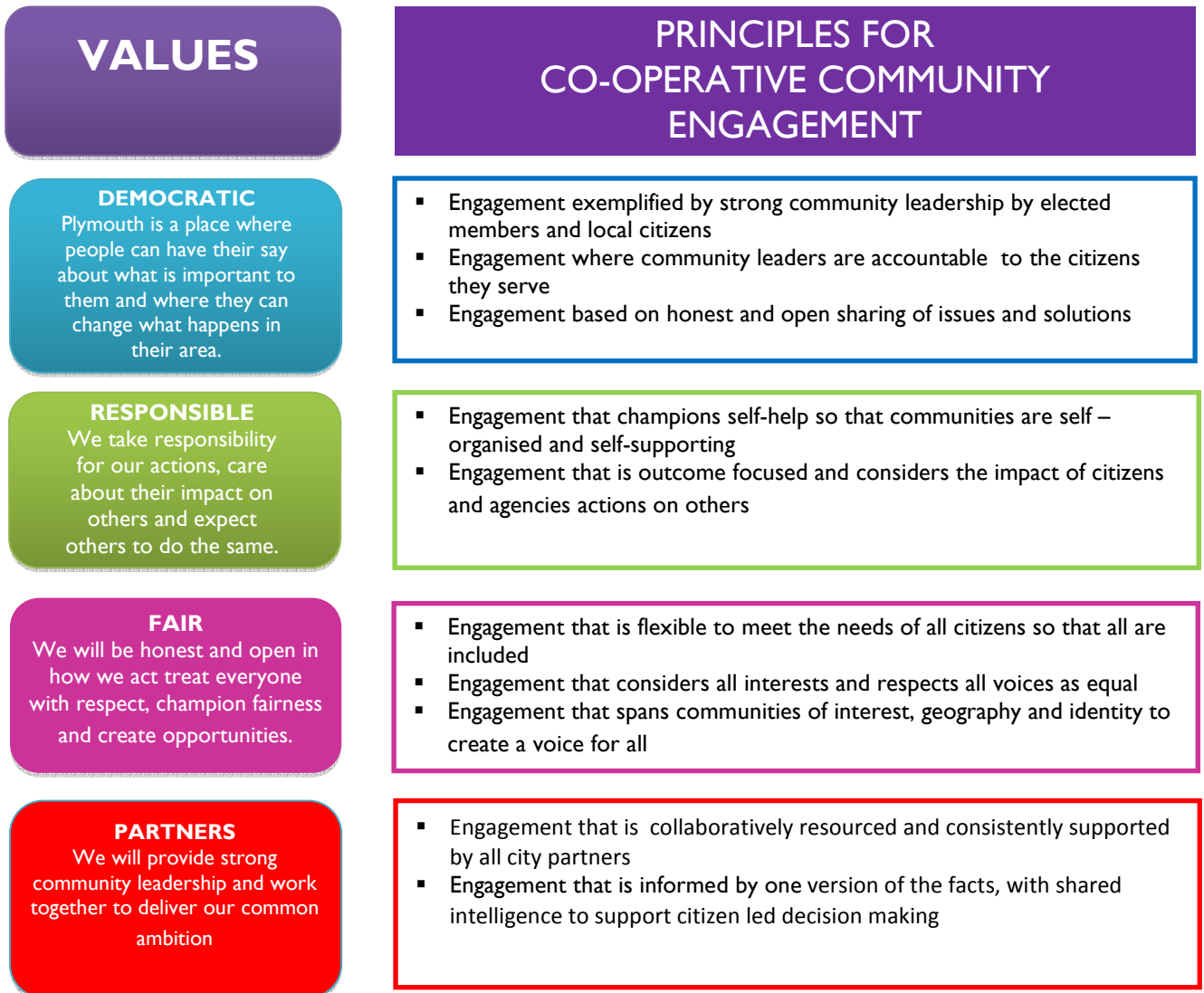
<sup>6</sup> Based on Arnstein’s ladder of Participation.



## 4 CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Our proposed co-operative community engagement approach is based on the four co-operative values. These values have informed a series of principles to guide the process and programmes of work by which the new framework will be delivered.

Fig 3



## 5. OUR ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOURS

The council and its partners will clearly benefit from citizens being able to ‘have their say and do their bit’ to inform how it responds to local community priorities, or re-shapes its services and its own priorities. This will require the council and its partners to foster an environment within which citizens can self-select or generate opportunities whereby a community’s capacity can be built or released. Equally we need to be aware of how the way we work with citizens could inadvertently prevent self-help and peer-help occurring through our organisational structures, actions and systems. To support the journey to empowered communities it is important that we understand how our behaviours support or inhibit engagement.

Table 2

<b>BEHAVIOURS</b>	<b>Single Agency</b> Our main concern is around behaviours on how we provide information, consult and engage (as a single agency) with citizens, as our customers.	<b>Lead Agency</b> Our main concern is around behaviours within how we provide multi-agency engagement, partnership arrangements and community empowerment which leads to citizen control.
<b>Flexible</b>	Our own channels must include a mixed market of options to create opportunities for a voice for all. This must include a range of support and methods rather than a one size fits all approach.	Community support provided by the most appropriate agency and at the request of that community, in ways that citizens prefer.
<b>Sustainable</b>	We must promote consistency, efficiency and reliability in how we engage, building self-help rather than reliance on council support.	The support provided must promote self-help which leads to peer-help both within and across our communities, thus reducing the need for ‘professional help’, so that communities are self-organised and self-supporting.
<b>Open and Transparent</b>	We must actively listen and be honest about the reasons for consulting and engaging with citizens and communities when we approach them. There must be no illusion about the potential outcomes of consulting customers. In this way we will not raise expectations unnecessarily. There must be a clear channel for reporting back the results of any consultation.	Communities must have access to information, advice and support to move towards citizen control. Providing clear, shared evidence to support collaborative decision making between communities and local agencies openly. Deploying support to those most disadvantaged, but our advice and guidance must continue to support all communities in this city who have the desire to self-organise.
<b>Smart and Collaborative</b>	The intelligence that all agencies gain from engaging with customers must be shared. Collectively customer insight must help to inform service provision but also to inform citizens through successful community engagement and empowerment in the future.	We must lead all agencies in the city towards a system that brokers collective support and engagement to serve our citizens from all sectors including support for the voluntary and community sector, working with our citizens collaboratively.

## **6. DEVELOPING THE ROLE OF COUNCILLOR AS LOCAL LEADER**

*“The dramatic budget reductions councils currently face demand a new kind of leadership, focussed on engaging the community to make difficult decisions about whether to cut social care, after school clubs or school transport”*

Parker S. 2013 Future Councillors: Where next for Local Politics

The most positive scenario for the future is where citizens and communities are able to do more for themselves. The council will have devolved many of its neighbourhood services to communities through community budgets and city wide services are delivered in collaboration with other key agencies through integrated functions. This opens up a new way of working for councillors. There is a need for a shift from hierarchical leadership towards a more co-operative leadership where councillors work through connections, relationships and sharing ideas, problems and solutions at a local level.

To fulfil this role, effective councillors will need to work alongside other key agencies in the private, public and voluntary sector, with community groups and citizens. They will represent a council who leads by example but understand that it cannot do everything by itself.

Support is needed to help members ‘channel shift’ and de-couple customer responses from community engagement opportunities through re-directing to appropriate service points. This will free up members to play a key role in supporting communities tackling local solutions through brokering support to local citizens, helping them self define the issues and potential solutions together with partner agencies. This needs to be supported from community development skills held within a wide range of agencies, including the Council itself.

Specialist skills will be needed to support communities around community budgets and engagement initially, helping them gain confidence and skills to tackle local problems themselves.

A set of options for community budgets will be developed to incentivise and support a collaborative approach between agencies, which could potentially match fund a range of local priorities that citizens feel are important. Elected members could act as brokers within and between agencies to facilitate this collaboration and act as the ‘responsible body’.

Asset transfer policies are in place within the Council, but they need to align to local conversations and other partner and community funding pots to support the delivery of local solutions. For example the devolution of budgets can be used to set up community mutual or co-operatives agencies.

When citizens can do more for themselves, and councillors interact directly with individual citizens via social media, councillors will be able to focus on other areas of local leadership such as city growth.

We need to support elected members in a way which helps them to be most effective and relevant in a co-operative and digital world.

## **7. CITIZENS AT THE HEART OF CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

What is the value of increasing engagement with citizens? The suggested answer is to support social movement, build social value and, in particular, create sustainable social capital.

A previous cabinet paper - 'Co-operative Commissioning and Market Management – A Framework for Delivering a Brilliant Co-operative Council' provided examples of how citizens should be seen at the centre of the commissioning process. This equally applies to co-operative community engagement:

Table 3

Citizens as innovators	Citizens may know things that many professionals don't
Citizens as resources	Citizens have time, information and financial resources that they are willing to invest to improve their own quality of life and into helping others
Citizens as asset-holders	Citizens have diverse capabilities and talents which they can share with professionals and other citizens
Citizens as community-developers	Citizens can engage in collaborative rather than paternalistic relationships with service providers, with other service users and with other members of the public

## 8. PART I – CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This part of the framework concerns itself with our council's role in the provision of information, consultation and engagement with citizens, as our customers. Although focused on our single agency role, where identified it is still essential that smart collaboration and partnership ways of working within the council and across agencies are carried out to act as 'one team serving our city'.

The Co-operative Centre of Operations programme will be introducing more co-ordinated engagement with customers (citizens, businesses and visitors) and communities, covering all channels and consultation methods, in order to have solid information from all representative groups. The co-operative 'brain' will also introduce systems to convert raw information from engagement and empowerment activity into intelligence that can be better used for decision making. To support this there must be better understanding of how we shift our current service delivery to reflect our new relationship with partner agencies, our customers, citizens and the community.

### What does this look like?

#### 8.1 Channel shifting

This means shifting customer contacts from more expensive channels to those that are cheaper, more efficient to deliver e.g. helping customers to report through a responsive re-framed customer portal and making a complaint via our online channel, rather than supporting the administration of 'Have your Say' meetings (where these meetings are used for reporting and issuing complaints).

Member's support for citizens and communities within their wards can then focus on supporting wider engagement and empowerment around priority setting and brokering solutions with multiple agencies.

Our front line can then function differently to see all customer contacts as potential ways of building trust and potential engagement, signposting to local community forums or other options etc.

## 8.2 Consultation

Consultation is often used as a method to gain customer insight to inform service delivery/ design and strategic planning. Yet this is inconsistent in quality and does not consider the multiple contacts and relationships that the customer has with the many faces of the council.

The lack of customer insight hinders services understanding of who their customers are and what preferences they have, and has prevented changes being identified and delivered in the past. Our partners equally carry out their own contacts in isolation while we are serving the same citizens and communities.

We must become smarter at understanding our collective customers and using consultation as evidence to support business and service planning within all key agencies in the city.

Currently the Council uses 'Objective' as a consultation portal to co-ordinate the consultation activity within the council but this is not widely used or referred to. We would use social media embedded in this new approach so that it becomes fundamentally part of the way we listen and communicate.

When our model for consultation is fit for purpose we would expect that the knowledge gained will not only inform better decision making but also feed into the intelligence held by the Co-operative Centre of Operations to disseminate to elected members, agencies and communities to inform evidence based local decision making.

## 9. PART 2 – CITY WIDE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

The ambition is to transform how we and our partners engage with, and within, communities and also the way in which communities engage with us. The new framework focuses on enabling community development through creating the conditions by which individual citizens can self – select and communities can self-organise.

The premise is that 'self-help' within individuals will lead to 'peer-help' within communities (an individual may be part of all sub sets of 'communities' i.e. geography, identity and interest) and citizens take control of their communities.

### 9.1 Co-producing Co-operative Communities

Customers are often excluded from service design. As a result services are configured to organisational preferences. Co-operative community engagement rests on the belief that citizens lead other individuals within a community, together with councillors, service providers and stakeholders to work co-operatively together in the planning, design and development of solutions to local issues.

Co-production has been defined as *'the public sector and citizens making better use of each other's assets, resources and contributions to achieve better outcomes or improved efficiency'*<sup>7</sup>. By working in partnership and building on each other's capabilities and strengths, we can achieve far more and create a more sustainable model of public service delivery. Successful and sustainable engagement with our communities is of mutual benefit to all - as the human resources involved in delivering this change go up, the financial costs involved in change go down.

Recurring uncoordinated multiple interventions by separate agencies have limited success, and they promote a 'done to' approach, rather than a citizen led approach. Agencies in isolation are not able to solve community issues, which are often complex and require jointly brokered solutions. Also, if organisations are not strategically aligned, their structures will remain a barrier to the work on the ground truly having an impact.

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<sup>7</sup> Bovaird and Loeffler, 2012

Enabling communities to tackle their own priority issues can help overcome apathy and lead more citizens to become active. When we enable communities to tackle their self – diagnosed priority issues, we will undoubtedly begin our relationship with the ‘true’ seldom heard and hard to reach groups.

To achieve full potential, this approach needs to be led by citizens within communities themselves but also be brokered across all agencies including statutory, voluntary and community sectors to build trust, understanding and develop an agreed collaborative approach. This should include shared responsibility to meeting citizen’s needs individually and collectively.

Engagement support needs to be coordinated and jointly resourced to reduce the inconsistency and duplication and create the opportunity for shared ownership of the new approach with a Strategic Network of agency decision makers to drive this approach and determine and deploy resources.

## **9.2 Role of VCS**

The roles of VCS agencies tend to focus on communities of interest, and there is scope to support this further to build social value. They are rooted within communities and therefore have a lot to offer. Volunteering and the work that has started with cities of service could be built on. A framework for commissioning and supporting this area is essential and further research around models is needed to strengthen and support the development of a resilient voluntary sector .

## **10. COUNCIL WIDE RESPONSIBILITY**

Our new relationship with customers must be flexible enough to mirror the expectations of our citizens as members of a community or as one of our customers. This new relationship must be council wide, with every customer interaction seen as an opportunity taken to re - establish our relationship. Furthermore this shift needs to be embedded within all our transformation programmes.

The 2013 Budget consultation found that 85% of respondents do want to be more involved in the decisions that affect them, their communities and the city. Fostering our new relationship and encouraging the social movement needed to build co-operative communities cannot be delivered by one department or team alone. Each interaction that this council has with customers and communities needs to advocate for the shift that need to occur to less expensive channels and to more self-organised and self – sustaining community development.

### **10.1 Communication strategy**

It is clear that citizens want to engage, but they lack information on how. A clear stream of work is on developing a communication plan to help citizens develop a wide understanding of the range of options for being involved.

A range of communications will be developed to frame the new approach with the channels available, and piloted practically through a range of projects.

### **10.2 Partnership working**

Citizens can be perplexed by the range of organisations’ services responsibilities and do not recognise the cross overs between services or even agencies. Rather than expect citizens to understand these constraints, we need to adopt one approach collectively with agencies providing flexible support to citizens to help them with navigating the ‘system’ better.

### **10.3 Transformational programmes**

Each transformational programme will impact on our customers and or communities to some extent. While we redefine and restructure the council, the transformation programmes will seek to build into business cases, consultation and engagement with customers and communities. Even changes which are focused fundamentally on internal transformation are likely to contain elements which have an impact on customers, their access to services and the conduct/approach of Plymouth City Council staff. The framework will help define tools to achieve this within all communities and with customers.

## **11. WORK STREAMS TO DRIVE ENGAGEMENT**

When the framework is agreed, we should begin a series of work streams to get traction and visibility with partners and citizens including the following.

- Pull together a network group of council and partner agency leads to coordinate / mutually resource the programme
- Reshape and re-align council resources to support members and a community network
- Launch a programme of promotion via social media to engage – signpost – showcase examples of existing work that typifies new approach
- Phase in a mixed market of local engagement - (roll out of local conversations - what's not to like about living here?)
- Support members to re-route customer requests from HYS and promote every council / agency contact as engagement opportunity (customer transformation)
- Shape up community budget options and trial / pilot aligned to new engagement.

## **12. Timetable to Approval and Adoption**

The suggested route map to adoption is set out below:

- Cabinet Planning **15<sup>th</sup> April** - to present /refine the framework
- Start up a key statutory and city partner network in **May / June**– to seek engagement and buy in from partners to develop a route map and agree resources to deliver the framework
- Pre- decision Scrutiny - **June** to seek engagement/ comment and views on the proposals and delivery plan for implementation
- Cabinet **July** – For formal council approval and adoption of the framework
- Community launch as part of the Council's response to the Fairness Commission

## APPENDIX I

### CURRENT CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CASE STUDIES

The **Plymouth Energy Community** is a members' co-operative run by local people to help those who live or work in Plymouth save money on their fuel bills, reduce their energy usage and consider using renewable energy. Membership is open to all, regardless of how you currently pay, making it accessible to those who pay by card or key meter. Working on behalf of its members the co-operative will negotiate with energy companies to find the cheapest suppliers and tariffs for its members.

The new co-operative will share dividends with members as well as reinvesting profits in schemes to tackle fuel poverty and reduce the city's carbon footprint. This will include helping Plymouth generate more of its own power, in particular solar power.

#### **Community Asset Transfer**

Plymouth City Council believes community asset transfer is fundamentally about giving local people and community groups greater control in the future of their area and their community in line with promoting the Council's co-operative agenda. The first transfer under consideration is for Oaks Rugby Club to take over the management of Horsham Playing Fields. If successful this will help the Club to attract funding from a variety of other sources in order to enable the development of existing facilities including upgrading the current changing room to conform with RFU standards, upgrading the pitch to include full drainage, installation flood lighting to enable evening training sessions and the installation of a 3G pitch. The Club will subsequently be able to attract other sports, encouraging even wider community participation, including a social membership facility. The Club works with schools in the Plymstock area and hosts several schools rugby festivals. The development of the existing facilities will enable the Club to increase the quality and quantity of these festivals.

**A Community Economic Development Trust (CEDT)** for the north of the city –run by local stakeholders, with the aim of creating jobs, wealth and economic benefits for the area through creating the conditions for investment, improving infrastructure, facilities and services , and developing opportunities for social enterprise and training. The proposed CEDT area includes Whitleigh, Honicknowle and West Park, Ernesettle and Manadon. We have ring-fenced £3 million in assets, alongside community and business development support of £50k, and additional non-monetary support. A steering group of local stakeholders has been formed to prioritise the development of a number of key assets, and progress the new trust to a legal entity with a fully constituted board.

#### **Whitleigh Big Local**

are lead partners in supporting Whitleigh residents, young people, children and other stakeholders, supported by PCC Neighbourhood Regeneration Team formed a resident led partnership that is endorsed by the Local Trust as the key decision making body for the Big Local (a lottery funded programme ). The Partnership has connected with the wider community through creative engagement approaches and has built a wide network of community champions on the ground. The Partnership are working through the Big Local 'journey' of visioning, creating strong local ownership and writing their plan to allocate a £Million to improve their neighbourhood.

The Plan's themes have been expressed by local people as areas that will improve the neighbourhood alongside which, links are being made with a wide range of match funding initiatives to ensure the Million levers in additional value. Community development practice of local action, decision making, ownership, delivery and enterprise is very much emerging as key elements of the Big Local. The Partnership will be responsible for delivering its Plan over the next 10 years.



**Greenspace Trust Model** - In January 2013, Plymouth's Cabinet agreed a 10 month, investigation in to developing a Greenspace Trust Model, to devolve the management and service delivery of our city's Greenspace back to its communities. Central Park and Derriford are the Pilot areas for this model.

### **Timebanks**

Plymouth City Council has commissioned a local cooperative to support the start-up of Timebanks in communities across the City. Timebanks work on the basis that time can be banked by residents who wish to do each-other favours and help each other out. The Timebanks are a vehicle for community engagement and action, are run by local volunteers and can support community development but are very much a local low key, informal, confidence building network that embeds themselves in community activity and neighbourhood improvement schemes.

### **Neighbourhood Plan – Barne Barton**

The first pilot area for a Neighbourhood Plan in the City is taking shape in Barne Barton through residents leading with support of our Neighbourhood Regeneration Team and Neighbourhood Planning team enabling and facilitating the Neighbourhood Planning process. The process is set within the Localism framework, and is seen locally as a powerful vehicle to improve service provision and facilities within the community. Neighbourhood Regeneration team are helping to shape the engagement and sign up of local people as well as key partners. This includes the support for the Barne Barton Partnership (multi-agency forum) and the emerging Neighbourhood Forum (resident led).

Local community based organisation Tamar View have worked with Plymouth City Council and Locality to bring people together to formulate a Plan that addresses local priorities. Creative approaches to engagement and relationship building are a central focus.

The Plan sets out the community's aspirations for change, a policy framework that will be endorsed through planning policy to bring about change. The process has already started bringing about 'Quick win' changes in response to local aspirations that involve groups of residents and young people working together with agencies to develop solutions to local problems.

### **Plymouth Plan**

The Plymouth Plan early engagement processes tried different ways of capturing peoples vies and opinions across the city and two examples are :

- **The Sofa Conversations:** The Plymouth Plan conversation was held on a sofa that moved around to over forty venues. These events introduced the idea of the Plymouth Plan and encouraged people to talk widely about the City and what they would like to see change in the future. They ran from October 2012 to June 2013. Highlights included the day we knitted and chatted with people in Cornwall Street, Graham Allan MP on the sofa at the Early Years Conference, the Culture Shop in Drake Circus, taking the sofa to the beach, and hosting over 100 people at the Council House in partnership with the Royal Institute of British Architects.
- **The Pop-up Shop:** The 'What's the Future' Pop-up Shop opened from Saturday 8 – 29 June 2013 at 71 New George Street. The shop was open to the general public four days a week Wednesday – Saturday and open for specific groups and meetings on Mondays and Tuesdays. It was also open in the evening on Friday 14, Thursday 20 and Friday 21 June. Approximately 1400 people visited the shop with the busiest days being the Greener Plymouth day and the Health and Wellbeing Day.

## **New Style 'Have your say and do your bit' conversations**

The Council has recognised that traditional style public meetings were bringing in the 'same faces with the same issues' – offloading issues and not taking responsibility for getting involved in solutions. Decision was made and supported by Members to trial different formats and times (e.g. straight after school with children's entertainers) as well as different approaches facilitated by the Neighbourhood Regeneration Team

Have Your Say events are now run that are informal, fun, creative and more engaging. Local community organisations are encouraged to facilitate them, as a means to involve the wider community in their activities (e.g. showcasing their work) and to offer residents lots of opportunities to raise issues, get involved in initiatives that solve them and to build relationships and networks with services providers and other residents.

## **1000 Club and Plan for Jobs**

This is an initiative led by Plymouth City Council Employment Sub Group, whose membership is made up from the private and public sector to support young people into employment through the 1,000 Club which aims to identify 1,000 companies in the Plymouth area to commit to providing a range of jobs, apprenticeships, graduate internships and work experience.

The objectives of the 1000 Club are to:

- Help young people gain experience in work
- Develop and support young people to become effective employees and meet the expectations of employers
- Ensure young people have the aptitude and skills that employers need and are able to support businesses in their growth as well as the local economy.
- Make it easier for young people and potential employers to find each other

## **Integrated Commissioning**

Plymouth City Council has developed a Joint Commissioning team which leads on all commissioning for services relating to citizens and communities. The Clinical Commissioning Group is now co-located with Plymouth City Council's Joint Commissioning Team. The Joint Commissioning Team is promoting regional collaboration and tasks a lead role in the commissioning of the Peninsula Children's framework. It is a partnership between Plymouth, Devon, Torbay, Cornwall and Somerset and aims to improve the quality and sufficiency of the Children's placement market. The Joint Commissioning Team utilise commissioning systems which ensure service user, stakeholder, community and provider involvement at all stages of the commissioning process. This includes involvement and ownership of needs analysis, business planning, specifying and procuring services, and contract management

Building on co-location and existing joint commissioning arrangements the focus will be to establish a single commissioning function, the development of integrated commissioning strategies and pooling of budgets.

## **Commissioning for personalisation – Day Opportunities**

We have changed the way we commission for day opportunities moving from commissioning block based building day care to a framework of suppliers. The new framework is designed in consultation with service users and carers to offer vulnerable and disabled adults an extensive range of day opportunities that respond to individual need and aspirations, promote inclusion, choice and control. The framework sets down pre-determined quality standards, service specifications and an open and transparent pricing structure.

## **Partnership with voluntary and community sector to draw in External Funding**

We are working in partnership with the Community and Voluntary Sector to develop funding bids drawing in external funding to the city. One of our approaches includes using the skills and enthusiasms that exist across all sectors to establish a Social Enterprise model run by older people supported by a strong multi-agency partnership.

## APPENDIX 2 WHAT DO NATIONAL STUDIES SAY TO HELP?

### Accountability and transparency for decision making - (Manchester and Birmingham University 2013)

- This is an academic review of power and transparency in local decision making
- Five equally valid models:
  1. **Representative govt. (Westminster model)** – elected members only making decisions – citizens as voters – community leadership for ward members only
  2. **Representative govt. (telling)** – as above with citizens as passive receivers of information / marketing. Members as community leaders communicating decisions
  3. **Representative govt. (telling and listening)** – as above but with opportunities for citizens to express opinions. Non-elected reps. Reqd. to justify representation. Members as community leaders gathering and leading public opinion
  4. **Representative govt. (interest groups)** - as above but with structured interest groups – area committees / vol. sector forums etc. members as community leaders brokering between representations by interest groups
  5. **Polycentric governance** – citizens as co-decision makers / problem solvers using their experience – creative support to resource this input. Members as community leaders but sharing with citizens as recognised ‘local experts. (they cite this as co-operative councils
- They conclude that the dominant Westminster model may be a barrier to greater community engagement in decision making - i.e. it works against an asset based approach, excluding the capacity of communities to influence and contribute.
- Community governance in model 5 sees citizens bringing their local experience and expertise to support local decisions, increasing buy-in and people doing their bit

***A key question to consider is to what extent on this scale of 1-5 is the council willing to work towards sharing decision making?***