

CABINET

18 JANUARY 2011

MEDWAY'S STRATEGY FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR

"PRIDE IN COMMUNITY SERVICE"

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Howard Doe, Housing and Community Services
Report from: Rose Collinson, Director of Children and Adults
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Summary

This report seeks approval of the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, which sets the direction as to how the Council wants to work with the sector over the next three years.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The Voluntary and Community Sector contribute to the delivery of the Council's six priorities.
- 1.2 The Voluntary and Community Sector often delivers valuable services that are not funded by the Council. Nonetheless, the Council funds a number of Voluntary and Community Sector organisations through grants and contracts, although this funding tends to be non-ring fenced and for non-statutory services.

2. Background

- 2.1 Officers within Adult Social Care have been working with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services to develop a Strategy document that identifies how the Council along with its statutory partners intends to work with and support the Voluntary and Community Sector in Medway.
- 2.2 It is intended that the outcomes within this strategy do not stand alone, but rather complement and support work that is already ongoing with regard to Medway's Sustainable Community Strategy and other documents that define how the Council and its partners work with the Voluntary and Community Sector in Medway.

2.3 The key messages of the Sustainable Community Strategy for supporting the voluntary and community sector are:

- 2.3.1 Develop social enterprise support at local level to equip community organisations to generate their own income and operate efficiently
- 2.3.2 Establish a community chest initiative enabling the delivery of community projects
- 2.3.3 Enable the Voluntary and Community sectors to deliver key services to 'hard to reach' communities

2.4 The Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, "*Pride in Community Service*", addresses how the ambitions, priorities and actions of the Sustainable Community Strategy can be achieved.

2.5 Over the last couple of years officers have been working to develop a strategy that will support the Voluntary and Community Sector in Medway so that real outcomes can be achieved for Medway citizens.

2.6 Following a series of initial meetings with key sector representatives; a consultation document was produced, which officers took for initial discussions to the VOICE membership through their networking lunches and a planned consultation event. VOICE is the representative body for the voluntary and community sector in Medway and its membership is made up of a range of voluntary and community groups across Medway. The feedback from this consultation was clear – sector representatives advised that the format and language of the document was unnecessarily complicated and as a result it was difficult to determine the key messages. Further comments advised that the document was too long. In light of these comments it was agreed that the document should be reviewed and significantly revised.

2.7 Following this consultation, officers have worked with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services to try to translate the vision into a short, clear and coherent document.

2.8 The strategy document being presented to the Cabinet is the result of that work and in light of comments received.

3. Advice and analysis

3.1 The voluntary and community sector plays a key role in reaching out at grassroots level to citizens across Medway. These organisations are usually borne out of emerging gaps in service and to respond to social and community issues and needs.

3.2 Given the Coalition Government's commitment to the "Big Society" and the role of the citizen and the voluntary and community sector within it; supporting the sector in Medway to help itself to be sustainable and continue to reach out to its communities will be of vital importance.

3.3 A Diversity Impact Assessment screening form has been completed and is attached at Appendix 2. The judgement was that the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy does not require a full Diversity Impact Assessment.

4. Risk management

4.1

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Lack of a mechanism for co-ordinated decision making by strategic partners	Voluntary & Community Sector reduces in capacity due to uncoordinated funding decisions	The Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy creates a platform for developing such a mechanism
Gaps in services appear that are not plugged	The Voluntary & Community Sector does not respond to the changing agenda of statutory agencies and the gaps that emerge	The Strategy facilitates a discussion with the Sector to manage the whole community's resources
The Voluntary & Community Sector does not engage with the Strategy	The Voluntary & Community Sector is not responsive to the needs of the community or influencing the planning of services by statutory agencies	Establish strong communication arrangements to ensure delivery of the outcomes in the Strategy

5. Consultation

- 5.1 As previously mentioned in section 2.6, thorough consultation was undertaken with the initial document. This included one to one meetings with key sector representatives and consultation events with VOICE. These consultations revealed that the strategy needed to be significantly revised.
- 5.2 As the outcomes expressed within the Strategy support the work of the LSP and is relevant to all partners, it was important to ensure that the LSP Board and its groups were consulted. Therefore officers presented the Strategy to the LSP Board and many of the LSP partnership groups across the summer. These groups broadly supported the document and its outcomes.
- 5.3 As part of its journey, the document has also been circulated to Corporate Management Team for their views and was presented at Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 December 2010. The Committee recommended the following:
- (a) That the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy be forwarded to the Cabinet for approval;
 - (b) That officers provide a briefing note including a spreadsheet of voluntary and community sector organisations across Medway along with details of what they provide and whether or not they are charitable organisations or supported by Council funding

- (c) That officers provide a glossary of terms used in the Strategy; and
- (d) Welcomed the offer by the Acting Chief Executive of NHS Medway to investigate the possibility of offering the use of Healthy Living Centres in the evening for the voluntary and community sector as meeting venues.

6. Director's Comments

- 6.1 The Strategy will be going to Cabinet on 18 January 2011.
- 6.2 Officers will produce a briefing note as set out above in January 2011. It should be noted that the voluntary and community sector is dynamic and may therefore change and adapt as the environment changes.
- 6.3 A glossary of terms will be produced by officers in January 2011 to accompany the Strategy document.

7. Financial and legal implications

- 7.1 Whilst many Voluntary and Community Sector organisations receive funding from the Council to deliver services, the greater majority do not. These groups and organisations often provide important support, which enables many people to live independently within their communities, without the help of the Council. This support in many cases prevents people from moving into more costly Council funded services and support.
- 7.2 Whilst there are no financial implications arising directly from this report, the establishment of a community chest, as referred to in paragraph 2.3.2, will require a contribution from existing Council budgets. Investing in the voluntary and community sector in this way should prevent or reduce the need for people to directly access more expensive Council services.
- 7.3 This Strategy recognises the importance of ensuring that Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and groups are supported to become self-sustaining without the need to access costly interventions from the Council.
- 7.4 The Coalition Government has expressed its commitment to developing a "Big Society" and is clear that the Voluntary and Community Sector has a key role to play in this important agenda.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The Cabinet is asked to approve the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, as set out in appendix 1 to this report

9. Suggested reasons for decision(s)

- 9.1 The voluntary and community sector plays a vital role at a grassroots level, as it provides important services and support that may prevent people from needing to access significantly more costly services and support.

9.2 Given the Coalition Government's view of the Big Society and the role of the citizen and the voluntary and community sector within it; supporting the sector in Medway to help itself to be sustainable in order that it is able to continue to support the communities in Medway will be of vital importance.

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Background papers

Medway's draft Strategy for Voluntary and Community Sector

Medway's Strategy for the Voluntary and Community Sector

Pride in community service

Picture of sport	Picture of green space
Picture of care/support	Picture of art/culture

Medway's Voluntary Sector Strategy

Foreword:

Given these difficult economic times, the need for partnership between statutory agencies, voluntary and community groups & Medway citizens becomes more crucial. Medway Council takes seriously its role as a community leader to ensure that the appropriate links are made so that there are positive outcomes for all sections of the community.

Unemployment numbers are rising; more people need support and budgets are becoming tighter. At a community and neighbourhood level all citizens of Medway need to work together to enhance employability through volunteering, provide opportunities for people who want to make a contribution and take a more active role in their community.

Much is said about how communities have become fragmented and how the state controls all. It is intended that this strategy will revive community spirit among the communities of Medway and provide a platform for the development of The Big Society in Medway.

It is the role of statutory organisations to harness the resources and goodwill in Medway so that there is a vibrant and sustainable voluntary and community sector that is able to galvanise and organise civic action. It is the intention of Medway Council along with its statutory partners, to work with voluntary and community groups, their representative organisations and Medway citizens so that they are influential partners in building a strong the social and vibrant Medway.

As a result of delivering this strategy, citizens of Medway will see that:

- More people get involved in their local community through volunteering
- Local neighbourhoods are strengthened so that people have a sense of pride and belonging
- People have opportunities to remain active and make positive contributions to their local community
- Voluntary organisations work together to coordinate complementary services for the benefit of the community
- Statutory organisations develop strategic partnerships with the voluntary and community sector

In order to deliver this vision your commitment is needed to achieve the outcomes for Medway that are described in this strategy. With your support and expertise, Medway's voluntary and community sector will be more vibrant and sustainable.

Cllr Howard Doe
**Portfolio Holder for the Voluntary
Sector**



Introduction:

There are currently over 580 organisations in Medway; these organisations cover a wide range from small, grass roots community groups to branches of national charities. Medway Council provides funding support to the sector in excess of £2.3 million per year.

Medway Council along with other statutory organisations fund a relatively small number of voluntary and community organisations. This means that there are a huge number of organisations getting on with the job of supporting the people of Medway and providing opportunities for enjoyment and achievement without accessing funds from these statutory organisations

Voluntary and community groups are so often the glue that holds communities together because they are at the heart of their communities. They promote community cohesion, a sense of belonging and are able to meet the needs of very marginalised and disparate groups in an innovative and cost effective way. Their support, range of skills, creativity and ingenuity are vital in enabling Medway to move forward in these difficult times.

In order to ensure that Medway is, and continues to be, a place where its citizens can feel supported and have their needs met; we believe there are four key priorities we need to focus on.

These are:

1. A **vibrant** sector exists in Medway that supports the community
2. Voluntary and community sector organisations in Medway are supported and are able to be **sustainable**
3. Voluntary and community sector partners feel that they are able to **influence** and contribute to developments in Medway as real partners
4. A **rewarding** experience for those that work and volunteer in the voluntary and community sector

Outcomes for Medway:

1. A vibrant sector exists in Medway that supports the community

What do we mean by a vibrant voluntary and community sector?

The sector is vibrant when it is able to be innovative, flexible and responsive to what people need, new developments, local changes and initiatives.

Why is it important to have a vibrant sector?

It is important to have a vibrant sector so that it can be flexible, proactive, and creative. In order for it to be vibrant there needs to be a mixture of organisations and groups providing a range of opportunities so that all Medway citizens can get their needs met and their aspirations supported in Medway.

The Council are conscious that many people look outside of Medway for their services and support because they are not able to access the range of opportunities and services they need within Medway. Medway Council want to change this.

Community cohesion is best achieved when people have an understanding of each other's beliefs and values and are working together. The voluntary and community sector is an important catalyst in enabling this to happen by creating opportunities through events and regular groups, where people come together to talk about their interests, develop their skills, or learn more about themselves or others. The voluntary and community sector also plays a key role in being an organiser of civic action. One of the important contributions that the voluntary sector can make is by providing opportunities that will bring enjoyment and achievement to a diverse group of people who are brought together through a common interest other than work or statutory education. These opportunities are important in ensuring that community spirit and civic participation remains alive.

Volunteers, and the valuable contribution that they make, can play a huge part in achieving a vibrant voluntary and community sector. Medway as an area is very lucky to have a really diverse range of cultures and communities. These communities all need to have opportunities to celebrate their cultures as well as being supported. A vibrant voluntary and community sector in Medway is vital and will be one that reflects the diverse range of Medway's communities.

What are we doing?

When commissioning services the Council are advertising widely to try to encourage a wide range of organisations into Medway. We are also looking to encourage and support the development of Social Enterprises and other community focused companies that are run by the community, for the community.

The Council has been commissioning services from the voluntary and community sector in Medway to deliver a range of community based initiatives, so that people can access services within their communities rather

than having to travel across Medway to access centralised support or opportunities.

The Council have been talking to various groups in Medway and listening to what they said. By listening to people, we are better able to target money and support in areas where people tell us it is important to them. By doing this we are trying to put Medway citizens at the heart of making choices and decisions about how, when and where their needs are met.

The Council already has in place different funding options from formal contracts to an annual small grants programme so that we can be flexible in supporting a wide range of organisations from very small to large.

Partnership boards which form the Local Strategic Partnership are looking at lots of ways to work together to support local developments and initiatives that will make Medway a great place to live, work and play.

What will we do?

Medway Council are committed to working with our voluntary and community sector partners and are therefore looking at a greater range of options for funding so that there are opportunities to access funding support for all organisations and groups no matter how large or small they are. We are now looking at establishing a Community Chest initiative with statutory partners and local businesses to build on the current range of local funding opportunities that are available and to bring these together. The community chest is a concept of pooled funds from a range of sources that can be used to support local projects and initiatives that make life better for people in Medway.

The Council want to explore and develop opportunities for voluntary and community groups so that they can collaborate and develop partnerships. It is intended that these partnerships and collaborations will enable skills and expertise from different organisations to be brought together and enhanced so that they are in a better position to be able to deliver services and support on behalf of the Council.

The Council want to support and encourage grass roots initiatives and projects championed by local people so that community needs and aspirations are recognised and supported and Medway citizens are more involved the delivery of services and support within their community.

The Council will be working with partners in the voluntary and community sector to develop User Led Organisations (ULOs) in Medway, so that vulnerable people can be supported to have as much choice and control as possible over their lives. ULOs are organisations and groups that are run and managed by disabled people and carers, for disabled people and carers.

The Council will be looking at opportunities and ways to encourage volunteering both within the Council and outside it, so that people from all communities and walks of life can become involved in, and care about, the community that they live in.

How will we know that we have been successful?

- ✓ Medway's Community Chest is established by Summer 2011.
- ✓ Medway's Community Chest is managed and monitored by Medway's Local Strategic Partnership Board
- ✓ Voluntary and community groups are able to receive funding from the Community Chest for projects by Autumn 2011
- ✓ User led organisations are established by December 2010
- ✓ Increase in the number of volunteers, especially from hard to reach groups by 10% each year commencing in April 2011
- ✓ Undertake a mapping exercise to determine the number of "Friends" groups that focus on green space initiatives and sporting activities across Medway. From the established base line, apply a target to increase the number of these groups

2. Voluntary and community sector organisations in Medway are supported and are able to be sustainable

What do we mean?

We want to look at the ways in which we can work with voluntary and community sector organisations to assist them so that they are able to be financially independent of grants and contracts from statutory organisations

Why is sustainability of the voluntary and community sector important?

Although there are a number of voluntary and community sector organisations that receive funding to deliver services on behalf of statutory organisations, there are a great many who do not. Organisations that do not receive funding tend to be the smaller grass roots organisations that are vital to ensuring that communities stick together. These groups often rely on donations and short-life funding streams, which makes it difficult for them to remain sustainable.

We want to ensure that Medway citizens are able to continue to enjoy the wide range of services and community groups currently available and in order to do this we must make sure that Medway has a market place that encourages the creation of new and innovative services and support. This means that we must all work together to ensure that excellent groups and services are able to remain sustainable once pump-priming funding stops so that they are supported to continue in a sustainable future and that new and emerging organisations and groups are able to receive the right help and support to become established.

The transformation agenda in adult social care will present opportunities for small and diverse, organisations to flourish because service users will have individualised budgets that they can spend in any way they like as long as it meets their social care needs.

Whilst 3 year funding from statutory organisations is important there are other options that should be considered to support sustainability. In these difficult financial times, access to external funding opportunities is reducing, so opportunities where voluntary and community groups can collaborate or develop partnerships together will become more and more important. In

addition, a move towards self-sustainability through establishing social enterprises and Community Interest Companies etc. will also support sustainability of important services and projects. Voluntary and Community groups in Medway must be supported to build their capacity in order that they can respond to these challenges and opportunities as well as become more sustainable.

What are we doing in Medway to make the sector more sustainable?

The Council has access to information and advice that can help voluntary and community sector organisations across Medway to access the right funding streams. The Council for Voluntary Services Medway, in its capacity as an independent infrastructure support organisation, can also provide invaluable information, advice and support with funding bids.

The Council is working more closely with its partners in Health to jointly commission services wherever possible, so that resources are used in a more effective and joined up way.

The Council is continuing to develop the COMPACT. The COMPACT funding code of practice is looking at sustainable funding that achieves full cost recovery for the sector; and therefore ensures that organisations can attract a wider range of talented individuals to the sector and invest in their employees so that their talents are developed.

What else do we want to do to support sustainability?

The Council is planning to provide training to voluntary and community sector organisations about its tendering and procurement processes, so that they have a better chance in successfully bidding for funding to deliver services.

The Council want to develop more community-based initiatives including good neighbour schemes and community pay back schemes and to encourage and involve Medway citizens in establishing services and support in their local areas that meet their needs. The Council wants to ensure that new and emerging community groups and organisations have information and access to support that will enable them to develop into social enterprises, community interest companies etc.

Economic Development will provide support to Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and groups which contribute to Medway's prosperity through their employment opportunities.

CVS Medway will provide support to voluntary and community sector organisations and groups, to ensure that they have information about and access to the Big Society Bank.

The Council wants to further develop participation in volunteering in Medway so that people who have found themselves out of work during the economic downturn can develop their skills and experience whilst providing a vital resource to their community. This will mean developing key partnerships with local businesses, the Job Centre and other key partners.

The Council want to look at a variety of options to support voluntary and community sector organisations including different options for funding. This will include contracts, small grants, and the development of the community chest initiative.

The Council wants to build on the training that is being offered and is available to voluntary and community organisations, in order to build their capacity. The training will include more about putting together a successful bid and establishing successful social enterprises and community interest companies.

The Council is working on a social enterprise strategy that will identify what is needed to develop and support more social enterprises, community interest companies etc.

How will we know that we have been successful?

- ✓ 40 or more voluntary sector organisations with 20 paid employees or less receive training about tendering
- ✓ 85% of evaluations received from attendees about the training from the Council are positive
- ✓ Ongoing monitoring of the outcomes of subsequent bids by organisations that have attended tendering workshops
- ✓ An increase of 10% in the number of volunteers who successfully gain employment as a direct result of volunteering.
- ✓ An increase of 15% in the amount of money brought into Medway as a result of successful bids for funding each year commencing April 2011
- ✓ Medway's Voluntary Infrastructure Consortium will agree targets for developing Capacity Building in Medway by April 2011

3. Voluntary and community sector partners are able to influence, and contribute to, developments in Medway as real partners

What do we mean?

Voluntary and community sector organisations and community groups have the opportunity to have a voice about, and contribute to, consultations about decisions that affect them.

Why is it important for the voluntary and community sector to be able to influence and contribute to developments?

Voluntary and community sector organisations and community groups often establish themselves because of a community need that is not being met, which means that they have an unparalleled knowledge and understanding of the real needs and issues for communities. For this reason ensuring that our voluntary and community sector partners are able to contribute to, and have a voice about, what and how services are developed is vitally important.

Statutory organisations are moving more and more away from a “we know best culture” to one of greater inclusion and involvement of both users of services and organisations that support these users.

What are we doing to support this?

In Medway, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and its lead thematic partnerships provides an important mechanism for voluntary and community organisations and groups to make a contribution to, and influence, what is developed in Medway. Across the Council there are a number of Partnership groups and boards that feed into these lead thematic partnerships.

Medway’s Local Involvement Network (LINK) also provides an opportunity for people in Medway to influence how health and social care services are delivered.

When commissioning services, much greater emphasis is given to involving key stakeholders, including voluntary and community groups and the people who use them. The expertise of these stakeholders through experience should contribute to reviewing and shaping services and in selecting the right organisation or provider to deliver that service.

What else do we need to do to develop the level of influence that the sector has?

The Council want to make sure that stakeholder involvement and engagement in shaping and developing services and support becomes part of every day practice and we recognise that there is still much to be done to achieve this. Establishing groups and boards will not ensure involvement and engagement on their own; it will really be about how these groups are run in practice.

The Council have worked hard to consult and engage with the citizens of Medway and we believe that we are much better at doing this. However, to

achieve real engagement we need to do more work. This means listening more, and sharing risks and responsibilities.

How will we know that we have been successful?

- ✓ An annual survey of the voluntary and community sector is undertaken to monitor progress against this strategy
- ✓ From April 2011 establish a monitoring system that records the number of organisations contributing to consultations and shows how that information has made a difference

4. A rewarding experience for those that work and volunteer in the voluntary and community sector

What do we mean?

Both paid staff and volunteers that work for voluntary and community sector organisations and groups are supported to receive good training and development opportunities. Volunteers receive regular and on-going support to enable them to continue to volunteer for as long as they want to.

Why is it important for the voluntary and community sector to be a rewarding experience for the people that work (paid or unpaid) in the sector?

Employees

People that are in paid employment within the voluntary and community sector often do so because they are committed to the community group or interest that the organisation is constituted to serve or promote. There is a sense of public service or enthusiasm that enables employees in this sector to continue to deliver or fundraise in financially challenging times, where funding can be uncertain.

Volunteers

People that volunteer with organisations do so for a number of reasons. They may have an individual interest in the organisation's aims and objectives that may have been prompted by a personal experience. Some people use their volunteering experience to improve their employment options or abilities; and others do so for the sheer enjoyment of being part of something. Equally, volunteers want to provide opportunities to children, young people, adults and older people by way of public service.

Whatever the motivation of employees or volunteers to be part of the voluntary and community sector, it is important that they are supported in whatever capacity that they give of their time. The work that both employees and volunteers are engaged in supports people at a grass roots level and within their communities, fostering community spirit and ownership, all of which, fits with the Coalition Government's vision of The Big Society.

What are we doing to support this?

Employees

The Council values the dedication of employees within the voluntary and community sector and recognises the importance of attracting and retaining excellent staff. The Council is therefore working with Medway Workforce Development Partnership and the Council for Voluntary Services Medway, to ensure that the right training and development opportunities are available for staff.

Volunteers

The Council funds Volunteer Centres to support all individuals from all age groups that want to volunteer in Medway.

The Council has worked with the Council for Voluntary Services and the Volunteer Centres to promote volunteering in Medway. It has funded promotion campaigns and celebratory events to ensure that the community's awareness is raised about how rewarding volunteering can be, the diverse range of opportunities offered and how much volunteering is valued.

Medway Council's Sports Development Team is already creating opportunities for people to become involved in the 2012 Olympics. The Council wants to ensure that local communities have the opportunity to volunteer their support for these initiatives, so that they can be part of this historic event.

What else do we need to do to ensure that the sector continues to provide a rewarding experience?

Employees

The Council wants to create opportunities for employees in the voluntary and community sector to develop their skills for the benefit of themselves, the organisation and the community, through training and secondment opportunities.

Volunteers

The Council also is keen to develop Employer and Employee Supported Volunteering initiatives in Medway so that those who are in work are encouraged and supported to make a contribution to their local community.

The Council will re-commission the Volunteering service so that it is more responsive to the needs of volunteers, the community and the organisations that need volunteers. The Council is keen to create a service that ensures that the social capital (untapped potential of volunteers) is identified and attracted to sharing and developing their talents for the benefit of the community.

The Council will support organisations to meet the Excellence in Volunteer management standards, as set out by Volunteering England.

The Council will recognise the work of volunteers across Medway, by holding a celebratory awards event every two years.

How will we know that we have been successful?

- ✓ Secondment opportunities for both voluntary and community sector staff and statutory organisations staff are in place by April 2011
- ✓ An increase of 25% in number of volunteering opportunities 'sponsored' by employers by 2012
- ✓ A recommissioned volunteering service that provides more opportunities for the wider community and has accreditation to Volunteering England
- ✓ Increase in the number of voluntary and community groups that meet the Excellence in Volunteer management standards, as set out by Volunteering England
- ✓ A volunteer celebration and awards event takes place every two years

Conclusion:

How can you get involved?

The Council wants everyone within the community to become involved in, or benefit from, the initiatives announced in this strategy.

Medway has a strong tradition of public service and this strategy plans to build on the successes and create a stronger foundation for the voluntary sector and community groups in the 21st century.

If you are a voluntary organisation or community group then the key messages of this strategy are:

- The development of a Community Chest in Medway to support local projects and initiatives
- A commitment to support grass roots initiatives and projects
- A commitment to encouraging civic participation
- A commitment to create opportunities for partnerships and collaboration
- Providing voluntary and community groups with the skills to win contracts
- Creating opportunities for Social Enterprise development

If you are an individual employed in the voluntary and community sector or a volunteer then the key messages of this strategy are:

- A commitment to promote volunteering to all sections of the community
- Working with employers in Medway to encourage them to recognise and support volunteering
- A commitment to provide support for training and secondment opportunities
- A commitment to develop skills and experiences to improve opportunities to gain employment
- A commitment to create more opportunities to attract a wider range of talented individuals

If you are a member of the community then the key messages of this strategy are:

- A commitment to ensuring that services and opportunities are sustainable for the benefit of the community
- That communities in Medway benefit from local initiatives like good neighbour schemes
- Medway citizens will have the opportunity to influence the services that are funded by statutory organisations
- Medway citizens will have the opportunity to take greater control of the services and support within their communities, in terms of how, where and when they are delivered
- Greater opportunities for civic involvement and participation

Diversity Impact Assessment: Screening Form

Directorate Adults & Children	Name of Function Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy	
Officer responsible for assessment Jane Love	Date of assessment 23 rd December 2010	New or existing? New
Defining what is being assessed		
1. Briefly describe the purpose and objectives	To support the strategic direction as to how the Council along with its partner will work with the voluntary and community Sector over the next three years. To enable the voluntary and community sector to contribute to the delivery of strategic targets. To support voluntary and community groups in Medway to develop their capacity and to enable them to be sustainable.	
2. Who is intended to benefit, and in what way?	All citizens of Medway, including vulnerable adults and children. Voluntary and community sector groups and organisations both large and small across Medway, of which there are currently around 600.	
3. What outcomes are wanted?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Voluntary and community sector organisations and groups are supported and are able to be sustainable. 2. The voluntary and community sector is vibrant and able to respond to the emerging needs of the citizens of Medway 3. Working or volunteering in the voluntary and community sector is a valuable and rewarding experience 4. Voluntary and community sector partners are able to influence and contribute to developments in Medway as real partners 	
4. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Contribute</u></p> A strong commitment from key VCS organisations to work in partnership with the Council & other statutory partners. Clearly identified issues and needs obtained through an inclusive consultation process. Strong relationships with key VCS partners. Shared strategic objectives through the Community Plan.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Detract</u></p> Limited funding opportunities. Lack of capacity through staff, volunteers and other resources. The way that some organisations and groups choose to organise themselves.

5. Who are the main stakeholders?	Voluntary and community sector organisations and groups in Medway, other Directorates within Medway Council, NHS Medway, other statutory organisations and voluntary and community groups across Medway
6. Who implements this and who is responsible?	Adult Social Care Division & Medway Council

Assessing impact

7. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>racial groups</i>?	YES	During the consultations that took place there were no specific concerns raised with regard to racial groups.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	A thorough consultation process has taken place, which included representatives from BAME communities in Medway. Particular note was made that the original document was too long and was difficult to understand. The strategy was rewritten in light of this and following further consultation no further comment has been received.	
8. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>disability</i>?	YES	During the consultations that took place no specific concerns were raised with regard to people with disabilities
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The consultation process, which included representatives from a range of voluntary, and community sector and statutory stakeholders, were undertaken through focus groups, network lunches and LSP thematic partnerships. These events gave stakeholders an opportunity to share their views and these did not include any specific concerns with regard to people with disabilities.	
9. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>gender</i>?	YES	There is a common view that both staff and volunteers within the voluntary and community sector are predominantly women. This strategy has been written to reflect equally the needs and aspirations of both genders and seeks to encourage work in the sector as a valid career choice.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	A thorough consultation process across voluntary and community sector and statutory stakeholders ensure the representatives of this group had the opportunity to share their comments.	
10. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>sexual orientation</i>?	YES	Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	This is flagged up for consideration on a Council wide basis	
11. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential	YES	Brief statement of main issue

impact due to <i>religion or belief</i> ?	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	We do not have specific data from consultations to be confident that religious groups have been consulted. However, this will be addressed as part the next review of the strategy.	
12. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to people's <i>age</i> ?	YES	There is a view that volunteers predominantly are from the retired community. The strategy seeks to promote volunteering across all age groups.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	A thorough consultation process enabled representatives across different age groups to comment on the strategy. No issues were identified	
13. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>being transgendered or transsexual</i> ?	YES	Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	This is flagged up for consideration on a Council wide basis	
14. Are there any <i>other</i> groups that would find it difficult to access/make use of the function (e.g. people with caring responsibilities or dependants, those with an offending past, or people living in rural areas)?	YES	The consultation process did not identify any other areas for concern.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The strategy is available on request and will be in hard copy or electronically	
15. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential impact due to <i>multiple discriminations</i> (e.g. disability <u>and</u> age)?	YES	Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Please see above	

Conclusions & recommendation

16. Could the differential impacts identified in questions 7-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact?	YES	Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
17. Can the adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or another reason?	YES	Please explain N/A
	NO	
Recommendation to proceed to a full impact assessment?		

NO	This function complies with the requirements of the legislation and there is evidence to show this is the case.	
NO BUT ...	What is required to ensure this complies with the requirements of the legislation? (see DIA Guidance Notes)?	Expertise is being developed to understand the profile of voluntary and community groups, volunteers and staff as regards sexual orientation and religion or belief in an unobtrusive way when undertaking consultations.
YES	Give details of key person responsible and target date for carrying out full impact assessment (see DIA Guidance Notes)	

Action plan to make Minor modifications		
Outcome	Actions (with date of completion)	Officer responsible

Planning ahead: Reminders for the next review	
Date of next review	December 2011
Areas to check at next review (e.g. new census information, new legislation due)	Impact of the implementation of Fair Access to Care Services Impact of Self Directed Care Services New census information Coalition Government's Big Society agenda The Localism Bill
Is there <i>another</i> group (e.g. new communities) that is relevant and ought to be considered next time?	No

Signed (completing officer/service manager) Jane Love	Date	23 rd December 2010
Signed (service manager/Assistant Director) Genette Laws	Date	4 th January 2011