

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
2.	<b>Date:</b>	Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2011
3.	<b>Title:</b>	Local Democracy Campaign 2011/12
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	Commissioning, Policy &, Performance

### 5. Summary

This report provides an update on the Local Democracy Campaign including what activities are going to take place in Local Democracy Week (LDW) taking place between 10<sup>th</sup>-16th October this year and the latest annual programme of events to ensure local democracy is a year long campaign.

### 6. Recommendations

#### That Members:

- To note the activities taking place in this years Local Democracy Week and Local Democracy Campaign.
- Refer to Cabinet Member for Community Development, Equality & Young People's issues.

## **7. Proposals and details**

### **7.1 Background**

The Local Democracy Campaign (LDC) is supported by the Local Government Association (LGA) and is about getting young people more involved with, and aware of, their local council. Research for the LGA by Ipsos MORI shows that just a quarter of 11-16 year olds believe that their local councillor is the best person to approach in order to change something in their community. The same research shows that just one in three 11-16 year olds have ever met a councillor or MP, and states that those who have are much more likely to express feelings of political engagement and interest.

The LDC therefore is aimed at bringing politicians and young people closer together through various networking events. The main focal point for the campaign is Local Democracy Week (LDW) which takes place during October each year and involves councils and schools across the country taking part in various events to promote democracy in their area. The Local Democracy Week in 2011 is taking place between 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October and includes activities such as the 'launch of the Youth Cabinet Manifesto', 'Panel Discussion on Campaigning', 'Political Speed Dating', 'Top Dog Challenge' and 'Take your Councillor to School'.

### **7.2 Local Democracy Campaign Activities**

Rotherham has been celebrating LDW for 6 years now, with many different events taking place across the borough. See Appendix 1 for an outline of all the events that have taken place since April 2011 to date.

The 2010/11 programme was a fantastic success and saw a much greater enthusiasm and involvement across the whole council than in previous years and this year's (2011/12) campaign is continuing in the same vein. It seems the Local Democracy message through the 'One Town One Community' vision is spreading and more people are seeing the potential these events can have on citizenship, cohesion and community empowerment, as well as improving understanding and awareness in Rotherham of the Council and roles of local councillors.

Although the target group for LDC and LDW is 11 – 16 year olds, a number of events have also taken place within primary schools across the borough in previous years, as well as colleges. The Local Democracy Campaign in Rotherham is aimed at everyone; the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Equalities and Young People's Issues has strongly advocated that

democracy affects everyone which is why we have taken a much more open approach towards including activities.

The Local Democracy Week and Campaign 2011/12 includes a diverse range of activities ranging from mainstream activities in our Voice and Influence Unit in the Young People Services and Area Assemblies to externally funded activities such as VAR activities, Parliamentary Outreach Service, Golden 7 Project and Tackling Race Inequalities Funding, which have added value to our existing activities such as Area Assemblies, VCS organisations and One Town One Community activities.

## **8. Finance**

The costs of running the existing events that comprise LDW have been met from within current resources and external funding, and the programme should be continued subject to mainstream resources been maintained in this challenging climate.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

There is a risk that some of the local people and vulnerable groups will continue to be disengaged, if we do not engage them in our political and democratic processes.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

New guidance emerging across a range of community empowerment and engagement issues is being reflected in the new Localism Bill and the Big Society.

The Localism Bill is seeking to put an end to the hoarding of power within central government and top-down control of communities, allowing local people the freedom to run their lives and neighbourhoods in their own way. The Bill contains a radical package of reforms that seeks to devolve greater power and freedoms to councils and neighbourhoods, establish powerful new rights for communities, revolutionise the planning system, and give communities control over housing decisions.

The Big Society is about helping people to come together to improve their own lives. It's about putting more power in people's hands – a massive transfer of power from Whitehall to local communities.

There are three key parts to the Big Society agenda:

- **Community empowerment:** giving local councils and neighbourhoods more power to take decisions and shape their area. Planning reforms lead by DCLG, will replace the old top-down planning system with real power for neighbourhoods to decide the future of their area.

- **Opening up public services:** our public service reforms will enable charities, social enterprises, private companies and employee-owned co-operatives to compete to offer people high quality services.
- **Social action:** encouraging and enabling people to play a more active part in society. National Citizen Service, Community Organisers and Community First will encourage people to get involved in their communities.

On a local level, engaging communities and ensuring no community is left behind by talking and listening to all our customers and treating everyone fairly and with respect is a council priority through the Corporate Plan.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Appendix 1- Programme of Activity (2011/12)

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## Appendix 1- Local Democracy Campaign 2011/12

### Programme of Events for Local Democracy Week 10<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Lead	Date	Activity
Voice & Influence Unit	Tues 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Youth Cabinet Manifesto Launch @ Town Hall with Daniel Wood (Houses of Parliament Outreach Service)
Rother Fed	Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Panel Discussion on Campaigning
Rother Valley South Area Assembly activities		
	Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	Top Dog Challenge, Dinnington Resource Centre
		Political Speed Dating, St. Bernards School, 4pm
	Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> October	Political Speed Dating, Dinnington Comprehensive School, 4pm
	Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> October	Take your councillor to school, Dinnington and Wales Schools, AM/PM
		Meet your councillor on the bus, evening
	Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> October	Political Speed Dating, Riverside, 1-3pm
		Political Speed Dating, Wales School, 4pm
	Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	Primary School Events TBC
		Visit to Parliament, date to be confirmed
		Tea with Mayor and tour of Town Hall, date to be confirmed.
Activities in other Area Assemblies TBC		

Voice & Influence activities where young people have made positive contributions towards democracy, engagement and empowerment that have taken place this financial year from April 2011

Lead	Date	Activity
RMBC Voice & Influence Team	11 <sup>th</sup> April	Youth Cabinet, UKYP & LAC Council Training Day
	12 <sup>th</sup> April	Anti Fascism Day Trip to Beth Shalom for Youth Cabinet, UKYP & LACC
	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	Youth Cabinet Meeting @ Town Hall
	18 <sup>th</sup> May	Voice & Influence group

Lead	Date	Activity
		making a positive contribution by Interviewing adults for Youth Service positions in new Youth Service restructure
	25 <sup>th</sup> June	Youth Cabinet, UKYP & LAC Council Training Day @ Thornhill
	28 <sup>th</sup> June	UK Youth Parliament Meeting – Community Involvement
	July 10	Looked After Children's Council Meeting – Consultation Development (28 <sup>th</sup> June)
	5 <sup>th</sup> July	Youth Cabinet Meeting @ Town Hall
	9 <sup>th</sup> July	IYSS Conference @ Magna – Voice & Influence Standards & Principles
	13 <sup>th</sup> July	Local Development Framework Consultation – V&I Subgroup
	15 <sup>th</sup> July	Voice & Influence Presentation at Town Hall by young people to inform 'Your Turn' democracy course for Rotherham young people.
	19 <sup>th</sup> July	UK Youth Parliament Meeting – Community Involvement.
	19 <sup>th</sup> July	Looked After Children's Council Meeting – Consultation Development
	23 <sup>rd</sup> July	UK Youth Parliament Regional Meeting in Leeds
	3 <sup>rd</sup> August	Youth Cabinet, UKYP & LAC Council Training Day & Activity
	5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> August	V&I Residential Sycamore Lakes – Activities around Globalisation, Famine in East Africa & Fair Trade
	1 <sup>st</sup> Sept	Youth Cabinet, UKYP & LAC Council Training Day

#### General VAR Activities

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
VAR	19.04.11	Volunteer Centre Open Day	Let people know how to volunteer, what volunteering opportunities are available and how VCS can be supported to recruit and support volunteers.
VAR	06.05.11	Dave's Big Idea	To give people the opportunity to find out more about what a social enterprise is and how to go about setting up a

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
			social enterprise
DART	07.05.11	DART Open Day	Local communities finding out about what is available in their area and how to get involved.
Rotherfed	12.05.11	Rotherham Deaf Community Open Meeting	An open meeting for all the deaf community to discuss and influence services available for deaf people in Rotherham.
Rotherham Stay Put	13.05.11	Rotherham Staying Put Launch	Offering support and advice for vulnerable people providing options to get your home repaired, improved or adapted so they can stay in their own homes for longer.
Age UK Rotherham	16.05.11	Information day for older people	An information day has been arranged for the older people within Rotherham to find help and support about the services AGE UK provides.
RAIN	10.06.11	RAIN Information day	An opportunity for VCS to publicise their services and for members of the public to find out about what is happening locally
VAR	14.06.11	Volunteer strategy interactive workshop	Development of a borough wide volunteer strategy
LINK Rotherham	17.06.11	National Carers Week Event	Helping carers get the recognition they deserve, helping carers understand that they are carers and raising awareness of where carers can go for support.
Rotherham Older peoples Forum	21.06.11	Older people's event - What Matters to You?	An opportunity for older people to influence Borough wide policy and find out about the help and support available to them.
VAR	27.06.11	Changes in Rotherham - better or worse?	Raising awareness of the latest results of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation for Rotherham and finding ways in which the VCS may be able to improve the results in Rotherham in the future
Inspire Rotherham	27.06.11	Inspired Rotherham Dissemination event	Getting involved in a literacy strategy for Rotherham
Rotherfed	28.07.11	Rotherfed Quality Awards	The awards not only recognise the hard work of the 34 TARAs affiliated to Rotherfed, but are designed to improve quality standards by providing examples of excellence.
VAR	29.06.11	Demonstrating the value of 3rd sector in Rotherham	Results of research aimed to help VCS be more effective at demonstrating the value of their own organisations
Rotherham Older peoples Forum	29.06.11	Older peoples event	An opportunity for older people to influence Borough wide policy and find out about the help and support available to them.
Rural Action Yorkshire	30.06.11	Rotherham Rural Network Meeting	Advice and information for VCS in Wentworth on funding, volunteers, running groups, and rural issues
Rotherham	01.07.11	Older peoples event	An opportunity for older people to

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
Older peoples Forum			influence Borough wide policy and find out about the help and support available to them.
LINK Rotherham	07.07.11	Getting to the heart of the matter	An opportunity for young people to find out about services that is available to them.
Sheffield YWCA	07.07.11	Fleming Gardens drop in	An opportunity for young people to find out about services that is available to them.
Rotherham Interfaith Group	11.07.11	Community Garden Course	The course aims to support local people to design and develop a garden with fruit, vegetables, flowers and trees.
Rotherham Cancer Care Centre	21.07.11	Cancer Care Centre open day	Opening of Care Centre.
Tassibee	28.07.11	Tassibee cancer awareness event	An opportunity for women to meet health care professionals specialising in cancer care , to find out about support available, get questions answered around cancer and find out about volunteer opportunities
VAR	20.09.11	VCS meeting with RMBC Chief Executive	An opportunity for VCS to maintain links with RMBC and understand and influence any policy or strategic direction.
VAR	23.09.11	The odd couple	An opportunity for VCS to find out more about Trade Unions and provide opportunities for the VCS to work in partnership with Community TU.
Rural Action Yorkshire	26.09.11	Rotherham Rural Network Meeting	Advice and information for VCS in Maltby on funding, volunteers, running groups, and rural issues
VAR and TfR	27.09.11	Advice Surgeries	One to one advice sessions for VCS in need of information or advice on building the capacity of their group or organisation

#### Golden 7 Project Activities

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
Rother fed	15 <sup>th</sup> April	A Community Action Day held at Lee Croft, Birks Holt, Maltby	The fun-packed event included a children's litter pick, Easter egg hunt and community clean up with two skips. A colouring competition allowed all children to take part in an activity. The Community Bus gave out free lunches for 60 children. A volunteer from Flanderwell TARA drove the Mayor's bus so 16 young people from their community could come and join the fun. Rawmarsh TARA volunteers manned the community bus all day helping children complete a basic questionnaire, asking what they thought



Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
			of their local estate. These questionnaires were provided to Area Assembly teams and will help inform future safer neighbourhood priorities on the estate. The Rotherham Wardens provided litter-pickers and helped children find egg tokens which had been placed near sites which need to be cleaned up. Staff from Willmott Dixon Partnerships was on hand to help residents load the skips and remove rubbish. This estate action day was a great example of joint working and resident action with community members taking a leadership role.
Rother Fed	17 <sup>th</sup> August	Picnic by the Water Event at Thrybergh Country park	More than 100 people attended the Picnic By the Water event for the elderly. Organised by Golden Seven volunteers from the Wentworth North area, a fantastic time was had by all with a mixture of great food, entertainment and much more. Many people travelled to Thrybergh Country Park on a vintage bus loaned by South Yorkshire Transport Museum. Entertainment included a giant pass the parcel, a prize raffle and music from Shiloh Choir as well as an excellent lunch provided by volunteers. The more craft orientated attendees made jewellery during the afternoon. Picnic by the Water was an opportunity to ask questions and work with officers from various agencies including Council officers in an informal and unthreatening way. Area Assembly consultation forms were shared with and completed by people attending.

#### Rotherham's One Town One Community

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
REMA	May 2011	REMA Hustings event	BME communities in Rotherham were able to directly engage with political leaders and voice their opinions
REMA	2011	Active Citizens Programme	REMA is co-delivering this international project with Voluntary Action Rotherham in Rotherham and Mirpur (Kashmir). 15 young adults (18-35

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
			<p>year olds) are participating in the programme to improve their understanding about a multicultural society both locally and globally and to make change happen in their communities.</p>
<p>RMBC, Yemeni Centre, Police &amp; RUSCT</p>	<p>18<sup>th</sup> June</p>	<p>Arab Women's engagement event</p>	<p>Organised as a follow up to the last Arab Engagement Event in February 2011 where women at the event raised issues relating to education and schools. Approximately 25 women from Arabic-speaking communities attended. The event was organised by Police with support from RMBC Community Engagement Team. The RMBC School Effectiveness Service ran a workshop for women to explain her role and the support available to pupils and parents. Women were then able to raise questions and concerns which Bev will take forward to find solutions. RUCST also ran a workshop to listen to the needs of women in promoting health and physical exercise.</p>
<p>RMBC Community Engagement Team/Common</p>	<p>July 7<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>'Your Turn' course</p>	<p>26 year 9 students from five schools in</p>

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
<p><b>Purpose Programme</b></p>			<p>Rotherham took part in an exciting 'Your Turn' course that is part of the Common Purpose programme, designed to encourage young people to take a more active part in influencing change in our society. The students had the chance to interview Cllrs Mahroof Hussain and Dominic Beck about their journey into local politics, followed by an in-depth question and answer session about what a difference they felt they had made in the community and their advice on getting involved in roles in public life.</p> <p>The Voice and Influence officers attended, alongside a number of young special guests who have all played an active part in the local community and brought about positive change as a result of Voice and Influence.</p>
<p><b>RMBC Community Engagement Team/Parliamentary Outreach Team</b></p>	<p>21<sup>st</sup> November 2011</p>	<p><b>Getting Involved in Parliament</b></p>	<p>To raise awareness amongst the VCS about the work of the Outreach Service &amp; what they can provide for community organisations; and Parliamentary processes such as Select Committees and legislation. Further workshops</p>

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
			will be organised for RMBC officers and Elected Members in Jan/Feb 2012

**Tackling Race Inequalities Fund Activities 2011**

Lead	Date	Activity	Outcomes
RMBC Community Engagement team/WEA	July-August 2011	Making Your Voice Heard Course	Empowering BME communities to overcome their cultural and language barriers to get involved in decision making. The outcomes from this course enabled the learners to access mainstream services such as community safety and health and social care services. They also learnt how to get involved in local politics and local democracy such as Area Assemblies and PACT meetings.