

**SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL – SCOPING TEMPLATE**

<b>REVIEW TOPIC:</b>	<b>Review of the Government’s emerging Big Society Agenda and its implications for the Council in order to identify suitable policy priorities in response.</b>
<b>LEAD SCRUTINY MEMBER</b>	Mr. Pain has been appointed by the Commission to chair the Panel in its second phase.
<b>OFFICER SUPPORT</b>	Chief Executives (Community Planning Branch).
<b>RATIONALE</b>	<p>This second phase follows the reporting of the Panel’s ‘interim’ findings to the Commission in January. There were areas of work which had yet to be explored which the Panel felt needed to be taken account of.</p> <p>The Panel’s review aims to set out where the Council should focus its efforts engagement with key stakeholders (as outlined below) in order to prepare for the Big Society, broadly focusing on how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public services can be opened up;</li> <li>• Social action can be promoted; and</li> <li>• How communities can be empowered.</li> </ul>
<b>PURPOSE OF REVIEW /OBJECTIVES</b>	<p>To consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Government’s Localism Bill and its likely implications along with other key emerging documents such as the Green Paper on ‘Modernising Commissioning’;</li> <li>• evidence from various voluntary organisations, the Interfaith Forum for Leicestershire, District, Borough and Parish Councils, the Police and County Council departments;</li> <li>• the potential risks associated with the effective delivery of the ‘Big Society’ and the measurability of outcomes;</li> <li>• detailed information on the formation of mutuals, co-operatives and social enterprises.</li> <li>• the “rights and responsibilities” inherent in the ‘Big Society’ concept;</li> <li>• Engagement with the business community</li> </ul>

<b>TIMESCALE</b>	Late May - December 2011
<b>METHODOLOGY/ APPROACH</b>	The review has already looked at the Government's Big Society concept and its potential implications for existing council policy of supporting and engaging with the voluntary and community sector. The first phase highlighted the above specific areas to be considered.
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	To advise the Scrutiny Commission and Cabinet on the potential implications of the Big Society agenda, the Localism Bill and possible policy and VCS support changes in response.
<b>CONSULTATION/ COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<p>The Panel has already consulted VAL. It will now consult with other voluntary/community sector groups and organisations, the Interfaith Forum, District/Borough Councils, the Police, County Council departments and representatives of the business community.</p> <p><i>[It will be necessary to programme in regular reports from the Review Panel to the Scrutiny Commissioners to ensure that the focus of the review remained appropriate, given the rapidly changing agenda, both nationally and locally, and the range of issues which the Panel could consider.]</i></p>
<b>PUBLICITY</b>	The outcome of the review will be published. The Council has good channels for consulting with the VCS and related stakeholders so it is unlikely wider publicity will be required. The Panel might choose to publicise the review to ensure wider representations.
<b>RISKS AND BARRIERS</b>	The Panel has already identified that there is a lack of clarity emerging from central government – this remains a risk. There is also a risk that the review may become too unwieldy and unfocused, given the broad topic at hand. The austere public sector spending environment will be a key constraint on the practicality of different policy responses and will need to be taken into account in the Panel's recommendations.

**DRAFT PROJECT PLAN**  
**(LATE MAY – cDECEMBER 2011)**

**Meeting 1 (end of May)**

<p>Consideration of the increased role of charities, social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives in public service delivery.</p> <p>Presentation by Nicole Rickard on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Success stories in the County;</li><li>• Agencies that can provide assistance in this area;</li><li>• How opportunities can be publicised.</li></ul>	<b>Nicole Rickard to advise</b>
<p>Meeting with representatives of/consideration of written submissions by County Council departments on areas where service provision may benefit from 'Big Society' thinking.</p> <p>Discussion with Simon Nearney – Chair of Social Enterprise Group.</p>	<b>Advised by witnesses</b>

**Meeting 2**

<p>Exploration of the Government's Localism Bill and how this feeds into the Big Society concept.</p> <p>Key areas are likely to include ways in which the Bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lifts the burden of bureaucracy;</li><li>• Empowers communities to do things their way;</li><li>• Increases local control of public finance;</li><li>• Diversifies the supply of public services;</li><li>• Opens up government to public scrutiny;</li><li>• Strengthens accountability to local people.</li></ul> <p>Some specific areas of the Bill that will be of interest will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Changes to local authority governance;</li><li>• Community rights to challenge;</li><li>• Allocation of funds to communities via the Community Infrastructure Levy;</li><li>• Plans and Strategies – abolition of RSSs/Neighbourhood Plans;</li><li>• Community ownership of assets</li></ul> <p>Consideration of Nick Clegg's 'Essential Guide to Decentralisation and the Localism Bill'.</p> <p>Consideration of how the Bill can assist in decentralising decision making from the County Council.</p> <p><i>It may be necessary to track any changes made to the Localism Bill as the review progresses.</i></p>	<b>Nicole Rickard to advise</b>
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<p>Identification of any further key stakeholders from whom to request written submissions on current activity and identification of those to be invited to future meetings beyond those outlined below.</p>	<p><b>Panel</b></p>
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### **Meeting 3**

<p>Meeting with representatives of a sample of voluntary and community sector organisations (suggestion: Lutterworth One Stop Shop and Vale of Belvoir Community Interest Company) on their role and how the Council can better support them. This session to include some consideration of existing Big Society project case studies.</p> <p>Consideration of how the Council can contribute to the 'European Year of Volunteering' 2011. <b>Emma McClarkin MEP to be contacted in advance of this session for her views.</b></p> <p><i>Some written submissions may be available from some voluntary sector groups who have already had involvement with the County Council on 'Big Society' projects.</i></p>	<p><b>Advised by witnesses</b></p>
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### **Meeting 4**

<p>Consideration of written submissions/presentations from district councils, parish councils, the Inter-Faith Forum and the Police.</p> <p>Consideration of the extent to which parish councils are able/interested in running services, some of examples of where they currently do and feedback of ideas from briefing session held in April.</p> <p>Involvement of GPs on commissioning of healthcare.</p>	<p><b>Nicole Rickard to advise</b></p>
<p>A look at the rights and responsibilities inherent in the Big Society concept and the promotion of social action.</p> <p>Work on measurability of outcomes and monitoring of service provision.</p>	<p><b>Nicole Rickard to advise</b></p>

### **Meeting 5**

<p>The role of Community Forums in the Big Society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can their role be developed to encourage public involvement?</li> <li>• How can they assist in sending out messages about service delivery opportunities?</li> <li>• What have they already achieved?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Nicole Rickard to advise</b></p>
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### **Meeting 6**

<p>The role of Community Forums in the Big Society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can their role be developed to encourage public involvement?</li><li>• How can they assist in sending out messages about service delivery opportunities?</li><li>• What have they already achieved?</li></ul>	<p><b>Nicole Rickard to advise</b></p>
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### **Meeting 7**

<p>Meeting with Fiona Holbourn from Corporate Resources about commissioning of services and procurement arrangements.</p>	<p><b>Nicole Rickard to advise</b></p>
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### **Meeting 8**

<p>Review of Evidence and information.</p> <p>Identification of any further information and advice/meetings required.</p> <p>Is more information likely to emerge from Central Government?</p>	<p><b>Panel</b></p>
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**Matter for the Panel to decide at this stage whether it wishes to pursue further meetings or would like to finalise its report.**