



Your Voice Your City...

Supporting Communities, Sharing Knowledge, Shaping Policy

Your Voice Your City Ebulletin: December 2012

All of us at LVSC would like to wish you a happy holiday season and all the best for the New Year. We will be back in touch in 2013!

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Your Voice Your City news

Social Investment: a new route to funding?

We would like to thank our speakers and all those who attended our recent event on Social Investment. We will shortly be producing a report from the event, and in the meantime, you can find all the [presentations from our speakers here](#).

Integrated Offender Management Board and VCS engagement survey

Are you working with your local Integrated Offender Management Board or would you like to become better engaged with them? If so, please help LVSC gather baseline data on levels of voluntary and community sector engagement in London by [completing our \(very short – we promise, less than five minutes\) survey](#).

Safer Future Communities VCSE Network Launch

LVSC are holding a formal launch for the London Safer Future Communities voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector network on 14 February at Amnesty International's Human Rights Action Centre, London EC2A 3EA. London's Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Stephen Greenhalgh, will deliver the keynote speech and describe how he would like to engage London's VCSE sector in reducing crime and improving community safety. Please [visit us here](#) to find out more or book a place.

Smart companies innovate...with community engagement

LVSC and business unusual are holding an event on 26th February showcasing examples of innovation in business-community engagement to a cross-sector audience. It will focus on how businesses are utilising the strengths of the VCS and Social Enterprise sectors and offer opportunities for cross sector introductions and networking

To book a place please click [here](#)

Data Jamming:

an active peer learning event on using data for change

February 2013 (date tbc)

In order to support the VCS to gain a greater understanding of open data and its relevance and to identify how best to take forward LVSC's TLI work LVSC will be holding and a one day peer learning event which will work with academics, practitioners, VCS infrastructure or support service providers, and open data experts to:

- Increase awareness of open data and other online information resources
- Increase the confidence of VCS to use data that is available
- Increase the confidence of VCS to produce and share it's own open data
- Recognise the need for 'stats and stories' and explore the use of social media and digital media for intelligence and planning;
- Rapidly prototype some 'intelligence hub' products to learn about what an intelligence hub should produce

- Build new networks and contacts to sustain the next steps of learning about open data

For you are interested in attending then please do contact Deirdre McGrath at Deirdre@lvsc.org.uk

LVSC is currently advertising two consultancy roles.

LVSC are seeking a consultant who can support the development of the London Safer Future Communities VCSE network between January and March 2013

They are also seeking a consultant who can support the development of the intelligence gathering service between January and September 2013

The deadline for submissions to deliver these pieces of work is 10am 8th January 2013. They expect to interview on 14th January 2013.

For further information please click [here](#)

London news

Mayoral news

Mayor announces development of high-tech institute

With Prime Minister David Cameron, Mayor Boris Johnson announced plans for a £50 million technical and creative institute to be built in London. The project will be funded by the Government and delivered with the Greater London Authority. A feasibility study into costs and potential locations is currently being carried out and is due to be completed early in the new year. [The full announcement is available here.](#)

Takeaways toolkit to help promote healthy eating launched

The toolkit is available to London boroughs to help make it easier to balance the need for the economic income from takeaways with the general poor effect they have on citizens' health. [The toolkit is available to download here.](#)

London transport fares to rise above inflation

Recently announced annual fare increases to travel in London have worried commuters as most of the increases are above the rate of inflation. The changes are listed on the [Transport for London website here](#), and coverage of the increase is available from [MayorWatch here](#).

London Assembly investigations

Call for evidence on airport capacity

The London Assembly's Transport Committee recently launched its investigation into the capacity of London's airports. The mayor and a range of businesses and aviation groups say there is a need for additional capacity. By contrast, other aviation groups and environmental campaigning groups say there is no crisis. [More information, including how to contribute evidence to the investigation, is available here.](#)

How good is London's career guidance?

The London Assembly is currently looking for evidence for its investigation into adult career guidance in London. The investigation will look into what constitutes high quality guidance and whether or not there are currently any gaps in provision. The deadline for contributing to the investigation is 25 January 2013, and [contact details and more information are available here](#).

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) is developing their fifth London Safety Plan (LSP5) which sets out how the fire and rescue service in London will be delivered over the next few years. LSP5 is their Integrated Risk Management Plan, produced in line with the government's national framework for the fire and rescue service.

LFEPA met on 22 November and considered an initial draft of LSP5. This initial draft and all of the supporting documents can be [found here](#).

A further draft of LSP5 will be considered by LFEPA in January 2013, including details of any proposed operational savings, which will depend very much on the government grant settlement due to be announced in December. It is expected that there will be a decision by LFEPA members on draft proposals at the January meeting, after which a full public consultation will be carried out, giving all Londoners a chance to have their say on any proposals.

London Councils

New report calls on Government to unblock 54,000 homes

As announced by London Councils on its website: "Up to 54,000 new homes in the capital could begin construction almost immediately if the government lifts an artificial cap on local housing authority borrowing." More information is available from the [London Councils website here](#).

London facing primary school shortage of 90,000 places

Following the November London Councils Summit, Chair of London Councils, Mayor Jules Pipe, wrote to Education Secretary Michael Gove warning that demand was rising far more rapidly than had been previously thought. [In his letter published in the Guardian](#), Mayor Pipe said that "the shortfall is now likely to be 90,000 school places in the capital by 2015, and the cost of meeting this is expected to be a staggering £2.3 billion – and this figure accounts for the capital alone."

National news

Mixed reactions to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement

On 5 December 2012, Chancellor George Osborne gave his [Autumn Statement to Parliament](#). As a reaction to the continued volatility of the international economy, the Autumn Statement announced that the Government would focus on protecting the economy, growth and fairness. Reactions to the Statement included:

- [New Economic Foundation's analysis](#) that begins by saying: "The Government's economic policy is failing on its own terms."
- [Analysis in the Telegraph](#) that quotes PwC saying: "Middle England are the biggest losers."
- [BBC round-up of headlines](#) from the following days, plus an [at-a-glance summary](#) of key points
- [Welcome from the scientific community](#) following the announcement of £600 million for eight strands of research, including synthetic biology, energy storage and advanced materials
- [Overview in the London Evening Standard](#) of key points

First Government websites migrate to GOV.UK

The Cabinet Office recently announced the successful migration of two departmental websites over to the cross-Government GOV.UK website. For the first time, all departmental information (that was formerly published on individual websites) will be available to the public in one place. From speeches to announcements and consultations, people will be able to search by topic or department. More departments will be moving their material over to the site in the coming months, as will other organisations and public bodies. [GOV.UK is available here](#), and the [Cabinet Office announcement here](#).

New powers for consumer access to data

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills announced the launch of the "midata" programme, which allows consumers greater access to the personal information businesses hold about them. There is currently no duty on businesses to release data about a consumer's consumption or transactions, and midata makes the case for this to become regularly available and easily accessed. More information on organisations supporting this initiative, along with consultation responses and ways midata applications could be used [are available from BIS here](#).

DWP expands Access to Work support for disabled workers

The Department for Work and Pensions announced an expansion of its Access to Work programme for disabled people, which includes providing more financial support for specialised equipment and other costs, as well as encouraging employers to think creatively when searching for solutions to help support individual workers. Included in the expansion is a number of recommendations made by the Access to Work expert panel, such as paying for the transfer of equipment, which will help employees move jobs more easily, and providing additional advice and partnership working between Access to Work advisors and employers. [More information, including how to apply for this support, is available here](#).

New report from SEUK calls for strengthened Public Services Act

New report "The Shadow State" argues that social enterprises and charities are being driven out of public service markets, leaving only a few large companies providing the majority of outsourced services. The report recommends using open-book accounting, on all public sector contracts worth more than £250,000, and also calls on the government to strengthen the Public Services (Social Value) Act. Coming into law in January, the Act currently only asks that organisations *consider* social value; SEUK is asking the Government to make social value a *requirement* when commissioning and purchasing services. [The Shadow State is available from Social Enterprise UK online here](#).

Think tank says housing associations should report social value

Respublica says in its latest report *Acting on Localism: the role of housing associations in driving a community agenda*, that housing associations, not communities, have the resources to benefit from localism. [A full article and link to the report are available from Inside Housing.](#)

College launches business case for adult social work

The College of Social Work is in the midst of proving that further cuts to the industry would prove to be a false economy. The College's business case rejects the recent Audit Commission call for councils to replace social workers with non-professionals in some areas and is hoping to prove that the social return on investment is far too high to ignore. Coverage is available from [Community Care here](#), and [the announcement and the business case are available here](#).

PM announces reduction in use of equality impact assessments

At the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) recent annual conference, Prime Minister David Cameron announced a series of measures designed to rid the public sector of "bureaucratic rubbish" that hinders British businesses. Included in the planned purge of red tape will be a severe restriction to the current right of residents to challenge planning rulings and an end to equality impact assessments. Coverage of the announcements is available in [the Guardian](#) and [the Telegraph](#).

Better Government Initiative calls for policy preparation standards

Designed to help make poor policy a thing of the past, the Better Government Initiative sets out four recommendations for making good policy in an environment of rapid change. [Coverage is available from the Guardian](#), and [the recommendations are available here](#).

New partnership announced for influencing government policy

The Big Lottery Fund and the Institute for Government have joined forces to help civil servants better make the connection between the policies they work on and the people living with the results. The partnership is called "Connecting Policy with Practice: People Powered Change," and will last for 12 months, starting in January 2013, and the VCS will play an important role in the project. [More information is available from the Institute for Government here](#).

Funding, events and resources

Cabinet Office launches £20m social impact bonds

In the announcement launching the new funding for work with young people and homeless people, the Cabinet Office statement said "The Fund encourages active engagement from the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector to enable service redesign and will accept expressions of interest by any interested party." [The announcement is available here](#).

Charity Awards 2013 open for entries

Open to all charities in the UK and free to enter, the Charity Awards look for evidence of results. The deadline for entering is Friday, 8 March 2013, and [the application form and more information about categories and the celebration are available here](#).

Big Venture Challenge opens for entries on 8 January 2013

The Big Venture Challenge is an investment-readiness programme for 30 ambitious social entrepreneurs looking to scale their ventures. UnLtd is running the programme, which is funded by the Big Lottery, and there is £1.5 million of match-funding available to 30 individuals. The ideal candidates are ambitious entrepreneurs looking to raise £50,000 - £250,000 of investment in the next 12 months to rapidly grow their venture to increase their social impact. [The full criteria for applicants is available here](#).

At a glance guide to Government spending

The Guardian's data team have put together an interactive guide to what each Government department spends its money on. [Have a look here](#), and for more in-depth analysis, the data is also available to download.

Healthwatch England to begin local work in April 2013

As the new, independent consumer champion for health and social care in England, Healthwatch England is designed to make sure that services are designed around people, not processes. Chief Executive [Anna Bradley explains more about the organisation in the Guardian](#), and the [Healthwatch England website is available here](#).

Project Oracle's festive treat: Action Training Day

Want to improve your evaluation work? Never have enough time? Never have enough money? Do it in a day with Project Oracle. Project Oracle is offering a [one day practical and action focussed session on Tuesday 18 December](#) delivered by several Project Oracle team members for those short of time and that want results quickly. And the session is free this side of Christmas (normal rate £200)! Be one of the twenty-five organisations to benefit from this invaluable opportunity!

At the end of the day you will have:

- A completed Project Oracle self-assessment
- An entry into the Project Oracle Evidence Competition (with prizes of £2,000 - £5,000)
- A researcher to support the continued development of your evidence base

9:15am-4:45am

IT lab Tower Building, London Metropolitan University
166-220 Holloway Road, London, N7 8DB

Project Oracle is also holding another free training day specifically for London's voluntary and community sector organisations on 21 January 2013 at Voluntary Action Islington. To find out more, or register an interest, please e-mail policy@lvsc.org.uk

Health, housing and the impact on health inequalities

Race Equality Foundation, Faith Action and Regional Voices in partnership with the Department of Health are hosting a joint event to explore the relationship between housing and health and its impact on health inequalities. Speakers, delegates and members of the public will have the opportunity to discuss the extent to which poor housing is a compounding factor of poor physical and mental health.

The event is free and open to everyone and will take place **in Leeds on 31 January** and in **London on 7 February**. This is a morning event, between 10am and 1pm and lunch will be provided to all participants. More detailed information will be circulated soon.

For further enquiries please contact Farah Islam-Barrett at Race Equality Foundation:

Farah@racefound.org.uk

0207 428 1880

Job Vacancies

At present, BTEG (Black Training and Enterprise Group) has two employment vacancies:

R2S PROGRAMME MANAGER (full time) for an application pack click [here](#)

R2S PROJECT SUPPORT OFFICER (full time) for an application pack click [here](#)

These are part of Routes2Success (R2S), an exciting new national programme set up to tackle the challenge of young black males aged 11-25 not reaching their full potential in education and employment. It intends to meet this challenge by connecting 1200 young males with a volunteer force of successful black male role models to raise aspirations and encourage participants to follow the best routes to learning and career success