

***The premier waterfront city, with an unrivalled maritime heritage - a great place to live, work and visit***

Portsmouth is the premier waterfront city, with an unrivalled maritime heritage – a great place to live, work and visit. Its proximity to the open sea, coupled with control of the harbour and its entrance, have secured Portsmouth's place in history as one of the world's great anchorages and a rendezvous for British shipping in times of war for over 800 years. For centuries this great city has helped shape this nation's history. Home of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth is a city with spirit and pride.

But Portsmouth is also so much more. The new millenium has seen an era of transformation in the city. Multi-million pound developments such as Gun Wharf and the Spinnaker Tower have made Portsmouth a destination city, while international events such as The International Festival of the Sea and the Volvo Ocean Race have given unprecedented profile and ever increasing visitor numbers to this jewel of the South Coast.

Portsmouth is a city of ideas, with an expanding university that attracts students from around the country and across the globe. It is home to over 6000 businesses including leading edge companies such as EADS Astrium, IBM UK, Pall Europe and McLaren Composites. We have a strong marine and leisure tourism employment base and advanced manufacturing related to defence, marine and aerospace. However, there are real opportunities to raise the rate of self-employment in the city. Though we start fewer new businesses in Portsmouth, evidence suggests we are good at supporting them and assisting them to grow.

Growth and opportunities inevitably bring their own challenges, and Portsmouth's unique island location only serves to highlight these. Portsmouth is the most densely populated area in the country outside of London, and demand for housing in the city is high. Creating housing that local families can afford is a major challenge. With almost half the houses in the city being built before the First World War, and with levels of unfit housing at double the national average, so too is the quality of the existing housing stock in the city.

An effective transport system is essential to Portsmouth, be it through improved accessibility to services, work or attractions; making the city more attractive to potential investors and visitors; improving safety or reducing harmful emissions. While generally better than in other comparable urban areas, there are pockets of severe peak time congestion and Portsmouth faces challenges due to its island geography. These problems impact greatly on local and investor perception of the city's transport system. Improved public transport is key to the management of congestion, and expanding the high levels of walking and cycling will continue to be encouraged.

It is vital too that people feel safe to enjoy their neighbourhoods. Addressing the problem of violence, which impacts heavily on people's perceptions of safety in their community, is another flagship issue for the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Portsmouth has engaged in pro-active partnership work to tackle issues around anti-social behaviour, arson and young offending, and will build on this to create communities in which everyone feels safe. The links between alcohol and substance misuse, crime, youth offending and health issues will continue to be tackled.

Enabling people to make informed, healthier choices can help to improve the quality of life for all residents of Portsmouth. Historically certain communities and areas of the city have suffered disproportionately from negative health outcomes and continue to have lower life

expectancy. The city in general has seen improvements in life expectancy in the last twenty years, but still lags behind both the surrounding region and the country as a whole. Portsmouth's LAA recognises this, with its aim to reduce obesity, especially among children, as a flagship issue, and with a recognition that reducing the high level of smoking is a major priority for improving health.

Portsmouth has parks, gardens and open spaces which are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, and is home to natural sites of national and international importance, but demand for land and density of development puts pressure on our open spaces. With rises in sea levels possible due to climate change, flood risk is a serious concern for the city, while the impact of climate change on rainfall could affect the long-term availability of water supply. It is important that the city starts to address these problems now if it is to secure quality of life into the future. The vision is for Portsmouth to be a city where individuals, communities and organisations recognise the impact their activities have on the world we live in, both now and for future generations, and make choices that respect economic, social and environmental limits.

Portsmouth embraces culture in its widest meaning. Visual arts, museums, dance, theatre and music are all crucial, but so too is the quality and use of shared public space and the built and natural environment, sport, children's play, public events, promenading on the seafront and walking on Portsdown Hill. Major international events have helped to create a big city buzz in recent years, whilst areas of the city such as Albert Road with their selection of cafes, shops and restaurants to cover all tastes give the city a cosmopolitan feel. The Northern Quarter will elevate Portsmouth into a major regional retail destination, while the Historic Dockyard and other attractions make Portsmouth a city with an unrivalled maritime heritage. Cultural and creative industries and activities are a recognised driver for local economic and social regeneration, creating employment, raising skills levels and contributing to an important sense of local identity and civic pride.

It is vital that the people of Portsmouth are able to access the many opportunities the city has to offer, and have the skills needed to support its ambitions. Improving attainment in education, skills and lifelong learning is key, with Portsmouth's LAA focussing in particular on employability of young people as one of its flagship issues. Recent years have seen significant achievement by pupils in local schools and colleges, with attainment being close to or above the national average at five, seven and 11. GCSE results are rising and we are among the fastest improving authorities in the country, but too many young people are not in education, employment and training after the age of 16. Despite the success of the city's university, only a quarter of young people in Portsmouth go on to higher education or access a training opportunity that will lead to a level 4 qualification. The city also faces an acute shortage in the number of adults with level 2 or qualifications or above, while informal, community-based learning will have to play an increasing part in improving standards, raising aspirations, and increasing skill levels and employability.

Our vision is for a city where everyone is welcome, and all are enabled to work and learn together to achieve their ambitions. Portsmouth has always had a strong sense of community, and of its own identity. Our challenge is to build a cohesive community where Portsmouth's identity is one which everyone wants to share and is open to all. Too many people experience anti-social behaviour, while less than two thirds of residents rate Portsmouth as a place where people from different backgrounds get along.

Those members of our community, young and old alike, who face the most significant levels of deprivation, are also those most likely to find it difficult to engage positively in the

communities in which they live. Looked after children continue to achieve fewer qualifications than their peers, rates of teenage pregnancy remain high and are associated with other forms of deprivation, while some older residents and other vulnerable groups struggle to access the services and wider benefits that should be available to them. We will shape our public services to meet their needs and ensure that everyone in Portsmouth can enjoy our premier waterfront city.

Portsmouth is a city of which its residents are rightly proud. Our vision is to build on our strengths and address the areas where we need to be stronger. We need to raise attainment and support innovation to make Portsmouth a city of ideas where everyone can access the opportunities provided by a strong economy; to provide the building blocks of affordable housing and transport in a sustainable way; to enable and support all individuals and communities within the city to be safe, healthy and included. Our vision is to make Portsmouth the premier waterfront city, with an unrivalled maritime heritage – a great place to live, work and visit.

## 1. Improve achievement in education, skills and lifelong learning

- Attainment at GCSE (specifically boys and English and Maths)  
There have been considerable improvements in educational attainment in recent years. Provisional results for 2007 saw 54% of Portsmouth students achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C (or equivalent) compared to 35% in 2001. However, results remain below the averages for the country and the region, boys' attainment remains low in comparison to girls, and the proportion achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C including English and Maths, although rising significantly to 34% in 2007, is well below the national average.
- Too many young people are not in education, employment and training after the age of 16. Increasing educational attainment will impact on the future life chances of our young people, helping them into better paid jobs and improving their quality of life.<sup>1</sup>
- Adult learners – e.g. learners achieving Level 1 qualification in literacy.  
Adult learning needs to engage those most excluded (whether financially, culturally or socially), set within a comprehensive city-wide offer. This will be achieved by partners and providers working more closely together to promote Portsmouth as a 'learning city' and to provide events and activities such as 'learning festivals', and develop learning partnerships from informal learning to qualifications and sustainable employment. Specific targets could focus on reducing the gap in literacy and numeracy between worst performing wards and city average. E.g. 25% of adults in Charles Dickens do not have a level 1 qualification in literacy, compared to city average of just 8%.<sup>2</sup>
- Key Stage 2 results  
One of the council's priorities is to improve attainment at key stage two, particularly in English and Maths, and this will be a focus within the Local Area Agreement. There will also continue to be local initiatives around earlier predictors of future performance such as breast-feeding or the extent to which children are read to pre-school. This last point could link in to the previous outcome around adult learning, with a recent survey<sup>3</sup> suggesting that one in twelve parents struggle to read children's stories.

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<sup>1</sup> This links directly to the flagship LAA issue of employability of young people

<sup>2</sup> 2007 adult learning ward profiles. Figure is 18% for next two worst wards (Nelson and Paulsgrove).

<sup>3</sup> survey commissioned by learndirect and carried out by The Survey Shop in May 2007

## 2. Make Portsmouth an accessible city, with sustainable and integrated transport

- Increase accessibility to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling  
Transport is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. With very few exceptions people do not travel around an urban area for the sake of it but rather to get from one place to another. If they feel inhibited from doing so then that can be damaging to the economy, people's health and well-being and to social inclusion. Accessibility to key facilities in Portsmouth – employment, education, health care and fresh food shops – is generally very good but some targeted improvements are needed. The objective is to ensure that all local people have fair access to essential services. Additional local targets could be based on something specific such as accessibility to health services e.g. 'Achieve access to health services within 10 minutes by public transport for 100% of all households by 2010' and/or 'Achieve 90% of households within 10 minute walk of GP surgery by 2009/10'.<sup>4</sup>
- Managing congestion  
Managing congestion is a major challenge with only three roads from the mainland onto Portsea Island and a number of congestion bottlenecks. Minor incidents can cause major delays throughout the network with significant economic consequences. Greatly improved public transport is key to the management of congestion and expanding the high levels of walking and cycling will continue to be encouraged. The LAA will look specifically at peak hour congestion and the quality of the road network. Local delivery targets could look at modal share of journeys to school e.g. Reduce single student car journeys to school by half for primary and secondary schools by 2010/11 and/or Increase walking trips to school to 70% of mode share for primary schools and 75% for secondary schools by 2010/11.<sup>5</sup>
- Increase cycle use in the city by 4% by 2009/10<sup>6</sup>  
Much of Portsmouth is geographically suited to cycling. The health and environmental benefits of increasing cycle use have already been mentioned, while it can also have economic and social advantages, attracting visitors, boosting accessibility, and reducing congestion.
- Safer roads  
Traffic accidents have been reduced significantly in Portsmouth over the last five years and targets could be set to continue this trend. Current plans focus on vulnerable road users and disadvantaged areas to deliver a lasting improvement in road safety and encourage more public transport use, walking and cycling. A city-wide 20mph zone is being introduced for all residential areas (excluding principal routes). This is expected to have a major effect on the number and severity of casualties, particularly for vulnerable road users. It will also help encourage more walking and cycling.

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<sup>4</sup> LTP

<sup>5</sup> LTP

<sup>6</sup> LTP



### **3. Develop Portsmouth as a city of innovation and enterprise, with a strong economy and employment opportunities for all**

- **Self-employment and new business start ups**  
There are real opportunities to raise the rate of self-employment in the city, which is currently 11% compared to 17.3% in Brighton.<sup>7</sup> Though we start fewer new businesses in Portsmouth, evidence suggests we are good at supporting them and assisting them grow. The VAT registration rate will give some data on start-ups, but an additional local indicator may be required to capture SME creation.<sup>8</sup>
- **Adults in employment in the city**  
The City of Portsmouth has growth aspirations going forward for the next 20 years. We are planning to achieve an annual economic growth rate of 3.5% by 2026. This is no small order. Growth of this level will outstrip current economic growth rates of the whole of the South East. However, there are real challenges to this growth aspiration, the key one being employment of young people alongside skills, innovation and availability of employment land. Reducing economic inactivity and unemployment, especially focusing on under-represented groups, is one of the PUSH priorities.<sup>9</sup>
- **Adults in the city with at least a level 2 qualification**  
Diversifying and raising the skill base within the city is linked to a need to improve employment, enterprise and innovation rates. It is vital that the people of Portsmouth are both able to provide the skills that businesses in Portsmouth need for the economy to grow, and that they are enabled to benefit and be part of that economic growth. In the short term there is a need to improve basic skills in order to boost employment, while longer term we will seek to see more people in the city gaining level 4 or equivalent qualifications. Specific local targets could seek to build on the excellent links between local colleges and employers which saw, for example, Highbury become the first college in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to gain the prestigious Action for Business Colleges Accreditation.

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<sup>7</sup> City Growth

<sup>8</sup> GOSE figures on VAT de-registrations put us in the upper quartile, with 1 and 3 year survival rates improving.

<sup>9</sup> LAA - links to LAA flagship issue on employability of young people.

#### **4. Make Portsmouth a city in which everyone feels and is safe.**

- Fear of crime

Feelings of safety within the City of Portsmouth are crucially important to residents' and visitors' quality of life. Attracting visitors, employment and businesses to the city will be influenced to a large extent by the city's crime rates. We also need to tackle concern about crime in particular areas of the city as well as provide reassurance in our communities. Communicating effectively with the public and partners is fundamental to reducing the fear of crime.

- Violence

Violent crime is particularly important since it is one of the crimes people fear most. Hidden violence like domestic violence, the abuse of vulnerable people, homophobic crime, bullying and racial violence are very much part of the overall picture although these crimes are significantly under-reported. Providing support to victims and encouraging reporting of violence is essential to understand the real reasons for it, and we will build on strong existing partnership work in this area.

- Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour has a significant impact on people's perceptions of crime and their quality of life. We are working with residents and new Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams to identify local priorities and deliver improvements and support for communities at the same time as taking tough enforcement action where necessary.

- Drug and alcohol misuse

There are strong links between drug misuse and crime as well as the obvious health risks of drug addiction. Tackling drug misuse, particularly in young people, can help save money for many public services as well as reduce crime. Portsmouth has performed well against the targets set by the National Drugs Strategy since 1998. National and local research shows that alcohol misuse is a bigger problem in Portsmouth than it is elsewhere in the region and is strongly linked to violent crime. Portsmouth's Alcohol Strategy aims to tackle the harm caused by alcohol in four main locations; in the home, in the workplace, in public places and within health services. There is a particular concern in relation to young people; access to alcohol and the impact underage drinking has on health and behaviour.

- Preventing youth offending and substance misuse

Youth offending in Portsmouth has fallen consistently since 2003 but is still a major concern for the city were several areas have higher than average rates of young offenders. Early intervention and the use of risk indicators to prevent offending and re-offending are used effectively in the City and work to further improve performance has direct links to schools, health services and the development of targeted and generic services for young people.

- Arson Reduction

Community safety and the perception of cleanliness of the city are of paramount importance to the city's public. The resources committed by the city's stakeholders in dealing with arson-related incidents is significant. The systematic and sustained focus on the reduction of arson will provide for making the city a safer, cleaner and greener place within which to live, work and travel.

## 5. Make Portsmouth and attractive and sustainable city

- Sustainability and reducing carbon footprint of Portsmouth  
It is important that our city promotes environmental sustainability. Everything we do has an impact on the world around us, and the organisations that make up the LSP have a key role to play in helping to deliver a more sustainable city as employers with responsibility for staff and buildings, as providers of local services, and as a community leaders. Portsmouth's carbon emissions per head of population were average for a set of similar cities in 2004. Rising sea level is clearly a major concern for Portsmouth. 47% of the city is at risk from flooding. The council will seek to set an example by demonstrably reducing its carbon footprint over the coming three years.
- Increase recycling/reduce landfill  
Improving levels of recycling and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill are certain to remain significant priorities both locally and nationally. The Year 1 LAA recognises that as well as improving domestic recycling there is great potential to improve commercial recycling, and this may want to be carried forward into the year 2 LAA. Longer terms targets for increasing recycling are an important part of our role in promoting environmental sustainability, and we will continually seek to reduce the amount of waste produced by households in the city.
- Residents who think the city is clean  
A key achievement in recent years has been to significantly improve residents' perceptions about the cleanliness of the city, due to much more effective targeting of resources and an integrated approach to street scene management. The environment continues to be very important to our residents. In the last residents' survey they said that keeping the city clean and attractive was their third highest priority. A relatively low amount of litter on Portsmouth's streets puts the city in the top 25% of council areas in England. This also potentially links to reducing arson because clearing the city of litter reduces the potential for waste secondary fires to be started.
- Attractiveness of the built environment  
The quality of the built environment impacts on residents' and visitors' perceptions of the city, as well as impacting on impacting on health, community safety, accessibility etc. Our aim is to make our city a beautiful, vibrant well though-out urban environment, while safeguarding and encouraging the use of our green and open spaces.

## 6. Deliver affordable, quality housing where people want to live

- New houses

The draft South East Plan sets a housing figure for the city of an additional 14,700 homes to be provided in the period 2006-2026, which equates to an annual average of 735 homes.<sup>10</sup> We still have twice the national average of homelessness, and approximately 8000 households on Portsmouth's Housing Register. In terms of the type of housing, there is a shortfall of 4 or more bedroom properties in the owner occupied sector and a shortfall of 1 and 2 bedroom properties in the social rented sector.<sup>11</sup>

- Affordable houses

The South East Plan also sets out desired levels of affordable housing, stating the between 30-40% of all new housing should be affordable, with an emphasis on social rented properties and an assumption that such housing will be of the right size, price and quality.<sup>12</sup> The level of need for affordable housing is over twice the national and South East average.<sup>13</sup>

- Homelessness

Homelessness remains a significant ongoing challenge in Portsmouth which this LAA will provide a continued focus on.

- Promoting carbon neutral developments

This is a government target to be achieved by 2016, but one that fits in well with the need for a city such as Portsmouth to take action to address the causes of climate change, as well as seeking to mitigate its effects. We will take action to raise awareness on future legislation and encourage developers to look at more sustainable options.

- Environmental performance of existing housing stock

According to 2003/04 figures, 9% (6,470) of all housing is estimated to be unfit, higher than a national average of 4.1%. Reasons for this include that over 46% of the city's housing was built pre-1919 and predominantly low incomes affect the amount people can afford to spend on the upkeep of their property. Improved energy efficiency reduces the use of fossil fuels, reduces energy running costs and reduces fuel poverty. Providing loft insulation could therefore have multiple benefits. As well as reducing fuel bills for some of our most vulnerable residents and helping with their winter warmth, it will reduce the damage to the climate from emissions. This could be linked to the planned 'thermal map' of the city, with assistance targeted at those areas shown to be losing the most heat through their roofs.

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<sup>10</sup> Core Strategy – issues and options

<sup>11</sup> Portsmouth's Housing Needs Study (2005)

<sup>12</sup> Core Strategy – issues and options

<sup>13</sup> Portsmouth Profile 2006

## **7. Encourage and enable healthy choices for all and provide appropriate access to health care and support**

- Life expectancy between highest and lowest wards in the city/between Portsmouth and the South East  
In 2004, life expectancy at birth for men was 75.4 years. This is lower than the South-East regional average of 77.7 years and the national average of 76.6 years. For women it was 80.4 years, also lower than the national average of 80.8 years and the regional figure of 81.9 years. According to the 2005 Annual Public Health Report, Charles Dickens ward has the lowest life expectancy at 73.9 years with Drayton and Farlington the highest at 80.7 years.<sup>14</sup> Two of the major contributory factors to lower life expectancy are smoking and obesity.
- Smoking  
Smoking is a major contributor to poor health and the lower life expectancy seen across Portsmouth. Too many people in Portsmouth smoke, especially in areas of historic deprivation and among certain ethnic and vulnerable communities. Campaigns to promote a smoke free environment, and the development of a broad range of services to assist people to stop, form the basis of a broad strategy to reduce smoking and its impact on health.
- Obesity  
Obesity is an established and major cause of poor health and poor social well-being in all age groups often resulting in significant illness and premature death in middle-aged and older people while linked to the early onset of diseases such as diabetes in children. There is also increasing evidence that obese children are more likely to be bullied at school and are more likely to under-achieve educationally.<sup>15</sup> Enabling people to make healthy choices could look at participation in active recreation and sport, family learning or healthy workplace initiatives.
- Alcohol harm-related admissions  
Drinking outside of sensible limits has negative impacts on health. It is also closely linked to a significant amount of violent crime in the city. Multi-agency work to reduce the number of people drinking harmful amounts of alcohol will help to address a number of concerns in Portsmouth's LAA.
- Oral health  
Whilst adult and child oral health nationally has been improving, it has become apparent that health inequalities in the population are still the cause of high instances of oral health problems in some areas. These instances of health inequality broadly correlate to people's social and economic background. Causes of poor oral health and tooth decay include poor diet and nutrition, poor oral hygiene, and, controversially, a lack of exposure to fluoride. In addition, smoking can increase the incidence of dental disease and both smoking and alcohol consumption are contributory factors in oral cancer.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Portsmouth Profile 2006

<sup>15</sup> LAA – Flagship issue

<sup>16</sup> Review of Oral Health and Dentistry, Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel 16<sup>th</sup> March 2006

## **8. Enhance Portsmouth's reputation as a city of culture, energy and passion, offering access for all to arts, sports and leisure**

- **Visitor numbers to Portsmouth**  
Portsmouth is fast becoming Britain's favourite waterfront destination and is packed with things to do. Combining sea views, great shopping, eating and drinking with stunning attractions and centuries of history, all on the water's edge, Portsmouth has something for everyone. Increasing the numbers of visitors to the city brings in significant investment to city's economy. It also helps to create the big city buzz which makes Portsmouth such an exciting place to live, work or visit.
- **Attract further major events with an international profile to the city (e.g. Dickens 2012)**  
Major international events such as the Global Challenge and the Festival of the Sea have raised the profile of the city around the world. Such events bring a massive boost to the local economy, and help to attract more visitors in the future, as well as being a source of pleasure to local people.
- **Maximise the benefit from the 2012 Games in London**  
The 2012 Games in London will provide a unique opportunity to engage people of all ages in a whole range of sporting activity, both competitive and leisure. Portsmouth has already submitted a bid to become a pre-Games camp. This strategy will look beyond the Games themselves to ensure that any benefits accrued are embedded. Participation in active recreation and sport is a significant element of the broader strategy to reduce obesity. It is not just the preserve of the young but can also be a key factor in helping older people and people with a disability remain active, and is not just about the physical well being, for sport and other cultural activities can also improve mental well being within the context of a local strategy that values the lives and contributions of its residents, whatever their backgrounds and abilities. The national Cultural Olympiad programme will provide a diverse range of opportunities for the city's cultural and creative sector, including the linking of Dickens 2012 activities and events.
- **Continue to attract new retail/leisure opportunities**  
Developments such as Gunwharf Quays have increased visitor numbers to Portsmouth, while the Northern Quarter development should boost the city's appeal as a retail destination. The redevelopment of the Mountbatten Centre will provide an improved leisure facility for locals and visitors alike. However, the city must continue to look to maximise the retail/leisure offer in the city and take full advantage of any opportunities that arise, such as the closure of the Pyramids, to attract new and exciting facilities that residents want and that attract tourists. Portsmouth also has its own thriving cultural and creative sector - including the local authority's own museums and archives, libraries, tourism and arts services – which is increasingly important to the local, regional and national economy. Together with London and parts of the East of England and South West, the South East region forms a "mega region" of world-class significance in relation to the creative economy. Creative industries have been shown to employ more than half a million people in the South East and contribute more than 40 billion to the regional economy<sup>17</sup>. Creative and cultural industries represent around 30 per cent of its GDP.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> David Powell Report, 2002

<sup>18</sup> and 6% to the national GDP, almost as significant as the manufacturing sector), making it our region's fastest growing sector

## 9. Celebrate the many diverse and different communities within Portsmouth and work together to create an inclusive city for everyone

- Empower local people to have a greater voice and influence local decision making and a greater role in public service delivery – measure through % residents who feel they can influence decisions affecting their area.<sup>19</sup>
- Numbers of people describing Portsmouth as a city where people from different backgrounds get along, and/or satisfaction of BME parents with the education their children receive  
Community cohesion was one of the top issues from the consultation carried out when developing the year 1 LAA. A strong community where everybody feels like they belong is essential if we are to achieve many of our other LAA outcomes, especially a safer city. The year 1 LAA contains a new local target to measure the satisfaction of BME parents with the education received by their children and this should definitely be in year 2 of the agreement.
- Racial incidents recorded/followed up  
Reducing racial incidents is a key priority for community safety partners in Portsmouth. This necessitates preventative action to ensure that young people grow up free from prejudice, and enforcement action to record and follow-up racial incidents. Measuring our impact continues to be a challenge because we want to ensure people who have suffered from racial incidents come forward to the police or other agencies but this means that the number of recorded incidents will rise even though our approach is improving.
- Promote volunteering  
We are keen to build on our work promoting volunteering through our current LPSA. Volunteering directly supports many vital services in the city, along with a range of attendant benefits to the individual and communities involved.
- Increase proportion of key public services delivered by the VCS<sup>20</sup>  
Portsmouth has a strong history of working with the voluntary and community sectors, and with local people, giving them a real say in key decisions. This includes partnership working with over 500 VCS groups, ranging from small informal organisations to large-scale social enterprises and social firms. They provide a wide range of services and activities, including to young people, offenders, those with special needs, faith groups, older people, asylum seekers and refugees, the homeless and to environmental groups. The city's VCS makes an important contribution to enabling people's voices to be heard, as a catalyst for involvement, representing diverse communities, empowering local people, raising aspirations and providing innovative cost effective services.

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<sup>19</sup> LAA 1

<sup>20</sup> target to be developed as part of LAA 1

## **10. Protect and support our more vulnerable residents by shaping public services to meet their needs**

- **Safeguarding children**  
Key public agencies have clear duties and responsibilities to ensure that children are safe and achieve their full potential. As a city we have high aspirations and expectations of our looked after children and also of the services we provide them. Historically looked after children achieve fewer qualifications and are less likely to go on to further and higher education. Portsmouth has made considerable progress in enhancing the life chances of looked after children. The LAA is an opportunity to harness the contribution of all partners towards building on this success. Maintaining an effective referrals systems for children's social care will play an essential role in ensuring the safety of vulnerable children in the city.
- **Supporting vulnerable young people**  
Rates of teenage pregnancy in the city are too high, and this is an area that we will continue to seek to address through our Local Area Agreement.
- **Helping people live at home**  
People are living longer and there is an ever greater demand for intensive care services, which will affect service delivery. We have a higher than national average number of people aged over 85 years. As people expect to have a greater degree of choice about how they are supported in old age, so providers have to meet this challenge by being more flexible and proactive in how services are provided. New technology and patterns of work can facilitate independent living.
- **Direct payments/individual budgets as proxies for independence**  
Vulnerable people are increasingly able to have much bigger influence over the purchasing and design of services they receive. This ensures that services are tailored towards the needs of the individual and empowers vulnerable people to have more control over their situation. Process measures such as this though are only proxies for the real goal of giving people control and independence and which link to earlier discussions on health, housing, community involvement etc.
- **BME elderly communities face particular issues with regard to health.** For example, they are six times more likely to have diabetes, and suffer higher levels of disability at an early age than the general population.<sup>21</sup> Elderly BME and their families often have little or no information around health and healthy lifestyles while supporting vulnerable BME people to live at home could also be an area of focus.

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<sup>21</sup> Age Concern: Age and Ethnicity in England, 2006