



## ACVO Big Aberdeen Action Plan

*This action plan is a proposal to you – those who care about Aberdeen – from hundreds of people in Aberdeen – for Aberdeen and the wider world of which it is part.*

ACVO has enabled its development as a framework and will contribute to its progress. However the Big Aberdeen aim is to **Connect, Challenge, Collaborate for positive Change** and the actions proposed will only progress with your active engagement. Whoever you are, whatever your interest, there is a role for you to play. The publication of this Action Plan is just the first step.

The **Big Aberdeen Event** took place on 22nd September at Pittodrie football stadium. It provided a showcase for cross-sector connectivity and collaboration and a catalyst for **on-going Big Aberdeen Actions** into 2015 in response to the City's challenges. 200 Conference delegates spread across 3 sectors attended and took part in 3 Café Discussions. An army of young volunteers gave them a chance to try community activities alongside 3000 family visitors.

A University of Aberdeen/Santander intern gathered questions for consideration and action planning by delegates. They were:

1. **What can Aberdeen learn from other cities?**
2. **What single improvement would improve the quality of life of the citizens of Aberdeen?**
3. **How well does Aberdeen City fit the words “a great place to live, play and prosper”?**
4. **How can we collaborate better to create an environment within which our young people (our emerging leaders) can shape their own lives and the lives of those around them?**





## 10 Steps from Lord Andrew Mawson

**The following points were made by Keynote speaker Lord Andrew Mawson on the day (and in his book “The Social Entrepreneur: Making Communities Work” .) These have acted as underpinning values in the creation of this Action Plan.**

1. Put effort into understanding an area and the people who live there over many years. Learn to play with ideas and experiment to gain practical experience before developing structural forms often drawn from business.
2. Don't try to define social enterprise. If it works it works.
3. Like talks to like. Ensure real innovation takes place. Work closely with social entrepreneurs to discover genuine new approaches to social problems and not simply regurgitate old solutions that civil servants can feel comfortable with. There is considerable room for innovation here. Encourage innovative partnerships between business and social entrepreneurs.
4. Support the Social Venture Capital movement. Move beyond traditional philanthropy by investing time and business skills to tackling social problems. Plug the gap of smaller-scale private entrepreneurs engaging with social enterprise.
5. Rather than inviting people to discuss what should happen, invite people to come and give them the tools to do. Don't tell people to write a proposal, tell them to get on with it. Ideas which go nowhere lead to new relationships, learning by doing and self-esteem. Forms do not.
6. Allow leaders to be leaders.
7. Focus should be getting the detail of service delivery right and having people with practical experience working in key positions.
8. Develop smarter ways of engaging with the private sector and social sector together – business relationships where social enterprise earns fees and the private sector wins tenders, markets its offerings and where facilities are not underused.
9. Build on the people and approaches that work. Produce evidence and base policy recommendations on it.
10. Give more personal responsibility and hold individuals to account for what they do. When an individual takes a decision they are visible.

## The Big City Issues

Café table discussions identified the following Big City issues. This was backed up by general feedback from the conference along with survey response from exhibitors, visitor, volunteers; workshop participants; and by a project engaging hundreds of primary school children in making bunting depicting their views of the City. They are the most frequently mentioned city wide issues and are not listed in order of preference

- 1. Better Transport System: Integrated, affordable, flexible and accessible.**
- 2. Regenerate City Centre & Improve the cultural offer of the city**
- 3. Regeneration Boards with business leadership involvement**
- 4. Improved understanding of what the public sector is trying to do.**
- 5. Affordable housing and engagement with construction industry.**
- 6. Increased support for teams in engaging with communities.**
- 7. The gap between Rich and Poor**

ACVO will raise these with the Community Planning Partnership management group in December 2014 for action at strategic level and report back to the Big Aberdeen Network and Third Sector.



## Small Starts on Big City Issues

**In the spirit of following Lord Mawson's advice, ACVO invites people from all sectors to "get on with it".**

Big Aberdeen Event Café delegates identified areas of action for themselves to take forward as a group after the event. The actions outlined below, developed directly from the Café table action plans, will therefore have their starting point with the groupings which identified those action areas on the day. However, a pragmatic approach will be taken to drawing in others both within Big Aberdeen delegates and beyond who have the will to connect, collaborate, challenge and change.



**ACVO'S ROLE will be to provide leadership and interface to support those actions in the following ways:**

### **Five Overarching Actions by ACVO**

1. ACVO team members will be available to advise on potential for collaboration and to signpost as individual actions are taken forward.
2. ACVO will implement a communications plan to promote the Big Aberdeen Action Plan as opportunity for engagement in positive practical activity
3. ACVO team members will support the identification of individuals from all sectors who demonstrate their willingness to engage in supporting the action plan.
4. Organisations willing to take initiative will be facilitated by ACVO to support their own communities in taking part in the opportunities arising so that there is increased ownership of developing ideas, a focus on people as individuals and a bottom up approach.
5. ACVO will seek to ensure as far as possible that groupings taking forward the various opportunities arising include input from all 3 sectors

## Quick and Easy Follow up Actions

1. All delegates/stall holders will be signed up to ACVO e:bulletin.
2. ACVO will advise all Big Aberdeen delegates of ACVO Facebook and Twitter connections and monitor the links made.
3. All delegates will be informed about the role of ACVO as a TSI and its services.
4. A Big Aberdeen Good News section will be created in the ACVO e:bulletin to which relevant Café groups and others may contribute - including news of employee volunteering, good news/good practice stories including in relation to reducing stigma and negative judgements of people and/or under overarching principles such as UN Convention for the Rights of a Child
7. Relevant Café groups will be supported in identifying spaces or venues (including outdoor spaces) to share with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector for events, meetings etc. and to consider future Big Aberdeen or Corporate Social Responsibility events.
8. Relevant Café groups will be tasked with identifying free places on training, coaching, mentoring courses which could be made available by private and public sector organisations to 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector organisations thereby increasing capacity for proactivity and promotion. ACVO to publicise.
9. ACVO training team will broker monitoring & evaluation training and promote to all Big Aberdeen delegates thereby developing the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector's ability to prove added value.
10. Café groups will be encouraged to share information about each others work and communities with each other.
11. ACOSVO Leadership Exchange programme will be promoted to Big Aberdeen delegates directly and via North East Learning Collaborative.



## Steps Forward Together on Big Issues

Initial progress will have begun by end January 2015 and targets and timetables will be developed and applied. Progress and prioritisation for 2015 will be reviewed by early March 2015.

### 1. On the gap between rich and poor:



- a. Relevant Café groups will gather facts or case studies through their own work relating to poverty in Aberdeen and the make-up of the “communities” they serve and ACVO will help circulate that learning to other Big Aberdeen delegates and their own networks to increase City-wide awareness.
- b. ACVO will support the relevant Café & workshop groups to identify 10 suitable transitions or people through their own organisations and, as a mixed grouping, further plan action on those transitions. Transitions might be, for example, out of unemployment, leaving care, out of hunger, out of hospital, into independent living, away from risk of offending. Action or support might include CV’s, interview support in-kind,; donations in-kind of food, clothes, household equipment; referral ,signposting; voluntary buddies ,befrienders or awareness-raising about infrastructure needs
- c. ACVO will work with the private sector to identify localities in which they would be interested in helping. Then match these with the City’s needs and support relevant Café groups in identifying local projects for those businesses to engage with together with local people and cultural practitioners. Local projects might be via Community centres, GP clusters, schools, church halls, learning partnerships, outdoor spaces or local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector projects. Help might be on-site, backroom or fundraising support for those local projects; in-kind donation of equipment, marketing support; purchasing, hire of local products/venues.

- d. ACVO to invite Big Aberdeen business delegates to meet and develop their and our recognition of their employee's volunteering and their support for employee's ability to volunteer. Development might include take-up of Awards; publicising of volunteering stories; CPD input to staff on issues linking volunteering to leadership/talent development/global behaviours
- e. Relevant Café groups will liaise with local social firms and social enterprises to identify local examples of diversity in employment, where social enterprise is working locally and challenges or opportunities for their expansion including for a Pop-Up shop for young aspirational entrepreneurs or businesses; teaching social enterprise in schools; business mentors for aspiring social entrepreneurs. By bringing discussion of all of these together at the outset, bring a wider range of stakeholders together with the established social firm/social enterprise community.

## 2. On Regeneration: A Clean City that is valued:

Relevant Café groups will be supported by ACVO to gather facts and case studies about a Clean Aberdeen through their own work – identify clean places, volunteers who clean things, issues around “cleanliness” and good practice. Circulate to other Big Aberdeen delegates and their own networks to increase awareness.



### 3. On Culture: For more cultural events and an opening of the cultural bridge:

ACVO will support the relevant Café groups to liaise with cultural networks and each other to identify an action plan for more cultural events and an opening of the cultural bridge.

ACVO to develop support and tools for community groups to create and manage events including with student and business involvement and support



### 4. On Transport: improved community connectivity

The relevant Café groups will be signposted by ACVO specialist teams to research and identify mechanisms or models for financing “free” mobility, transport and wifi and improved wheelchair access.



## Big Aberdeen Achievements so Far

1. Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian and ACVO to visit Lord Mawson in relation to “Place-making in East London” - close working partnerships with universities, local schools and communities; creating integrated developments at scale through joined up working, clear leadership and an aspirational narrative; creating mutual benefit through enterprise and renewal, the relationship of form and function; shared endeavour that builds vibrant communities through engagement and integrated local development.
2. Memorandum of Understanding signed between ACVO and University of Aberdeen Careers Service, ACVO has been invited to submit proposals for the Big Aberdeen Action Plan to be supported through a new pilot work-based project course;
3. The University of Aberdeen Business School has appointed ACVO as the CSR partner for the Aberdeen Executive Education Partnership. The Aberdeen Partnership delivers high quality executive education on topics such as change management, strategy, leadership and innovation. The partnership with ACVO will help a range of third sector organisations gain access to the programme
4. Aberdeen Football Club, Henderson Loggie & Empire HR were shortlisted in the Aberdeen Impact Awards 2014
5. Jasmine Group invited ACVO guest speaker to launch Jasmine Charity Challenge and follow up on Big Aberdeen Action Plan
6. Thorpe Malloy sought ACVO support to develop employee volunteering
7. Northlink Ferries ready to explore Big Aberdeen Action Plan.
8. RGU Talent Exchange invited ACVO to provide photography assignments in Third Sector.
9. The contribution the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers made at the Big Aberdeen Event is being included as one of the Case Study examples of best practice in the national evaluation of the Police Youth Volunteers programme;
10. Substantially increased engagement of Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian, University of Aberdeen, business sector in 2015 Aberdeen Impact Awards for “Working Together :Positive Collaboration” and “Friend of the Third Sector”.

## **ACVO wishes to thank the following people and organisations without whom the Big Aberdeen Event would not have been a success:**

Lord Andrew Mawson OBE

Lord Provost of Aberdeen, Councillor George Adam and fellow Councillors

Ally Prockter, Aberdeen Football Club in the Community and team

George Yule, Aberdeen Football Club

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Stewart Spence, The Marcliffe Hotel and Spa and team

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Aileen Reid and Lindsay Adam, North East Learning Collaborative

Steve Plummer, Common Purpose

### **[And all the participants in the Big Aberdeen Event](#)**

**Further information about The Big Aberdeen Project is available from ACVO 01224 686058 or [events@acvo.org.uk](mailto:events@acvo.org.uk)**