

**LONDON**  
**COMMUNITIES**  
**COMMISSION**



**Evidence & Draft Recommendations for Action with  
THE BUSINESS SECTOR**

**Paper 3, Mar 2016**

## **Foreword**

This report is both a second Report of Evidence from the London Communities Commission and recommendations dealing with the contribution of the business community. This independent Commission was set up in September 2015, with eleven Commissioners from the private, public and voluntary sectors, convened by the Paddington Development Trust and supported by London Funders and The City Bridge Trust. Its task is to look into how citizens and communities in London's most deprived areas might be strengthened and supported in these times of austerity.

This is in response to growing concerns that, without such support and the active engagement of local people, the quality of life there may continue to deteriorate to levels that not only destroy the well-being of tens of thousands of citizens, but pose a threat to the social and economic sustainability of the whole capital.

This paper focusses on the business community. In our original call for evidence we had limited input from the private sector, so our Report of Evidence published in February 2016 (see <https://londoncommunities.wordpress.com> ) is weak in this area. The Commissioners therefore agreed that a further report should be written illustrating the existing major contribution of the private sector and clarifying how the sector could add value to the Commission's proposals.

This report describes the current contribution of the private sector and how it is already making a difference in some of the poorest areas in London. It also looks at how the private sector might in the future contribute to the Commission's aims of tackling priority unmet needs and disadvantage in London's most stressed neighbourhoods.

I am extremely grateful to the three private sector Commissioners (David Adair, Head of Community Affairs, Corporate Sustainability at PricewaterhouseCoopers UK; Paul Buchanan, Executive Director responsible for Business in the Community's work on community issues; and Guy Insull , Co-Founder of The Global Noticeboard and Appeal Director of Caritas Anchor House) who gave their time by submitting evidence and sharing such impressive ideas with us.

**Sir Stephen O'Brien**  
**Chair of the London Communities Commission**

## **The Commission's Approach**

We were very conscious of the wealth of data already available and the huge number of initiatives already under way to tackle disadvantage in London. We wanted to ensure that our work was complementary to other exemplary initiatives, but we also wanted a fresh and focussed approach - one that brought together the private, public, health and voluntary and community sectors genuinely working with common aims to an agreed, shared programme and one which started from the citizen rather than institutions. Although our approach starts from the citizen it is also in the interests of companies in the capital. Companies of all sizes need a healthy, skilled, accessible and positive labour force and good infrastructure. Unless current trends are reversed London is becoming unsustainable- it is becoming a city of great divides, significant poverty and mental health issues, more stressful travel to work, unaffordable to key workers and with a crumbling voluntary and community sector that is losing the capacity to make a difference.

The Commission agreed to focus its work initially on a few selected pilot areas (Tottenham, Newham and Paddington) where there were known concentrations of deprivation and known support networks. Within these areas, we agreed that attention should be on "priority unmet needs" - as defined, not by us, but by people in the areas concerned - so that relevant programmes for action and outcomes could be drawn up and agreed. We are also determined to be action-orientated and to agree who does what to improve the situation in these communities. The business community has an important role and is already developing an integrated approach to responsible business practice, contributing resources and ensuring it does so in an effective way. The section below outlines the wide scope of existing corporate practice.

## **The Evidence**

It was clear to us that the business sector is gradually shifting from seeing corporate social responsibility as an add-on to seeing it as a fundamental principle at the heart of the company. This has already happened in the environmental field as companies have understood for some time that environmental good practice not only helps address climate change but also brings benefits to the companies themselves by reducing costs and motivating staff.

There are a number of ways that companies are engaging with citizens in stressed areas.

### **1. Supporting local citizens to become job ready and employed.**

Creating meaningful employment and routes into employment is one of the most significant ways that business contributes to the livelihoods of individuals and communities.

Companies have been offering quality work experience and apprenticeships; they have

adopted new approaches to recruitment; and broken down barriers to entering work for people from disadvantaged groups. These actions can benefit business by tackling skills shortages, building new talent pipelines, boosting retention rates and achieving higher productivity. They benefit individuals and communities by reducing unemployment and providing a potential route out of poverty.

#### **Urban Futures and Haringey Education Business Partnership (HEBP)**

Both organisations are based in Wood Green in Haringey. Urban Futures is a not for profit social enterprise dedicated to supporting and helping London's unemployed and economically inactive reskill and build career and sustainable employment for themselves and their families. They deliver a range of government programmes: information, advice and guidance (IAG), training services, young people services (including pre apprenticeship support programmes and apprenticeship), business support services and welfare to work programmes. The Haringey Education Business Partnership is located in the same building and the organisations work together on some of these programmes and on relationships with companies. HEBP places 1600 students a year in work experience places; provides work related and enterprise education and careers guidance in schools and organises mentoring. HEBP argues that given the current economic climate, youth unemployment and social issues, the need for effective partnership between education, business and the local community has never been more important. The majority of the companies involved in this programme are small local companies who see the benefits of contributing to their local community.

The following national programmes of Business in the Community demonstrate what is being achieved:

- a) *Ready for Work*: Business in the Community's national programme enables some of society's most disadvantaged people to enter employment, with business involvement every step of the way. 150 businesses in 20 locations support Ready for Work participants through training, work placements and their progress into employment. To date over 10,000 people with multiple barriers to overcome have been supported and over 3,500 have found long term sustained employment.
- b) *Business Class*: This creates effective and mutually beneficial school-businesses partnerships to increase social mobility. Over 500 schools have been involved in Business Class, supported by 1,000 businesses (33% of whom are SMEs), impacting on 140,000 young people across the UK.

### **Bringing initiatives together: South Leeds Case Study**

Malcolm Hall is an experienced Senior Commercial Manager with Lloyds Bank, seconded to BITC full time for 12 months to make a difference in the community of South Leeds. Significant opportunities are being created in the £150m Victoria Gate scheme which will see John Lewis open its first store in the city with a 21,000 square meter flagship site alongside a retail arcade with 30 stores, restaurants, cafes, a casino and a multi-story car park. Hammerson, the company behind the city centre development, have estimated that the first phase of the regeneration scheme will create up to 1,000 construction and 1,000 retail and hospitality jobs. Many of these jobs could go to the unemployed in South Leeds. There are however some twenty organisations working to support different groups of unemployed and it is difficult for Hammerson to liaise with all these groups effectively. So Malcolm Hall is working with Hammerson and Leeds City Council's Employment and Skills Service to bring the different programmes together to ensure that opportunities through this major development become available to local people.

## **2. Giving staff the opportunity to share their skills capacity building**

Clifford Chance told the Communities Commission that legal firms are moving to a human rights approach which informs the whole way that they do business and how they deploy their resources to support deprived communities. The Commission heard how Clifford Chance gives £20m a year in pro bono hours to CVS organisations.

Many companies, both large and small, encourage their employees to act as mentors to individual young people, helping to raise their aspirations. They are also encouraged to serve on the Boards of voluntary and community organisations bringing their financial and management skills, or to act as school governors.

The Commission also heard about how businesses are responding to the passion that young graduates in large companies are showing in relation to engaging with the voluntary and community sector. One example is given in the box below.

### **BeyondMe**

BeyondMe is a growing movement in which professionals, businesses and charities work together to make a meaningful impact on the world beyond them. It is particularly good at engaging with specific projects, generating funds and providing business expertise. BeyondMe puts together a team of 8 professionals under 35 who join together and donate their money, skills and time to a niche charity project, with matched funding and mentoring support of a senior leader and their employer.

So far achievements include:

- 45 teams launched donating £250,000+ and 4,500 skills-based volunteer hours.

- Teams established at 12 major businesses – including Deloitte, PwC, EY, KPMG, Goldman Sachs, Allen & Overy and the Civil Service.
- Range of social issues tackled from homelessness to human trafficking.

### **3. Increasing opportunities for local SMEs and Social Enterprises**

The Commission heard from Catherine Needham at the University of Birmingham, who had recently completed a two year evaluation of micro-enterprises in the social care sector. This study showed how local micro enterprise and social enterprise could provide more personalised care, more valued outcomes, innovation in how services are delivered without a higher price tag. The study showed that such enterprises require dedicated start-up support and support from commissioners.

However there is evidence that business to business support has declined. In the past, most areas had enterprise agencies to support start-ups. Such organisations worked closely with banks developing business viable plans which the banks could support. They also helped to network companies and provided peer to peer support. These enterprise agencies were mostly replaced by the national initiative, Business Link, which in turn had most of its funding withdrawn. There is now a shortage of enterprise and business to business support in the poorer areas.

Larger employers can provide some of this support. They can provide markets for social and micro enterprise by looking at their supply chain and also encourage their suppliers to pursue responsible business practice. KPMG has a Supplier Engagement Programme. The programme involves sharing best practices and regular dialogues around three key areas: carbon reporting, improving diversity within the supply chain and supporting the Living Wage campaign. Castell Howell Foods is a food wholesaler and distributor to the hospitality and catering sector, employing around 450 people, predominantly in the Cross Hands, Carmarthenshire, Wales. The Regional Supply Chain Initiative is successfully bringing small and medium-sized enterprises together under the auspices of one programme. This not only means that Castell Howell can share expertise and knowledge about how to supply to them, thus strengthening its own operations but it also provides opportunities to those smaller companies and builds a more sustainable supply chain with local economic benefits. Skanska believe that a sustainable supply chain is not just about environmental impact but also considers other issues such as community and social impact, equality, diversity, inclusion and procuring to best value. They work in a collaborative way with SMEs and have established the Supply Chain Sustainability School, an online learning platform that allows suppliers to self-assess against a range of trade specific questions about their sustainability knowledge and practice and to generate an improvement plan.

### **Brigade: Fire Station Tooley Street.**

When PwC leased the Fire Station (a derelict but historically important building on Tooley Street, London) as part of their agreement for their new More London office they wanted to ensure that it supported the local community. They decided to create a social enterprise hub. As plans developed other partners came on board: notably De Vere Venues to manage the Bar & Bistro, meeting space and cook school, the charity Beyond Food who train the apprentices and Big Issue Invest who joined the partnership as an investor to support the venture. Social Enterprise UK, the School for Social Entrepreneurs and Blossoms Healthcare all agreed to house operations at the Fire Station and PwC decided to create a Centre for Social Impact within the building to foster social innovation and impact measurement and share its knowledge to accelerate positive change. Collectively they have also worked with Babcock Training who helps with training; Jobcentre Plus; hostels; and potential employers for the apprentices. It was all worth it. The social impact in the first three years is significant with 593 people completing the Freshlife programme (a five days of interactive workshops that use food as a catalyst to motivate and inspire people who have been at risk of or experienced homelessness) and 69 people completing United Kitchen apprenticeships, not to mention the hundreds more who've been inspired to change their lives through the Beyond Food programmes. Over 50 PwC staff have mentored apprentices and well over 100 PwC volunteers have supported Brigade since it opened.

#### **4. Giving significant cash profits to support communities**

In 2014 the top 500 companies in the UK spent £3.25 billion on CRS activity<sup>1</sup>. The top UK company for cash donations in 2015 was Lloyds Banking Group which gave £53.7m in 2015, the second was Tesco at £25.4m<sup>2</sup>.

In America, in particular, there are many rich philanthropists from Bill Gates who by 2013 had donated \$28 billion (nearly a third of his wealth) to his foundation but has pledged to give more; to Charles Francis Feeney, a retail magnate, who wants give away his entire fortune and has so far given away \$6.3b leaving himself \$1.5m. In the UK, wealth is more limited but there are philanthropists like Sir Tom Hunter who has current wealth of £1.06bn and has so far made donations of more than £1.01bn and Lord Sainsbury who has wealth of £1.3bn and has donated £233.8m.

Another way that cash funding is given to support local communities is through not-for-profit and community benefit companies which are founded not only to create jobs and deliver services but also to generate income which can be used to support those residents that need help and community capacity building. Many of Locality's members are formed in

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<sup>1</sup> Global Noticeboard prospectus

<sup>2</sup> Directory of social Change: The Guide to UK Company Giving 2015-16

this way and use community assets and social enterprises to generate income for their programmes. Some social entrepreneurs are now looking at ways to develop this model on a larger scale and two examples are given below.

#### **Gloucester Gateway Trust**

This is a ground-breaking partnership between local communities and a motorway service business. Gloucester Gateway Trust is the charity partner in the new M5 Gloucester Services, working alongside the Westmorland Family, pioneers of building motorway services 'with a difference' focusing on local suppliers and high quality food. More than 300 jobs have already been created – with at least half going to people living in the Trust's local target poorer communities and two community hubs have been opened. Over the next 20 years, the Gloucester Gateway Trust will plough an estimated £10m income generated by the Services into sustainable community projects through its local charity partners.

#### **HCT Group**

HCT Group is a social enterprise in the transport industry. It started in 1982 with the formation of Hackney Community Transport, providing low cost minibuses for local community groups – a service they still provide. HCT Group now provides over 20 million passenger bus trips every year. It delivers a range of transport services – from London red buses to social services transport, from school transport to Park and Ride, from community transport to education and training for the long-term unemployed. It reinvests all the profits from its commercial work into further transport services or projects in the communities it serves. It has 800 employees, ten depots spread across London, Yorkshire, Humberside, the Southwest and the Channel Islands, a fleet of 500 vehicles and, in 2014/15, a turnover of £45.4m.

### **5. Community Investment**

Strong communities are good for business. By investing in their local communities, helping them tackle the issues that affect the lives of their workforce and customers, businesses are investing in themselves. Business in the Community encourages companies to invest in education, employment and enterprise in their communities and states that its ambition is to deliver a culture change in the way businesses and community organisations, including schools, work together to support their local areas.

**British Land**

Regent's Place in Camden comprises 13 acres of office, retail and residential property, owned and managed by British Land. The company has worked closely with Camden Council and the local community since the 1990s. Since 2009, British Land has contributed £900,000 to the local community at Regent's Place in cash, time and in-kind donations. It has invested £49.1 million in local infrastructure through the planning process since 2007. From 2010 to 2014, the company's construction activity in the area has supported 6,700 jobs. Since 2010, it has created 160 affordable homes (out of 310 new units) at Regent's Place, alongside community facilities including a theatre, arts studios and employment and training centre.

A key initiative that is place-based and helps build stronger communities is BITC's Business Connector Programme. Business Connectors are talented individuals seconded from business, trained by Business in the Community and placed in communities of greatest need to build partnerships that tackle local issues. The programmes run for three years in one place and individual business connectors are placed full time in the community for 12 months. The programme is supported by BIG Lottery. To date, 192 talented business people have been seconded as Business Connectors from 44 different organisations supporting 100 of the most deprived communities across the breadth of England. Over 3,000 community organisations have received support in the last 3.5 years. London locations include Tottenham, Westminster, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Greenwich, Wandsworth, Croydon and Acton.

The Business Connectors can bring services together as already discussed in the South Leeds Case Study above. They can also co-ordinate company volunteering programmes: maximising the skill development opportunities for employees and ensuring that volunteering offers from companies are productive for the voluntary and community and educational institutions where volunteers are placed. The Time and Talents Programme in Westminster in the box below illustrates this.

**Business Connector: Westminster**

The Business Connectors in Westminster have helped One Westminster to develop the Time and Talents programme which was set up in 1996, and the complementary Time for Paddington programme run by the Paddington Partnership. The Time and Talents programme facilitates the placement of skilled employee volunteers within the local community, where their knowledge and experience are utilised by those in need. Employee volunteers provide a range of services such as training, mentoring, workshops or acting as trustees, and engage directly with local people and charity staff, ensuring their work has the highest possible impact. In 2014-15 this led to 1037 skilled volunteers providing 5534 hours of their time to the community. Many of the companies involved were SMEs. Over 50 small

charities were helped with tasks such as web-design, events management, business planning and project management support. In schools, Time for Paddington places staff as reading, maths, chess and science partners in primary schools; mentors and careers advisors in secondary schools and academies.

The Connectors have run events such as speed dating for community groups with companies; they have facilitated the business improvement districts which are run by business and leading to environmental and community safety improvements in Paddington and Bayswater; they have deepened relationship between some major companies' CRS staff and local community organisations (e.g. BNP Paribas with Vital Regeneration; Paddington Development Trust and Innocent Smoothies (IS); City West Homes with Money for Life, Lloyds financial capability and personal money skills programme); and they have forged a partnership between One Westminster and the Westminster Business Council and the Westminster Community Network.

#### **Business Connector: Tottenham**

Kay Horne was a senior store manager for Sainsbury and was seconded to Tottenham as a Business Connector the week after the riots in 2011. Initially her role consisted of contacting all the retail outlets on the High Street to make sure they knew how to access the emergency funding that was designed to help them. She then worked with The Boxing Academy, which provides alternative education to children in danger of dropping out of school, to raise funds and get business support. She was succeeded by Dave Willis from Argos who spent eighteen months in Tottenham working with a range of organisations, community groups and charities to tackle unemployment, poverty and other challenging social issues.

#### **How can existing successes be built on?**

##### **1. A co-ordinated voice in the community**

One of the problems faced by companies wanting to engage with deprived communities is the multiple organisations that claim to represent the community and the perception that small community organisations go to corporates with a begging bowl for cash to support their current programmes. The Commission heard on several occasions that corporates and funders would welcome community groups networking more effectively and approaching them with a more co-ordinated proposal on the support they require. Such a co-ordinated approach could present a much more powerful case to get the support required to draw on potential resources that local communities offer in terms of knowledge, relationships, skills, and their passion and enthusiasm about making a difference to the area in which they live

The Commission has suggested to the Mayoral candidates that Community Action Neighbourhoods (CAN) should be identified across Inner and Outer London (building on the existing local community bases) by conducting an all-London analysis of the most deprived areas, using existing GLA data. Within each of these areas agreement should be reached on the lead voluntary sector anchor organisation which could work with other community organisations, particularly smaller groups who have the ear of the local community. These networks would work with other partners to define priority unmet needs and explore new ways of working which allowed residents to define the outcomes, a genuine cross-sector approach, individual and organisational leadership from the anchor organisation, a local focus and clear accountability. We believe this approach would be welcomed by the business community and funders.

## **2. Deeper Area involvement**

The case studies above show the important impact of business investment in communities. However the work of the Commission has shown that there are some gaps in partnership work in turning around the poorest communities.

At the moment there is limited systematic engagement of business with communities in identifying priority unmet needs and in agreeing the outcomes that all partners want to achieve and empowering citizens to craft new ways of working to deliver such outcomes. Our Commission has highlighted that with strong leadership, citizens in neighbourhoods can influence new ways of working which not only reduce isolation and ensure access to services but also further develop self-management skills and capacity to increase personal and collective independence

The question remains how business can be involved in agreeing joint programmes and releasing community assets and at same time releasing both corporate support and local business support for the community.

Firstly, we suggest, there needs to be a matching service whereby a lead company (or a group of companies like the East London Business Alliance) is matched with each Community Action Neighbourhood. Ideally a Business Connector from this company could then be placed to liaise with the relevant anchor organisation and facilitate the delivery of the broad range of activities needed to support the citizen-led programme. Bringing initiatives together, as in the Leeds case study above, would be an important role of the Business Connector. The Business Connector could also be charged with encouraging smaller companies to get involved. Our aim is not just to release community assets but also to release small business assets. This initiative could also encourage more business to business support, developing enterprise in those areas where the local economy has been

failing. BITC has just placed Michael Maynard from the Department of Work and Pensions in Newham and this might provide the basis for building this type of relationship.

Secondly we are suggesting that an Joint Action Board be established with a lead company, leaders from the community and the chief executives of the statutory sector and key funders. This Board would hold an initial workshop to enable the lead company (and others corporates if they want to) and other partners to engage with the community in defining priority unmet needs and in planning a programme of activity to deliver a set of outcomes over, say, a five year period. Such a workshop would also need to discuss how progress is to be assessed and how those delivering the programme will be accountable. The delivery of the agreed outcomes would be handed over to a set of task groups.

The lead company would not necessarily wish to be involved in the delivery details. The Joint Action Board might just meet annually to review progress and make appropriate changes in the programme to ensure continual effectiveness. In this way the focus is on action and bureaucracy is minimised. The role of the lead company would be to think about how local small and medium sized businesses can be engaged to support the community and encourage local enterprise. Many such businesses have deep roots in the community and have much to offer in terms of employment opportunities, community support and skills. There are also local organisations that span the public and private sector such as housing associations and local colleges that have much to give and much to gain by working to support the local community.

### **3. Funding**

If local communities are to be supported some extra cash will be necessary. The support through volunteering and capacity and skills development is invaluable to poorer communities but funding remains crucial. The Commission were told about a study of current funding resources in small to medium sized voluntary organisations in two deprived areas. This found that, in deprived areas, the VCS is particularly dependent on the public sector which is now being cut so it is losing funds. But capacity and energy is being focused on service delivery (often to specifications laid down by prime contractors) and these small and medium organisations do not have the capacity or skills to apply for foundation funds or seek support from the corporate sector. So, paradoxically, applications for foundation funding are declining in the very areas where such funding is most needed. The recommendations of these reports focus on the need to strengthen capacity, develop new business and financial skills within the smaller VCS organisations and fund more support for this sector.

This report has already mentioned that in 2014 the top 500 companies in the UK spent £3.25 billion on CRS activity. This may sound like a lot but it actually represents just 0.026% of profit. 46% of this was donating goods and services, 34% was employees volunteering and fund raising and 20% was cash donations (0.0053% of profit). One of our Commissioners

was very adamant that the Commission must call for a greater contribution from the private sector, and that giving should be proportionate to profits.

One of the ways this can be done is by developing more companies in each sector that give a greater percentage of their profit to their local communities thus changing the culture on corporate giving. The Gloucester Gateway Trust and HCT have already provided examples. The Global NoticeBoard outlined in the box below is due to be launched in March 2016 and seeks to create a paradigm shift in attitudes.

### **Global NoticeBoard**

Global NoticeBoard is a website where people can post a notice of what they need help with, at no cost and others can respond; where exchange of information, goods and services is facilitated and where payments associated with market transactions are done. It is a bit similar to Gumtree but has additional functions, for example: it can show volunteering opportunities on an interactive map; support fundraising campaigns; and provide advice and guidance in response to questions. It is structured as a limited company (Global Noticeboard Holdings Ltd) and a charitable foundation (GNB Charitable Foundation, known as 'the Humanity Fund'). The limited company has given the GNB platform to the charitable foundation on an exclusive 999-year lease on the basis that the platform is made available to all people free of charge so that local groups and charities can create their own NoticeBoard. The company has been supported by Middlesex University and owing to its organisational structure is able to attract both equity investments on the commercial side as well as grant funding for the charitable foundation. The plan is to one day have built a FTSE 100 company that is a 'hybrid' social enterprise, a business run for good which attracts buyers and sellers because it is more cost effective than other platforms but also delivers funding for charitable purposes. In this way it will encourage other companies to follow its example.

As well as creating new companies that give a significant share of their profits to a linked foundation, there are already examples of foundations working together with business to address a major gap in funding. The Commission received evidence that Youth Services are being cut in London by 60% and the cuts in further education, the shared housing benefit rate for those under 35 and the proposed end of housing benefit for most under-25-year-olds are all taking their toll. Homelessness and mental health issues among young people are increasing. A response to this youth services funding crisis is given below.

### **Westminster Youth Foundation**

The John Lyon's Charity gives grants to benefit children and young people up to the age of 25 who live in nine boroughs in northwest London: Barnet, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Kensington & Chelsea and the Cities of London and Westminster. It is in the process of setting up a Westminster Youth Foundation, which will employ fundraisers to draw in other foundations, corporate donations and money from the Community Investment Levy. While this initiative will not replace public sector funding it should allow some of the most valuable initiatives and ways of working within the youth service to become sustainable in the long term.

There have been discussions about establishing a similar fund for the Community Action Neighbourhoods, possibly linked to the Mayor's Fund for London as suggested in the Commission's recommendations for the mayoral candidates or through models like Islington Giving.

Finally our first Report of Evidence contained some new proposals to increase funding from the corporate sector. The proposals to reform business rates next year contained the suggestion that rates could rise if the business in the area voted for such an increase to fund improved infrastructure. It is possible that such a rise could also be agreed to fund certain community investment but this remains to be seen. Funding that is currently available is the 5p plastic bag charge which has generated new funds from larger retailers. There is no legal requirement to pass the money on to charities, but most large retailers have chosen to do so. Most is currently going to environmental projects but this could provide some funding for the Community Action Neighbourhoods.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This report has shown how the private sector is already making a real difference to London's poorest communities. In the recommendations for Mayoral candidates, the Commission asked the future Mayor put out a call to action to London's business community, London's civil society (including faith communities) and borough leadership. Such joint action should seek to fulfil the vision that the Commission has put forward: a vision of change driven by new, community-led, ways of working that release local communities assets to create healthier social and economic outcomes across London.

We have also argued that local business assets need to be released. Businesses are already engaging in programmes to open up recruitment, develop staff skills by encouraging volunteering, engaging in education business partnerships and building sustainable supply chains where good employment practice are encouraged and support is given for local

SMEs. Such action brings enormous benefits to the community but also helps the business community itself through tackling skills shortages, building new talent pipelines, enhancing reputation, boosting retention rates and achieving higher productivity.

The Commission would like to see business consider whether there is further change in their day-to-day activities to better support deprived communities and local enterprise development. It would also like to see take-up widened to involve far more local SMEs in stressed areas. The business community will need to build on what they already deliver if this change is to be achieved.

Specifically the Commission is calling on the Business Sector:

1. To develop greater area based involvement so that they can join with local citizens in addressing their priority needs. We ask that business second talent to the BITC Business Connector programme to support their local community. This will enable a local needs based and collaborative approach bringing together all three sectors.
2. BeyondMe could establish a team in one or more of the Community Action Neighbourhoods defined as pilots for this approach.
3. To actively explore ways of increasing the funding available to support programmes in Community Action Neighbourhoods.
4. To work with brokerage organisations, such as BITC, the Media Trust and Team London, to think differently about how they donate their employees' time – to encourage skills based volunteering, long-term secondments, repeated donations of small amounts of time rather than one-off afternoons.
5. To campaign for a culture change to recognise the business benefits of increasing corporate giving at a proportionate rate to profits.