

Agenda

Community Alliance

Date: Thursday, 24 February 2022

Time: 14:00

Venue: Zoom Video Conference

Contact: Ashley MacIntyre, Committee Officer
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Dear Member

The Convener has directed that the powers contained in Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 will be used and so Members will attend this meeting of the **Community Alliance** remotely. The business is shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

JOYCE WHITE

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

Anne MacDougall, Chair

Community Representatives and Voluntary Sector Members

Councillor J McColl (Vice Chair)

Councillor J Millar

Councillor S Page

All other Councillors for information

Date of issue: 10 February 2022

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

THURSDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2022

AGENDA

1 STATEMENT BY CHAIR

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare if they have an interest in any of the items of business on this agenda and the reasons for such declarations.

4 RECORDING OF VOTES

The Committee is asked to agree that all votes taken during the meeting be done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

5 - 11

Submit for approval, as correct records, Minutes of Meetings held on 12 March 2020 and 25 August 2021.

6 COMMUNITY ALLIANCE UPDATE AND PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

13 – 19

Submit report by the Communities Manager providing an update on the proposed approach to transition from the current organisational structure towards a more community led format and to seek approval for this approach.

7 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

At a Meeting of the Community Alliance held in The Denny Meeting Room, Council Offices, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Thursday, 12 March 2020 at 2.03 p.m.

Present: Anne MacDougall, Chair; Councillor Sally Page; Barbara Barnes, Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Locality Engagement Network; Frances McGonagle and Polly Wheelans, WDTRO.

Attending: Suzanne Greer, Acting Communities Manager/Community Empowerment Officer; Ric Rea, Performance and Strategy Officer; Stephen Burns, Communities Project Worker - Communities Team and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf Councillor Caroline McAllister; Brenda Pasquire, West Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau; Jackie Maceira, West Dunbartonshire Access Panel; Rhona Young, Clydebank Seniors Forum; and Neil Etherington, Clydebank Mens Shed.

Ms Anne MacDougall in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any of the items of business on the agenda.

NOTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Note of Meeting of the Community Alliance held on 12 November 2019 was submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to noting that the next meeting date of 15 January 2020 was rearranged, to today's meeting date instead.

In terms of matters arising from the Note of previous meeting, it was noted that any actions in relation to any points contained therein would be taken forward as necessary by officers.

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE CONFERENCE: SUMMARY REPORT AND KEY OUTCOMES/NEXT STEPS

A report was submitted by the Acting Communities Manager/Community Empowerment Officer providing an update on the Community Alliance Conference held on Saturday, 22 February 2020 in Clydebank Town Hall.

After discussion and having heard the Communities Project Worker and the Community Empowerment Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Alliance agreed:-

- (1) to note the terms of the verbal update given;
- (2) otherwise to note the content of the report and to continue consideration to a future meeting on the key outcomes from the Conference and the next steps moving forward;
- (3) in view of (2) above, that there was an identified need to build on the key findings and to promote the Alliance more widely. This could be done using a variety of methods, social media and the development of a communications and marketing plan. Also, there was a key need to consider the timing, format and location of meetings in reaching out to new members and ways of including young people and increasing the representativeness of the Alliance; and
- (4) to note the discussion that had taken place on 'Your Community', the Community Alliance and how it links into the wider strategic aims of the Community Planning West Dunbartonshire (CPWD) Management Board.

REVIEW OF SCHEME OF ESTABLISHMENT FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS

The Community Empowerment Officer gave a verbal update in relation to the process of reviewing the Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils and advised that this was the formal part of the process (including a nine month review timetable). The officer also gave an outline of what was planned in relation to the review, which would then be proceeded by new community council elections.

After discussion, the position was noted in respect of this matter.

WORKPLAN FOR COMMUNITY ALLIANCE/FORWARD PLANNER

Discussion took place on what measures might be most effective in ensuring a better attendance at future meetings of the Community Alliance (CA), and it was noted that the timing, location of meetings should not be a barrier for members who wished to attend. The use of social media was also discussed as this could be used to advertise the existence of the Community Alliance and make more community groups aware of how they could interface with the CA, to the benefits to themselves and to the wider community of West Dunbartonshire.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Having heard Anne MacDougall, Chair, it was noted that there had been no intimation of any items to be taken forward under this.

DATE(S) OF NEXT/FUTURE MEETINGS

Anne MacDougall Chair, Chair, thanked Stephen Burns, Communities Project Worker, Suzanne Greer, Community Empowerment Officer and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer for their work in taking matters forward with regard to raising the profile and making the Community Alliance generally more effective and fit-for-purpose.

Anne also took the opportunity to welcome back Elaine Troup, Communities Manager. It was noted that officers would take away and consider the key themes that emerged from the recent conference which would inform the workplan for the Alliance for 2020/21 and allow planning of meetings and inviting speakers and making the meetings more accessible and appealing to new members.

The meeting closed at 3.23 p.m.



Meeting of the Community Alliance - Minute

25 August 2021

Attending – Anne MacDougall (Chair), Rhona Young (Clydebank Seniors Forum), Stephen Burns (WDC), Cllr Jonathan McColl (Elected Member), Drummond McNair (Community Council Forum), John White (Stepping Stones) and Suzanne Mason (WDC)

Apologies – Barbara Barnes (Alexandria Neighbourhood Action), Cllr Sally Page (Elected Member) and Theresa Jones (Clydebank Asbestos)

1. Introductions / Background

The chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting over Zoom.

Everyone at the meeting was asked to introduce themselves briefly describe who they represent.

The chair asked someone to propose and second the minutes from the meeting on 20 July 2021, the minutes were proposed by Rhona Young and seconded by Cllr McColl.

Stephen updated the group on the consultations that he has held recently in relation to the Community Alliance. A survey monkey was sent out in December 2020 to Community Groups, Equalities Forum and Community Alliance distribution lists. The results were analysed and a report was written and circulated.

Following on from the survey monkey, a second consultation was organised in the form of listening events. The listening events either took the form of answering the questions through email or by attending the zoom listening event. On conclusion of this consultation, a report was written and circulated. Stephen offered to resend the reports.

There was a feeling expressed at the meeting attendance has been poor, the community are not being listened too and a sense that the Community Alliance has had it's day/ a fresh approach may be needed.

One member from the Community Council Forum expressed the view that an extended membership of the Forum could possibly replace the Community Alliance. There was also some discussion about the number of community bodies in WDC, and whether they can co-exist and gain enough interest to be worthwhile individually.

Stephen pointed out that not every area in West Dunbartonshire has a Community Council so they would not be represented and to expand the membership of the Community Council Forum to other community groups would change the nature of this group, which is currently being supported to develop and function effectively as a CC Forum.

There was some general discussion about how well recognised the role of the Community Alliance has been both now and in the past and how it has functioned, whether as mainly to rubber stamp decisions already made.

The chair asked the group how do we move the Community Alliance forward.

Cllr McColl reiterated some of the views stated, that whilst the former Community Participation Committee had developed in the Alliance, however it had lost its way somewhere along the way.. Cllr McColl also felt that the role and purpose of the Alliance may need to be totally revisited.

Cllr McColl felt that whilst the draft remit was strong, it requires input from a revitalised membership of which does not seem to be happening with the current format of meetings. Whilst the role of the Alliance should be the conduit between Communities and the Community Planning Partnership it is not currently fulfilling its potential in this regard and to present the view of the community groups to councillors on a wide range of topics.

The Chair also reiterated some of this sentiment and felt that the Alliance was not fulfilling its role, as did other members of the group.

There was some discussion about the Council's customer service charter and not responding within timescales set and some issues around Home Care services.

A new member of the group was in attendance and commented that the draft remit reads really well and Stepping stones would like to continue to be involved with the Community Alliance. John had not previously been aware of the Community Alliance, but had in the past had experience of similar forums and recognised the sentiments which had been expressed by members today.

Cllr McColl responded to some of the issues raised re.lack communication in response to the community and stated that any instances should be reported. Also regarding the Home Care Service and highlighted that the council are following the Government guidance about staff who can work from home should work from but in the months ahead, a phased return to offices is planned.

Cllr McColl suggested that before considering the election of office bearers it would make sense to ensure that the remit is complete to represent the type of group the Community will support. This item was therefore deferred.

The chair commented that in the previous forum, guest speakers were invited to the meetings and it improved attendance as people wanted to hear what was being said.

Cllr McColl suggested that due to numbers in attendance it was not possible to cover the full agenda of the meeting.

The chair proposed some changes to the draft remit and felt that changes should be made to the Governance section i.e. if any finances were going through the group and the list of participants. It was also felt that when setting the agenda that the relevant staff member from a department in question attend the meeting to participate in the discussion.

Cllr McColl also suggested that the Community Alliance meetings become part of the audio streaming to be available for members of the community to listen to if they can't make the meeting.

Stephen will make the relevant changes to the draft remit for comment.

Cllr McColl has offered to do a letter all the Community Groups named in the draft remit to invite them along, give them a brief update on the Alliance to encourage participation. This letter will be a joint letter from Cllr McColl and the chair.

The Chair closed the meeting.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Communities Manager, Housing & Employability

Community Alliance Meeting: 24 February 2022

Subject: Community Alliance Update and Proposed Way Forward

1 Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to update Community Alliance members on the proposed approach to transition from the current organisational structure towards a more community led format and to seek approval for this approach.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that CA members:

- Agree that the Community Alliance should cease to operate in its current form.
- Agree to the proposed approach to transition from the current structure by engaging with local people through the attached Approach to Developing a Communications Plan (see Appendix One: Approach to Developing a Communications Plan).

3 Background

- 3.1** The Community Alliance was established in 2013/4 following a review of community planning. The former Community Participation Committee became the Community Alliance as the community representation or voice within the Community Planning West Dunbartonshire Management structure. Its remit as stated in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017 - 27 was to include bringing together, *'representatives from a range of organisations at neighbourhood, interest and user group level across West Dunbartonshire with the intention of identifying issues of common concerns and to highlight local priorities'*.
- 3.2** Despite having a committed and enthusiastic Chair and membership for the duration of the time, the transition to the Community Alliance has proved challenging. There have been several attempts to support, review and develop the Alliance since then, however membership has remained stubbornly low. The Covid-19 pandemic was a further blow to the Community Alliance, and like so many other organisations, the membership numbers have dropped further with very few new members coming on board.
- 3.3** Feedback from community conversations that have been underway to support the Community Empowerment work have indicated that:

- The role of the Community Alliance is unclear;
- There is more interest in smaller, geographically based groups;
- That one group covering the whole authority area cannot represent local issues effectively.

3.4 Having an effective community voice and representation within CPWD is critical and any replacement for the Alliance should be developed with input from local citizens. This is the only way a truly community based alternative can be developed. This approach is in line with the West Dunbartonshire Community Empowerment Strategy and will ensure that it functions effectively to reflect the views of the community.

4. Main Issues

4.1 As part of the Community Empowerment Strategy Delivery Plan, a Communications Plan is being developed as a Year One priority project. This Communications Plan is designed to look at how the Council, Partners and the community communicate, in both directions, to help deliver the aims of the Community Empowerment Strategy (see Appendix One: Approach to Developing a Communications Plan).

4.2 One of the key aims of the Communications Plan will be to develop a transition from the Community Alliance to a more sustainable community led solution. It is essential that a robust process is carried out to involve community members in the development any new group/s formed and a plan will be put in place to support this.

4.3 There have been some early community conversations which have given clear feedback on what an alternative to the Community Alliance should consider, as noted above. These on-going community based conversations will be crucial to help inform the process to develop a sustainable, alternative model.

4.4 It is essential that any group/s established are fully supported by the Communities Team to fulfil their role on an ongoing basis, with training and development support as required. Work would also be undertaken alongside Rona Gold, Communities and Partnership Manager to ensure the new group/s have a clear role in CPWD.

5 People Implications

5.1 There are no people implications.

6 Financial & Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no financial resources, existing budgets will be utilised.

7 Risk Analysis

7.1 Without this approach to transition from the Community Alliance

to a more sustainable model, there is a risk that the community voice is not heard or represented at CPWD. There is also a risk of not delivering on the West Dunbartonshire Community Empowerment Strategy and the requirement of the Community Empowerment Act (2015).

8 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** An EIA was carried out as part of the development of the Community Empowerment Strategy, Delivery Plan and further EIAs will be carried out as required.

9 Consultation

- 9.1** Consultation and community conversations have been taking place and will continue, as part of the development and roll out of the Delivery plan. The work will be further informed by the outcome of these discussions.

10 Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** The re-focusing and redevelopment of the community voice within CPWD will support the delivery of the CPWD strategic objectives, in particular in relation to an empowered West Dunbartonshire.

**Suzanne Mason, Team Leader, Communities Team
West Dunbartonshire Council**

Person to Contact:	Suzanne Mason suzanne.mason@west-dunbarton.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Proposed Approach to developing a Communication Plan

Background Papers:

WD Community Empowerment Strategy – Priority Project One Communications and Engagement Plan

Outcome: Individuals, communities, council and partnership staff understand what community empowerment means and how it can help individuals and communities.

Action: Communications Plan to manage how the Council, Community Planning partners and communities should communicate to turn the Strategy into reality.

This work will also address the following action:

Action: Revitalise the Community Alliance to lead communication with local communities and represent views to the Council and CPPs on empowerment issues.

Considerations: This work will look at communication in both directions, from the Council / Partners to the community and crucially how the community can have their voice heard by the Council/Partners. It will be carried out with the understanding that the majority of local residents may be quite happy not to engage with the Council on the Empowerment Strategy. Also, that according to the regular WDC telephone surveys there is a 75% satisfaction rate with how the Council communicates.

In 2013/14 the Community Alliance (CA) was established, this replaced three local area partnerships. As detailed in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) the CA was, *'a strategic partnership group established to support CPWD in ensuring communities and local organisations within West Dunbartonshire are able to influence and scrutinise the work of CPWD'*. While the CA has operated for a number of years it has faced a number of challenges that included a lack of membership, poor community awareness and buy-in.

This project will consider literacy rates across Scotland and identify if there are any improvements that could be made to support those who struggle with literacy (24% of people struggle with reading and writing across Scotland).

The work to develop a Communications Plan will focus on listening to and understanding how local people want to be communicated with and how they want to communicate and participate with the Council and Partners. It will:

- Establish if there are improvements we can make in communicating with communities;
- Investigate if there is a preference for a single, authority wide group to represent the community or whether smaller, geographically based groups would work better, if needed at all.
- Investigate if people want to be involved and participate in shaping individual projects / work streams, for example Community Budgeting,
- Investigate how people want to hear about and support the Community Empowerment work and from other services;
- Consider how we can better communicate the benefits of community empowerment;
- Understand how people want to have their voice heard; and
- Develop a transition from the Community Alliance to a more sustainable community led solution.

Proposed Approach

Task	Timescale	Lead	Update on progress
Preparations			
Review and consider feedback from initial Community Conversations undertaken by Alan Karas, Communities Team	Nov/Dec 21	SM/AK/CY	Conversations completed. Key findings noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of the Community Alliance is unclear; There is more interest in smaller, geographically based groups; That one group covering the whole authority area cannot represent local issues effectively.
Community Alliance meeting – seek approval to proceed.	Feb 22	SB/SM/ET	
Focus Group - seek community members to join a discussion to consider the approach to engagement, question-set and audience. Utilise existing engagement underway? Utilise survey monkey? Face-to-face? Social Media?	Feb 22	CS/CY	
Develop a plan for carrying out research / ensure we target all ages / minority groups / etc.	Feb/Mar 22	CY / focus group	
Conversation with Corp Communications around showcasing community empowerment / case studies, etc.	Feb/Mar 22	LC/CY	
Stage 1 Early Engagement / User interviews			
Engage and listen to the community about if / how they want to communicate with the Council and CPP. How can we best represent the views of the community?	Mar 22	CY/community partners?	
Publicise the need for community members to partner with us to develop a community voice/or whatever it will be called. How can this feed into the CPWD? Does it need to? Do people want to be part of a formal structure?	Mar/Apr 22 – on-going	CY/community partners / CPP	
Identify any community members interested in representing the views of their community.	On-going	Communities / HSCP/ other services.	This should be part of the CE conversations, the work in Faifley, the PB pilot conversations and the SoE work! Stronger Voices Group?
Understand findings of User Interviews in advance of planned session.	To be confirmed.		

Dedicated sessions for individuals to discuss the potential of a community voice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What it needs to achieve; • What form it should take; • Frequency/form of meetings; etc. etc. • Support needed • others 	To be confirmed (depending on feedback)	Community / Communities team/HSCP/ Comms	
Stage 2 Acting on Feedback / Developing a Plan (all to be confirmed)			
Understand and implement any improvements to method of communication. This could be recommendations for all service areas to consider.	tbc	Communities team/HSCP/ Comms	
Proving feedback to individuals and wider community of the outcome of the work and any improvements made.	tbc	Community / Comms / Communities Team	
Planning sessions with community reps and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rona Gold, CPP Manager to develop how the groups might work; • Colin Smith, Communities Team Leader to understand training and support available to each group • Project Workers to develop remit, roles, etc. • As required.... On-going programme of support. 	tbc	Community / CPP Manager / Communities Team	
Dedicated Communities Team officers to each community area group to support with meetings, reports, action points, training and development, etc.	tbc	tbc	
Preparation of Progress/Outcome Report.		Communities Team	
Stage 3: Embedding the Community Voice / Communications Plan			
To be discussed with the community representatives.			