

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Executive

Community Participation Committee: 20 February 2008

Subject: Operation of the Community Participation Committee (CPC)/Wider Community Engagement Structures

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report makes recommendations about reviewing the working of the CPC with a view to increasing the effectiveness of its role and linking this to the wider review and development of the Council's Decentralisation Scheme/Community Engagement Strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1** The August meeting of the CPC considered two reports as follows:
- Community Engagement Structures – Role and Operation of the CPC
 - WDC, Review of Decision-Making and Management Structures.
- A report on the Operation of the Community Participation Committee was submitted to the October meeting responding to points raised from the above, but continued for further consideration.
- 2.2** The Best Value Audit has indicated the need to better co-ordinate community engagement activity. We are now updating our Decentralisation Scheme which, in its reviewed form, will also act as the Council's Community Engagement Strategy.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** The review of the Decentralisation Scheme will involve a consultation process with partners including the community, to ensure that we are taking a strategic approach to community engagement and using our combined partner resources to the best effect.
- 3.2** In addition, the re-establishment of the Community Forums as part of the community planning engagement structures presents the opportunity to identify the best arrangements for establishing links between the Community Forums and the CPC (including membership for community forum representatives).

- 3.3** To enable the committee to grow and develop, it is suggested that, as part of the above process, we carry out further consultation both within and outwith the CPC (the former evaluation was carried out only with the current members of the committee). This can be done in a number of ways, including through focus groups recruited from the Citizens' Panel and through the newly established Community Forums.
- 3.4** It is proposed that this process should be used to consider a number of options for the role, agenda format & content, and membership of the committee, e.g.:
- the structure and content of agendas
 - opportunities to develop the departmental / service focus of agendas
 - opportunities for more direct community input to agendas
 - opportunities to ensure that the membership of the committee reflects the broadest range of community interests
 - the scrutiny role of the CPC
 - the role of the CPC in relation to other community consultation and engagement structures
 - the mechanisms for monitoring the effectiveness of the CPC
- 3.5** The Community Participation Committee and the Community Planning Partnership Board will have the opportunity to comment on and input to the Draft Community Engagement Strategy (Decentralisation Scheme).
- 3.6** A draft for consultation will be prepared for the April meeting of the CPC.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** There are no financial issues.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There are no risks identified in relation to the above.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** A review of the operation of the CPC should take place in the context of the wider process described above and should include external consultation.
- 7.2** This process should help to establish an effective, mutually agreed role for the CPC and strengthen its influence.
- 7.3** The process of developing the focus on departmental / service agendas could be piloted at an early stage to allow this to inform the consultation process.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1** A more extensive review of the CPC should be carried out as described in paragraph 3, in the context of the new developments identified.
- 8.2** The CPC should continue in its current form pending the review described above.

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David McMillan
Chief Executive
Date: 7 February 2008

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Background Papers:	CPC: Wednesday 22 August, 2007, Community Engagement Structures – The Role and Operation of the Community Participation Committee (CPC) and West Dunbartonshire Council – Review of Council Decision Making & Management Structures CPC: Wednesday 24 October, 2007, Operation of the Community Participation Committee
Wards Affected:	All