

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

West Dunbartonshire Council – 28 June 2006

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership – Key Developments

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report provides members with an update on key developments within West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership, (CPP). Progress and key issues will be reported to West Dunbartonshire Council on a quarterly basis – following CPP board meetings.

2. Background

- 2.1** “Community Planning is a process whereby public services in the area of the local authority are planned and provided after consultation and on-going co-operation among all public and community bodies.” (*Local Government Scotland Act*).
- 2.2** The main aims of Community Planning are described as:
- making sure people and communities are genuinely engaged in the decisions made on public services which affect them; allied to
 - a commitment from organisations to work together, not apart, in providing better public services.
- 2.3** West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership was established in its current form at the beginning of 2005. This resulted from a merger of the previous Community Planning structures and the Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP). The merger also included the services which had been developed using the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund (BNSF). The CPP is primarily funded by the Scottish Executive’s Community Regeneration Fund (CRF), which is £13.3 million, on a tapering basis, over the 3 years from 2005/06 to 2007/08. In addition, during 2005/06, some ‘carry forward’ was available from BNSF. This has allowed the overall budget for the 3 years to be spread more evenly, but, in the absence of any new allocation from the Scottish Executive, could mean a significant reduction in the funding available to West Dunbartonshire.
- 2.4.** The greatest proportion (80%), of the CRF is allocated to projects which deliver services in the most disadvantaged areas of West Dunbartonshire,

(approximately the worst 17% as defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation – SIMD). The detail of the planned approach was set out in the Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA), which was agreed with Communities Scotland and the Scottish Executive in 2004/05, and which establishes the targets for the Community Planning Partnership in relation to the most disadvantaged areas.

- 2.5. The first year of operation of the CPP has been spent in establishing structures, (see paragraph 3.3), and in realigning projects to ensure that they are delivering in accordance with the ROA, rather than on the targets agreed under the previous SIP and BNSF structures. A major focus is on tackling 'worklessness', and all projects have been assessed in terms of their ability to deliver on this target.
- 2.6. The new CPP is now working on a range of issues which will be of interest to Council, and which are outlined in paragraph 3.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1. *A revised Community Plan* – The original Community Plan was agreed in 1999/2000, and now requires review. The target for completion of this process is December 2006. The Community Plan will cover the whole of West Dunbartonshire, (rather than just the priority regeneration areas which are the target of the ROA). An initial meeting to set the direction for the new Community Plan was held on 27th June 2006. There will be opportunities throughout the rest of the year for all partners, including elected members, to contribute to the Community Plan development. The development of the new Community Plan is being led by the Council and will be overseen by the 2nd tier of the CPP structure, the Partnership Regeneration Group (PRG).
- 3.2. *Sustainability of Partnership Structures* - The sustainability of the CPP beyond the current period of CRF is a major concern. The Partnership Board has agreed to look at models which might address this issue, and in particular have agreed to investigate a 'Regeneration Trust' model. Again the PRG has been given a specific responsibility to consider the options and report back to the Board. This investigation will take place over the summer/early autumn and a report will be made to a special Board meeting at the end of October.
- 3.3. *Structure*: - The agreed CPP structure is continuing to evolve. The Board membership is almost complete, although a space exists for a young person. Sitting between the Board and the Thematic Groups, the PRG is key to the Partnership's development. As well as taking a co-ordinating role, the group will drive forward the worklessness efforts and make overall recommendations on funding etc. to the Board.
The Thematic Groups which deliver on the agreed objectives are at different stages of development as noted below. These groups involve all stakeholders in their work.
 - *Communities Group*: Established with a full agenda. The group will address the issue of membership on an ongoing basis

- *Safe, Attractive Communities:* Currently the Community Safety Partnership addresses these issues in a Community Planning context. A mechanism is still required to deal with housing related issues, and this is being discussed with WDC and Communities Scotland. The Citizens Panel survey on the topic of community safety and anti-social behaviour is complete. The questionnaire was issued to nearly 1200 people and generated a high response rate (77%). The findings are being considered by the panel steering group.
- *Health Improvement:* Established and focusing on developing its role aligned to the ROA. The group has carried out a review of role, remit & membership in light of all developments over the past year and which also focused on the Community Planning/Community Health Partnership relationships.
- *Youth Strategy:* The group is focusing on service delivery issues, co-ordination of services and developing an Outcome Agreement for Young People. A Youth Outcome Agreement Framework has been designed and is currently being populated with information. A sub-group has been formed to focus specifically on the Youth Strategy Employment theme and will also take forward the Partnership's worklessness theme in relation to young people. The Youth Trust will play a key role in this to ensure that young people are central to the development of effective, innovative and user-led facilities across West Dunbartonshire.
- *Getting People Back Into Work:* This new Thematic Group is being developed around Business Growth and Employability, with links to the Local Economic Forum

3.4 *Tackling worklessness* – A main focus for the CPP is reducing the number of people not in work. Very specific targets have been set by the Scottish Executive. The PRG has been a specific remit in this area. As noted in paragraph 2.5, projects have been reviewed in terms of their contribution to worklessness. The next stage will be to look at the various programmes and projects provided by mainstream services. The overall objective of this exercise is to set out a cohesive, co-ordinated programme which tackles worklessness and the barriers associated with this. The review and mapping process will help identify duplication and gaps in service provision and should provide an opportunity for public sector agencies to get better value services for their investments. A worklessness framework is currently being developed which will help identify who does what in this sector.

3.5 *Civic Forum / Community Week* - The Civic Forum has been developed as the mechanism by which the wider community can gather information and feed into the CPP structures. The Forum is scheduled to meet 4 times per year, with themed meetings. The first forum was held in November 2005, and was attended by around 100 community representatives. The second meeting in February 2006 focused on community safety/anti-social behaviour issues and was attended by 80 representatives, and the third in May 2006 focussed on health. The feedback from the forum has been extremely positive. The local community also has a continuing opportunity for involvement during the annual 'Community Week', which starts with the Council run 'Community Day'.

These events took place in April/May this year and have continued to provide an important focus for local activity.

- 3.6** *Financial Inclusion* - A total of £1.2 million has been allocated to West Dunbartonshire for 2006/07 and 07/08 to tackle financial exclusion across the area. This work is being developed by a working group of partners and agencies involved in the finance/information and advice sector, and is chaired by the Leader of the Council. The group has undertaken research which will establish a 'financial exclusion baseline' and generate performance management information for partners. The research comprises consultation with key partners, market research with credit union members and with CAB enquirers, and market research with a random selection of West Dunbartonshire residents.
- 3.7** *ROA* - The ROA is continuing to develop and attention is now focusing on the annual reporting cycle which requires an annual report to be submitted to Communities Scotland by end June 2006. Three key elements of performance will be reported; CRF project outputs, partnership development activity and mainstreaming equalities. The ROA is available on the West Dunbartonshire Council website. The document will be subject to regular updates as the Monitoring Framework evolves.
- 3.8** *Better Neighbourhood Services Fund* - Preparations are underway for the final BNSF report, as required by the Scottish Executive. In line with conditions of grant, a draft report will be submitted to the Scottish Executive by the end of June 2006.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** There are no financial implications.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** The CPP is continuing to develop on a number of fronts, details of the main issues are summarised in paragraph 3. The key issues include:
- taking action to meet the Scottish Executive targets for worklessness, and the wider Closing the Opportunity Gap (CtOG) targets
 - ensuring the longer term sustainability of the CPP

7. Recommendations

- 7.1** Members are requested to consider the information in this report, and to request further detail if required.

Tim Huntingford
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Background Papers: Regeneration Outcome Agreement
Minutes of CPP Board and PRG meetings

Wards Affected: All Council Wards.