

Agenda

Community Alliance

Date: Monday, 29 August 2022

Time: 16:00

Format: Zoom Video Conference

Contact: Ashley MacIntyre, Committee Officer
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Dear Member

Please attend a meeting of the Community Alliance as detailed above. The business is shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

PETER HESSETT

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

Anne MacDougall, Chair

Community Representatives and Voluntary Sector Members

Councillor Gurpreet Singh Johal

Provost Douglas McAllister

Councillor John Millar

All other Councillors for information

Date of issue: 18 August 2022

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE**MONDAY, 29 AUGUST 2022****AGENDA****1 APOLOGIES****2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

3 OPEN FORUM

The Alliance is asked to note that no open forum questions have been submitted by members of the public.

4 COMMUNITY ALLIANCE UPDATE AND PROPOSED WAY FORWARD 5 - 12

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.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Communities Manager, Housing & Employability****Community Alliance Meeting: 29 August 2022**

Subject: Community Alliance Up-date 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**

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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.	Aug 22	SB/SM/ET	This was delayed due to elections/ recess
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	Completed: Question set and survey monkey utilised to reach 11+years across the authority via partner organisations, WD Education and social media platforms.
Develop a plan for carrying out research / ensure we target all ages / minority groups / etc.	Feb/Mar 22	CY / focus group	Completed: Survey results collated and to be published online and shared with Community Councils and action groups for area specific feedback.
Conversation with Corp Communications around showcasing community empowerment / case studies, etc.	Feb/Mar 22	LC/CY	Completed
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?	Completed: Survey results indicate an Online Discussion Forum would be the preferred method for people to communicate with the Council.
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	CY/AK/SB to collaborate, share results and target responders to stress the need for people to get involved in a 'Community Voice' to develop purposeful conversations and relations with CPWD.

Identify any community members interested in representing the views of their community.	On-going	Communities / HSCP/ other services.	Has been taken forward as part of CE conversations, work in Faifley, the PB pilot conversations and the SoE work/ Stronger Voices Group. To be further built on.
Understand findings of User Interviews in advance of planned session.	To be confirmed.		CE conversations have taken place. Survey results will be publish and identify representatives to take forward discussions.
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 	Aug-Oct 2022	Community / Communities team/HSCP/ Comms	Next stage to take forward following Community Alliance final meeting in August 2022
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/ Steering group.			