

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by the Chief Executive

Council : 31 October 2007

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**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 are reported to West Dunbartonshire Council on a quarterly basis – following CPP board meetings. The most recent Board meeting took place on 8 October 2007.

### 2. Background

2.1 West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership was established in its current form at the beginning of 2005. The Council has a statutory responsibility to lead Community Planning in the area. The Partnership is composed of a range of statutory agencies and voluntary & community sector representatives. It has an overarching planning remit in West Dunbartonshire, and aims to ensure that developments are co-ordinated to provide the best possible services and the most effective use of resources. A number of funding streams are administered through the CPP. These include:-

- The Community Regeneration Fund (CRF), which is £13.3 million, on a tapering basis, over the 3 years from 2005/06 to 2007/08. 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 this is set out in the Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA).
- The Community Voices Programme (CVP) which is £0.258m over the 3 years from 2005/06 to 2007/08. The detail of this is also set out in the ROA.
- Financial Inclusion Funding which is £1.2m
- Workforce Plus of £0.84m and NEET of £0.8m all over the 2 years 2006/07 to 2007/08.

The details of these are set out in the various action plans approved by the Scottish Executive. There is currently no information about funding beyond 2007/08, but there could be a significant reduction in the funding available to West Dunbartonshire from April 2008 onwards

2.2 The CPP is working on a range of issues which are outlined in paragraph 3.

### **3. Main Issues**

#### Structures and Staffing

- 3.1** The Partnership currently has 3 main tiers of operation, the Board, which is responsible for the strategic direction; the Partnership Development Group, which is responsible for making recommendations to the Board on key issues and implementing strategic decisions; and the Thematic Groups, which have responsibilities for specific areas of activity.
- 3.2** In 2006 it was recognised that the governance structures of the CPP required further development. These structures have now been reviewed and general proposals for revised structures were agreed by the Board in June 2007. The specific commitments required from partners and the working arrangements of the CPP are set out in a draft Partnership Agreement. This was the subject of discussion at the Board meetings in August and October. Following final amendments, it is envisaged that this agreement will be agreed and signed by all partners at the December 2007 meeting of the Board.
- 3.3** Given the uncertainty of funding in 2008/09 and beyond, the August meeting of the Board agreed that no new posts should be created, or vacant posts filled. The aim of this is to ensure that the CPP is in the best position to review its staffing requirements both in line with new funding arrangements, when these are announced, and in relation to the delivery of the new Community Plan. This position is being monitored by the Executive Group of the CPP Board, with a view to ensuring that key commitments are delivered or alternative arrangements are made.

#### Partnership Development Group (PDG)

- 3.4** The 2<sup>nd</sup> tier of the structure is the Partnership Development Group. This has a co-ordinating role, and has responsibility for, among other things, monitoring budgets, driving the 'worklessness' agenda and developing recommendations on the future sustainability of the CPP. With the completion of the new Community Plan, (see paragraph 3.28 below), there will be a strong focus on ensuring that it is implemented, monitored and reviewed.

#### Key Themes and Thematic Groups

- 3.5** The Thematic Groups deliver on the agreed objectives of the Regeneration Outcome Agreement. The groups involve all stakeholders in their work. The current themes will be amended to reflect the priorities in the new Community Plan, (e.g arrangements are being made to ensure Housing issues are addressed as appropriate in CPP structures).

#### Getting People Back Into Work:

- 3.6** The Business Growth and Employability Strategy Group, (BG&ESG), plays a key role in developing the worklessness agenda. Local and national research shows that many people who experience complex barriers to employment, such as childcare difficulties, health problems and benefit dependency, often

struggle to maintain work. This problem is often masked by the traditional focus on measuring employability services' performance by counting job entry outcomes, rather than considering whether they are successful helping people to get *and keep* a job. In response to these issues, the BG&ESG has been working with Job Centre Plus to design and deliver additional services which will continue to support people once they enter employment. If successful in securing Job Centre Plus funding, these new services would be available to people in West Dunbartonshire from autumn onwards.

- 3.7** A recent survey sought to identify the training needs of staff in the employability and health, social work and housing sectors, to ensure more responsive and holistic employability support is available to job seekers experiencing multiple barriers to employment. Following completion of the survey, key managers within these sectors have come together to design a programme of joint training which will be developed as part of our Workforce Plus Action Plan. The full survey report will be available in October, with training programmes rolling out thereafter.
- 3.8** Operating as a sub-group of the BG&ESG, the Youth Employability Group is responsible for developing and delivering the local NEET, (Not in Education, Employment or Training), Action Plan. Recent activity has included the design of a new project which will give trainees opportunities to become involved in work placements within the National Park area. There will be three main areas of training placements:-
- Land Services, which will include working with the National Park Ranger service on ground maintenance, pathways, wildlife and customer care
  - Sports Coaching, which will include working with the West Dunbartonshire Sports Development Team and;
  - Outdoor Education, which will be involved with environmental education delivered from Balloch Castle

Other activities linked to the NEET plan include:-

- Right Track and Cre8 training sessions on arts
- Get Ready for Work targeting 16-18 year olds' transition to employment
- The Junior Working in Tourism and Hospitality 13 week course targeting 16-18 year olds to support progress towards employment

A meeting was held in August to engage with around 100 officers from key organisations which may be able to support NEET work.

**3.9** Communities

The Communities group aims to ensure full community and voluntary sector participation in the Partnership and to support community development and capacity building as an integral part of sustainable regeneration. This group is continuing to develop the successful Civic Forum model, and the Standards for Community Engagement.

- 3.10** The programme of Civic Forums continued on Thursday, 4 October with a focus on the 'Four Health Challenges for West Dunbartonshire', namely Smoking, Alcohol, Nutrition and Physical Exercise, (see paragraph 3.20).
- 3.11** The induction training for community representatives had been postponed as a result of the review of the Community Plan and the review of the Partnership structure and governance. These exercises are now complete and the Induction Pack is being updated and training will be delivered as a matter of priority.
- 3.12** Following an evaluation of last year's pilot People's Fund event, planning for this year's event is underway. The People's Fund was promoted in the local press week beginning August 13th, seeking applications and voters. Applications and voter registration were completed in August/September. The People's Fund Event will be held on Saturday, 3 November 2007, in the Concord Community Centre.
- 3.13** A Community Engagement database has been developed which gives details of community groups and organisations within West Dunbartonshire. This can be utilised by partner agencies. The database has in excess of 600 contacts. The Community Support Teams together with key partners (such as CL&D and CVS) will begin to establish the three geographic community 'hubs' over the coming months

*Safe, Attractive Communities:*

- 3.14** The Community Safety Partnership addresses this theme in a Community Planning context. The Community Safety Partnership has established separate Task Groups to oversee work on Anti Social Behaviour, Youth Diversion, Violence Reduction, and Accidents. The Pulse has been established as a key mechanism for delivering a varied range of diversionary activities throughout West Dunbartonshire. The Strategic Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is now in the third year of its strategy 2005 - 08.
- 3.15** Work is beginning on a multi-agency Strategic Assessment which will provide a solid basis for the Partnership to develop its work into 2008 and beyond by assessing the evidence on local issues, and agreeing multi-agency priorities and resources. This is an innovative approach and we are one of the first partnerships in Scotland to undertake this in a thorough and systematic way on a multi-agency basis.
- 3.16** Safe and Sound was a major event for older people around home and community safety which took place on October 2nd and 3rd in Dumbarton. This involved a wide range of partners and was supported by MSPs and elected members. Other Home Safety projects include the provision of safety equipment for vulnerable families. The Road Safety Group is planning a major presentation for S5 and S6 pupils in February 2008, and filming of a specially commissioned DVD is currently underway. The Pass Plus scheme is proving popular with a good take-up already and with good partnership involvement by local driving schools. The Fireworks Group will again be co-ordinating multi-

agency action around November 5th including an innovative paper-folding leaflet/quiz for primary school pupils.

- 3.17** The Antisocial Behaviour Task Group meets monthly and has ongoing action plans in a number of geographical areas, current initiatives including Haldane (fire-raising), Whitecrook (environmental, antisocial behaviour, youth provision etc), Off- Road Motor biking, Litter Issues (Faifley and elsewhere).
- 3.18** The Violence Reduction Group is finalising plans for a rapid deployment CCTV camera, which will initially be sited outside Cheers in Dumbarton, and will also be planning the NightZone West initiative for the festive season. Alcohol and Drugs underpin a great deal of the wider community safety issues, and the new Protection, Controls and Availability Group is tackling this on a multi-agency basis. The membership of the group, chaired jointly by the Joint Addictions Officer and the Community Safety Manager, includes Strathclyde Police, Addictions Services, Licensing Forum. Current initiatives being considered are a Pubwatch scheme and action on under-age/proxy purchasing. This also aims to co-ordinate with enforcement action by Strathclyde Police.
- 3.19** The Pulse is a diversionary activity project which provides a range of quality sports and arts activities for young people aged between 12 and 18. During the past 3 months the Pulse has introduced Parkour sessions at Unit 23, BMX racing in Onslow Road and a Music development programme at CRE8, the state of the art music studio. External funding amounting to £18,000 has allowed these activities to be implemented and an application has been made to the Young People's lottery fund to continue and develop the Pulse to March 2009. The 'Pulse' brand is recognised throughout West Dunbartonshire by both young people and adults. Parents and guardians see it as a safe environment for their children and young people see it as an exciting innovative project that allows them to participate in activities they would not normally be able to.
- 3.20** Health Improvement.  
The Health Improvement Strategy Group, (HISG), is driving the Joint Health Improvement Planning agenda, with an overarching focus on reducing health inequalities. The four priority topics which have been agreed are alcohol, tobacco, nutrition and physical activity. Focusing on these four priorities, the HISG will develop a new outcome-focused Joint Health Improvement Plan (JHIP) in line with recommendation from recent West Dunbartonshire Health Needs Assessment. This new JHIP will be produced by March 2008 and will provide a clear strategic steer, underlying principles, and an overarching set of actions.
- 3.21** The HISG has begun to work in partnership with NHS Health Scotland and the Local Government Improvement Service to develop an integrated approach to local health improvement planning. This best-practice approach will allow direct access to learning from a number of ongoing national initiatives. Consequently, the JHIP will be developed in the form of a Local Outcome Agreement for Health Improvement in relation to the four topics.

Four Task Groups will be established to deliver the actions in the JHIP. These four Task Groups will be accountable to the HISG in relation to the health improvement targets as identified in the JHIP. The HISG will steer and co-ordinate the work of the groups and provide regular reports on progress.

- 3.22** Stakeholder consultation and involvement has been a key element of the process in highlighting the four priorities. Extensive information has been collated from local surveys and a range of data sources. The Civic Forum (4<sup>th</sup> October 2007) was another important step in the consultation/engagement process.

Youth Strategy:

- 3.23** The Youth Strategy group focuses on service delivery issues, and developing an Outcome Agreement for Young People. The development of youth consultation mechanisms is a key focus and work is developed through area based Youth Forums, 10 local Youth Action Groups, the Pupil Council Congress and the West Dunbartonshire Young Scot Youth Information Portal.
- 3.24** At its August meeting, the CPP Board agreed to conduct a review of existing youth services activity in West Dunbartonshire, with a view to providing options for future delivery which would be affordable, sustainable, best value and ensure good quality. The review process is progressing well and an Action Plan to address the issues raised is almost complete. One further review session will be required to finish the process. A range of complementary activities have also been undertaken along with the review process. These include a mapping exercise of current local youth consultation and representation structures under the auspices of the Community Learning & Development Partnership and the formal evaluations of both the West Dunbartonshire Youth Trust and Y Sort it.

Financial Position – Community Regeneration Fund

- 3.25** Community Planning Partnerships were given flexibility on carry forward to smooth the effect of the tapering CRF funding. Actual spend of £3.052m 2005/06 and £5.367m in 2006/07 was achieved leaving the sum of £4.949m for allocation in 2007/08. The Board have agreed full allocation of this sum, with the current spend being closely monitored by the Partnership Development Group. Any slippage which occurs will be addressed by the utilisation of a reserve list. Work is now underway to assess the outcomes of existing activity, with a view to informing Board decisions about funding priorities in future years. Contingency arrangements have been agreed to cover the costs associated with the ending of any projects.

Financial Position – Other Funding Streams

- 3.26** Appropriate action was taken to protect the minimum spend requirement of the other funding streams in 2006/07. As there will be no carry forward beyond March 2008, detailed discussions are ongoing with each project to maximise the spending position. All funding streams are monitored by the West Dunbartonshire Council Head of Finance. Joint monitoring reports are

prepared by the Head of Finance, in conjunction with the Partnership Manager, and are presented to each meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Board and the Partnership Development Group.

#### Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA)

- 3.27** The annual report for on the ROA 2006/2007 was submitted to Communities Scotland In July 2007. This has received generally positive feedback. The ROA is available on the CPP website.

#### Development of the New Community Plan 2007 - 2017

- 3.28** Community Planning has a wider remit than delivering on the Regeneration Objectives in the ROA, this is reflected in the Community Plan for West Dunbartonshire. Following extensive consultation, the new Community Plan is now complete, and was launched on 25 September. Copies have been circulated to all Elected Members

### **4. Personnel Issues**

- 4.1** The immediate personnel issues relate to the decision not to fill vacancies until the future funding position is known.

### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** The financial implications relate to the CRF and other funding streams, and the position noted in paragraphs 3.25 and 3.26.

### **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** The risks are associated with:-

- any failure to ensure the minimum spend from the Community Regeneration Fund and other funding streams
- non compliance with Scottish Executive requirements for reporting on the ROA
- any failure to ensure the longer term sustainability of the CPP
- the likely gap between existing and future funding.

- 6.2** The report outlines the arrangements which are in place to address these risks.

### **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1** The CPP is continuing to develop on a number of fronts, details of the main issues are summarised in paragraph 3. Further detail, (Board and PDG papers, minutes etc), are available on the CPP website or from the Community Planning office.

The key issues include:-

- Ensuring effective spend from the CRF and other funding streams (including ensuring minimum spend required)
- The implementation of the new Community Plan
- The development of the approach to worklessness, including the Employability Framework and the NEET Strategy
- The longer term sustainability of the CPP

## **8. Recommendations**

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

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**David McMillan**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Date: 22 October 2007**

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**Background Papers:** Community Plan 2007/17  
<http://www.wdcweb.info/chiefexec/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=8678>  
Regeneration Outcome Agreement  
Minutes of CPP Board and PRG meetings  
(All background papers are available from the CPP, the Policy Unit, or on the Community Planning pages of the Council’s Intranet)

**Wards Affected:** All Council Wards.