

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

Council : 28 January 2009

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership – Key Developments

1. Purpose

1.1 This report provides the Council with an update on key developments within West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership, (CPP). Progress and key issues are currently reported to Council following CPP board meetings. The most recent Board meeting took place on 24th November 2008. The agenda and papers are available on request.

2. Background

2.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility to lead Community Planning in the area. The Partnership comprises a range of statutory agencies and voluntary & community sector representatives. It has an overarching strategic 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.

2.2 The current Community Plan for West Dunbartonshire, (2007-17) was adopted in June 2007. This in turn informed the development of the Council's Corporate Plan, and the first Single Outcome Agreement, (SOA), for West Dunbartonshire. It should also set the framework for the plans of all other partner agencies. In general, the role of Community Planning is to focus on the wider strategic approach by all partners, and the most effective use of partner mainstream budgets. However historically, there have been, in addition to mainstream resources, a number of specific funding mechanisms which have supported partnership working. In the current financial year 2008/09, all previous funding streams were combined into the Fairer Scotland Fund, (FSF). This fund provides £5.946m in 2008/09, £5.507m in 2009/10, and £5.067m in 2010/11. In the 3rd year, this budget will be included in the Council's general allocation, and will not be subject to ring fencing.

2.3 The CPP is developing on a range of fronts, which are outlined in paragraph 3. Progress with recruitment, the development of the 2nd version of the SOA, the financial arrangements for 2009/10, and the review of community support mechanisms are among the most important points for noting.

3. Main Issues

Structures and Staffing

3.1 Following approval of the Brodies report on future governance and staffing structures at the Board meeting on 12th May 2008, the 24th November Board meeting received a further report on the implementation of these decisions

3.2 *Recruitment*

The review process established a core CPP staff team of 5. The outcome of the matching process left 2 vacant posts - the Community Planning Manager, and one of the two Co-ordinator posts. The initial rounds of interviews for both the Manager and Co-ordinator posts, (August and October), were either unsuccessful in identifying suitable candidates, or in the case of the 2nd round for the Manager post, the offer of the position was not accepted by the successful candidate.

3.3 Since the Board meeting on 24th November, there has been a further round of interviews for the Manager post, at which a successful appointment was made. The new CPP Manager, (Peter Barry), will take up the position at the beginning of February 2009. The key priorities over the first few months will be:

- to ensure full partner involvement in the next SOA,
- to finalise and implement the Partnership governance structures
- to implement the outcome of the current review of community support arrangements.

The position with the 2nd co-ordinator post will be the subject of further discussion with the CPP Executive Group and the Partnership Manager.

3.4 *Structures*

As a result of the time taken to make a successful appointment to the Manager post, the Board on 24th November agreed to continue the interim decision making arrangements which had been established at the June meeting of the Board. This included agreement that the new Executive Group should continue to take responsibility for operational decision making during the interim period, with a remit to call meetings of the Strategic Board if wider strategic matters required discussion. The full implementation of the new governance structures will be an early priority for the new Manager.

Community Support Arrangements

3.5 The Brodies review of structures and staffing had recommended a separate review of the Community Support Arrangements, including both the support for Community Forums and the provision of Community Resource Bases. The June meeting of the Board approved a number of interim arrangements to maintain core community support services until the review was complete. West Dunbartonshire Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), had offered to support community representatives to run the Community Forums, and to provide a presence to ensure that the facilities at the Vale of Leven and Clydebank Community Resource Bases, (meeting accommodation, computer

equipment and photocopying), continued to be available to eligible community users 2 days per week. The independent review of Community Support Arrangements is now underway and will report its findings to the Board before the end of March 2009. The interim arrangements will continue until May 2009 to allow time for Board decisions on the outcome of the review and time for these decisions to be implemented.

Current Funding Issues

3.6 *Fairer Scotland Fund (FSF) - Budget for 2008/09*

The main FSF spend for 2008/09 was agreed by the CPP Board on 14th January 2008. Full details of the allocations and budget spend to date are available in the Board papers for 24th November 2008. The report notes that budget spend for 2008/09 is on track. The funding overview presented to the Board also noted an unallocated balance of £362,750. This is money which will not be available in years 2 and 3. The Board agreed some general criteria for spend from this budget. However it was also noted however that greater year end flexibility has been granted, which means that this funding need not be spent by March 2009. The Board agreed that these funds should not be allocated until the CPP Manager is in post and there has been an opportunity to assess any needs arising from the new structures.

3.7 *Fairer Scotland Fund (FSF) – Budget for 2009/10*

The November meeting of the Board also agreed a process for the review of projects funded in 2008/09 which will determine the levels of funding available to these projects in 2009/10. As agreed, a working group has now been established and the Executive Group will meet to consider the recommendations of the working group at the end of January. Projects will be notified of the outcome shortly after this.

3.8 *Budget Monitoring*

All CPP related funding is monitored by the West Dunbartonshire Council Head of Finance. Monitoring reports are prepared by the Head of Finance, (in conjunction with the Partnership Manager once in post), and are presented to each meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Board. At a Council level, the impact of funding decisions is monitored by a senior officers' group, with key issues reported to Council on a quarterly basis.

Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)

- 3.9** On 23rd June, the Board considered a report which presented the same version of the SOA as was considered by Council on 25th June. The Board agreed this first version of the SOA for submission to the Scottish Government, and partners made a commitment to the development of a full Community Planning SOA by the end of May 2009, (first draft required by the end of February 2009). The November meeting of the Board received a report on progress to date with the Community Planning SOA.

3.10 The development of the 2nd version of the SOA has begun with a series of workshops during November and December 2008. These involved a range of partners and have resulted in a number of proposed amendments to local outcomes and some suggestions for targets. These will now be discussed at a seminar on 27th January, to which all elected members, senior Community Planning partners, and the Corporate Management Team have been invited.

Other Issues

3.11 The CPP Board on 24th November also considered reports on:

- the progress of the Community Plan – which is now monitored using the Covalent performance management tool
- the position with the West Dunbartonshire Employability Programme (WDEP) – and the associated European funding
- the Equally Well test site in West Dunbartonshire
- the identification of lead agencies for each of the six Community Planning themes.

With regard to lead agencies, the following was agreed:

| Community Planning Theme | Lead Agency |
|--|---|
| Building Safe and Strong Communities | Strathclyde Police – L Division |
| Creating Sustainable & Attractive Environments | WDC – Chief Executive’s Services |
| Developing Affordable & Sustainable Housing | WDC – Housing, Environment and Economic Development |
| Improving Health & Wellbeing | WD Community Health Partnership |
| Promoting Education & Lifelong Learning | WDC – Education & Lifelong Learning |
| Regenerating & Growing Our Local Economy | WDC – Housing, Environment and Economic Development |

It should be noted that although these agencies / services have been given the lead responsibility, in each case there will be a critical role for a number of other key services. The structure of Thematic Groups covering each of these six areas will be finalised as part of the full implementation of the governance structures noted in paragraph 3.4. Full details of all of these issues are available in the Board papers for 24th November.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 The personnel issues relate to the arrangements required to implement the Brodies’ recommendations. The main outstanding issue is the recruitment of the 2nd Co-ordinator post.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The financial implications relate to the management and monitoring of the FSF budget. This is on track.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There is a risk that if the CPP does not operate effectively, it would not be in a position to respond to the current environment, including the development and delivery of the Community Planning SOA for West Dunbartonshire.

- 6.2** The report outlines the actions which are being taken to address these risks.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** The CPP has undergone a significant restructuring, details of the main issues are summarised in paragraph 3. Further detail, (Board papers, minutes etc), are available on request.

The key issues include:-

- Implementing the review of governance structures
- Completing and implementing the review of community support arrangements
- Ensuring the implementation of the decisions on 2008/09 funding from the Fairer Scotland Fund and ensuring that decisions are taken on the funding for 2009/10
- The development of the revised SOA and the implementation of the Community Plan 2007/17

8. Recommendations

- 8.1** Members are requested to consider the information in this report.

- 8.2** Members are invited to request further detail if required.

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Date: 12 January 2009

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Background Papers: Brodies Report - Review of West Dunbartonshire CPP
Governance and Staffing Structures – May 2008

CPP Board Papers 24th November 2008

Wards Affected: All Council Wards.