

Report

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	27 June 2018
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Proposals to Develop a New Approach to Community Participation
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ seek approval for proposals to establish a new approach to community participation and empowerment
- ◆ seek approval to add 7 FTE posts to the establishment to form a new Community Participation and Empowerment Team

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the proposals to develop a new approach to community participation and empowerment noted at section 5 of the report be approved;
- (2) that the addition of 7 FTE posts to the establishment to form a new Community Participation and Empowerment Team be approved; and
- (3) that the cost of the proposed team (as detailed in section 8) is met from the improved revenue budget outturn position for 2017/2018, for a period of 2 years with future costs from 2020/2021 incorporated into the Councils Financial Strategy, be approved.

3. Background

3.1. The current arrangements for community participation and engagement within South Lanarkshire have developed over time and in many instances reflect statutory requirements or regulatory expectation.

3.2. Over a number of years there has been a reduction in the number of individuals coming forward (e.g. through tenant and resident groups or community regeneration initiatives) to help identify the issues facing communities and shape service provision. Accordingly while the arrangements have many recognised strengths there is a need to fundamentally revise the approach to improve levels of community participation and meet the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

3.3. To achieve this it is proposed that the council will undertake a significant and planned programme of community participation to develop a new approach which reflects community needs and aspirations. This would constitute the first phase of a programme which would be delivered over a two to three year period, by the end of which a new South Lanarkshire approach to community participation and empowerment would be firmly established.

4. Current Position

- 4.1. The implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 was accompanied by a refresh of the “National Standards for Community Engagement” which set a clear and challenging set of criteria against which community participation activities can be judged. Within South Lanarkshire it is clear that significant work is required to progress the key aspects of the Act in a manner consistent with the legislative ambition.
- 4.2. A wide range of work is currently underway within South Lanarkshire to progress the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, including:-
 - ◆ The development of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)
 - ◆ The development of locality/neighbourhood plans
 - ◆ The development of Participatory Budgeting
- 4.3. Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) - The Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is a South Lanarkshire wide document and details the actions which will be taken in relation to high level outcomes in the following areas:-
 - ◆ Community Safety,
 - ◆ Health and Social Care,
 - ◆ Getting it Right For South Lanarkshire’s Children
 - ◆ Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth
 - ◆ Tackling deprivation, poverty and inequalities (is an overarching objective)
- 4.4. Neighbourhood Plans - Work to progress the development of Neighbourhood Plans has been a particular focus of activity within South Lanarkshire over the past 6 months. Following a range of analysis, proposals to develop Neighbourhood Plans are currently being progressed in:-
 - ◆ Hillhouse/Udston and Burnbank
 - ◆ Whitlawburn and Springhall, and
 - ◆ Strutherhill

To date, the work has involved community surveys being undertaken to identify people’s views on the areas they live in and has now moved towards a series of community meetings which will aim to identify priority actions to be progressed within each area.

- 4.5. Participatory Budgeting - Another key area of work which is being progressed nationally and locally, in the context of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 is Community Choice Budgeting. The framework developed by the Scottish Government and COSLA to support achievement of the target of 1% of Local Authority budget being directed towards Participatory Budgeting Activities details the breadth of activities, ranging from major capital expenditure to small community grants, which fall within the definition. Work is currently underway to establish an SLC position in relation to participatory budgeting activities and to develop proposals to further progress work in this area.
- 4.6. It is proposed that the work which is underway to develop the LOIP and Neighbourhood Plans will continue. It is however recognised that, as the approach to community participation is revised, there will be a need for dialogue with partners

during the programme to explore opportunities to improve and further develop community participation and empowerment in relation to community planning.

- 4.7. Currently responsibility for community participation is spread across different Resources with no individual or team with responsibility for the coordination of corporate and partner activities. An analysis of the current levels of community participation across South Lanarkshire confirms the uneven spread of activities across the area. That, coupled with a general reduction in the level of community participation, makes it clear that concerted effort is required to coordinate council activities to support individuals and groups to play a leading role in shaping their community. This requires to be progressed in a way which works with community groups, including community councils, to help coordinate activities and build capacity.

5. Proposed Approach

- 5.1. To address the issues highlighted at 4.7 it is proposed to establish a dedicated team with responsibility for working with local people to build their capacity and harness the resources within the community, to help further develop the level and nature of participation with communities across South Lanarkshire.
- 5.2. The key objective in developing the new approach would be to ensure a coordinated approach to community participation and empowerment which is clearly and demonstrably outward looking. A particular priority would be ensuring that communities were aware of the range of opportunities to engage with the council in a manner which reflects their own interests and aspirations and the resources available to support community participation and empowerment.
- 5.3. The development of Community Led Plans (CLPs) would be a feature of the new approach. CLPs have been progressed in a number of local authority areas and have been identified as a progressive approach to secure effective community participation. Their aim is to bring local people together to agree a vision for their community and develop a plan to achieve this. Communities would lead the development, consultation and monitoring of the plans and would be supported to do so by dedicated staff with the necessary community development skills, experience and qualifications. It is also recognised that community groups would have the potential to access funding from external sources that is not open to the Council. The production of CLPs will be a priority focus within South Lanarkshire as part of the new approach.
- 5.4. It is proposed that work to develop the new approach is progressed in 3 phases:-
- ◆ Phase 1 – will take place in the period up to June 2019 and will involve a major programme of community participation which aims to engage with communities and build capacity. It is proposed within phase 1 to work with communities to:
 - ◆ identify community capacity building priorities
 - ◆ develop a clear framework for Community Led Plans (CLPs)
 - ◆ develop CLPs for identified areas where the community has an aspiration and capacity to do so.
 - ◆ Phase 2 – will run throughout financial year 2019/2020 and will involve the continued roll out of community led planning and capacity building. At the same time a key aspect of phase 2 will be the commencement of implementation of the CLPs. In this regard it will be important to ensure effective communication with communities to support effective implementation. Consideration would also be given at the start of phase 2 to the need for any revision of existing council

structures to reflect the new approach to community participation. This could include arrangements for community participation at South Lanarkshire wide and locality levels.

- ◆ Phase 3 - will take place in 2020/2021 and while the new approach would again continue to be delivered, it would at this stage be appropriate to work with communities to review the progress which has been made through the new approach and identify any areas for further development and improvement.

5.5. Phase1 – Work Programme

An outline of the proposed work during the first phase is detailed below.

- ◆ Communicate Change in Focus/ re-brand
A major programme of communication will be delivered to support the development of the new approach, and signal the significance of the proposed change and the scope which exists for communities and individuals to influence the process. The programme would include:-
 - ◆ a social media campaign;
 - ◆ targeted communication with a wide range of community groups and interested individuals;
 - ◆ development of appropriate web content; and
 - ◆ promotion of the programme through community newsletters and local media.
(Timescale - from June 2018)
- ◆ Community Participation to support development of new approach (6-9 months)
The focus of the programme of community participation in the development phase would seek views on as wide a basis as possible on existing structures and options and requirements to help achieve the vision.

The programme should not commence with a set view on appropriate structures and/or arrangements for community participation but recognise and respect the legitimacy of groups and individuals across South Lanarkshire to engage with the council, wider community planning and Third Sector partners in a way that reflects their aspirations and requirements. The key components of the programme would include:-

- ◆ Developing and promoting clear routes and channels of communication (key named contacts with responsibility for community participation)
- ◆ Emphasising the breadth of opportunities for participation and supports available to individuals and communities across South Lanarkshire;
- ◆ Undertaking a range of community work to engage community groups and representatives, in order to develop the capacity of the groups and the extent of their participation;
- ◆ Delivering a range of community capacity building activities;
- ◆ Working with communities to identify aspirations and resourcing requirements;
- ◆ Establishing the views of communities on options and preferences using a range of various survey methods, both formal and informal;
- ◆ Supporting communities to develop the first round of CLPs; and
- ◆ Developing Year 1 CLPs where communities indicate an aspiration, and have the capacity to do so.
(Timescale through to March 2019)

6. Initial Priorities

- 6.1 It is proposed that the development of the approach will be managed and monitored by the Corporate Management Team with Executive Directors taking responsibility for ensuring progress in relation to agreed areas of work.
- 6.2 To support the effective involvement of Elected Members in the process, in addition to regular updates to Executive Committee, it is also proposed that an awareness session will be arranged for members.
- 6.3 Establishing a Community Participation and Empowerment Team: If this proposal is accepted the initial priority will be to establish an appropriate team which will be responsible for undertaking community engagement over the period of the programme. These staff would be based within a new Community Participation and Empowerment Team. The team will incorporate staff with the relevant community engagement / development skills and in the initial period it is planned will consist of:-
- ◆ Manager - Grade 5
 - ◆ 4 Communities Officers - Grade 3
 - ◆ 2 Assistants - Grade 2
- 6.4 It is proposed that the Community Participation and Empowerment Team will:-
- ◆ be a public facing service
 - ◆ provide a single point of contact within the council for community participation and empowerment
 - ◆ develop and deliver a programme of community work to engage community groups and representatives
 - ◆ provide a range of community development support
 - ◆ work with communities to help develop their capacity to achieve the changes they would like to see in their area
 - ◆ facilitate community participation in a range of participatory budgeting initiatives in line with good practice principles
 - ◆ support communities to develop Community Led Plans where the community has an aspiration and capacity to do so
 - ◆ support and signpost communities to help access relevant resources/supports
 - ◆ coordinate the work of other council Resources to support effective community participation
 - ◆ coordinate council engagement with third sector partners
- 6.5 When established, the team will be able to draw on expertise and experience from across the council, for example from community learning and development, to support specific initiatives.
- 6.6 While the community participation programme proposed within phase 1 will help establish a fuller understanding of requirements over the longer term, the proposal detailed above will support the delivery of the first phase programme. The key priority area of work within this phase will be to work with communities to broaden the range of participation activities across South Lanarkshire while developing capacity within communities.
- 6.7 An early focus during the first phase would be to work with communities and wider stakeholders to identify proposals for the communities to be progressed within the

first round of CLPs. This part of the programme would involve work in each of the 4 areas of South Lanarkshire (i.e. Hamilton, Rutherglen /Cambuslang, Clydesdale and East Kilbride). We will aim to ensure that a minimum of 4 CLPs are significantly progressed by the end of March 2019.

- 6.8 Based on the experience of initial demand a forward programme will then be developed which takes account of both the resources available to support this programme, as well as the capacity of communities to develop and implement plans. This programme will be the subject of ongoing monitoring and review.

7. Employee Implications

- 7.1 This represents a new way of working for the council and as such, although there are elements of this activity being carried out within current roles, a new team needs to be established to provide the resource required to successfully transition to a new approach. The table below details the posts required. These are new posts and as such a broad band evaluation has been applied. This will be reviewed and a further job evaluation exercise undertaken once the team has been established and in post for 6 months.

Post title	Number of posts			Grade / SCP	Hourly Rate	Annual salary	Gross costs (including on-costs 30.3%)
	Existing	New	Difference				
Community Development Manager	0	1	+1	Grade 5 Level 1 – 8 / SCP 96 - 108	£26.84 - £32.11	£48,980 - £58,597	£63,821 - £76,353
Community Development Officer	0	4	+4	Grade 3 Level 2- 4/ SCP 61 - 74	£15.98 - £19.35	£29,161 - £35,311	£151,998 - £184,044
Community Development Assistant	0	2	+2	Grade 2 Level 1 – 4, SCP 33 - 57	£10.58 - £15.04	£19,307 - £27,446	£50,314 - £71,524
							£266,133 - £331,921

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The staffing costs of the proposed team have an estimated initial annual cost of £0.330 million. These additional costs could be funded, for a 2 year period, from the improved revenue budget outturn position at the end of year 2017/2018, if approved. This would fund these posts until year 2020/2021, at which point funding would require to be incorporated into the Council's Financial Strategy.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment. This has indicated that there should not be any adverse impact on any group with protected characteristics, although we will monitor the implementation, and involve communities in shaping the direction of community participation policy development. If approved, the recommendations of this report will be added to the agendas for meetings with relevant representative groups.

Paul Manning
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

5 June 2018

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ◆ Work with communities to promote high quality and thriving and sustainable communities
- ◆ Support our communities by tackling disadvantage and deprivation and supporting aspiration

Previous References

- ◆ None

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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