

# **Report**

Report to:	<b>Hamilton Area Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>17 November 2021</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Neighbourhood Planning Update</b>
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## **1. Purpose of Report**

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update the area committee on the work being carried out in Hamilton in relation to neighbourhood planning

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

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

- (1) that the progress being made in respect of neighbourhood planning be noted; and
- (2) that the annual reports that have been produced for the neighbourhood plans within the area be noted.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 places a statutory duty on Community Planning Partnerships (CPP), of which the Council is a statutory partner, to identify smaller areas within the local authority area which experience the poorest outcomes and to prepare and publish locality plans to improve outcomes on agreed priorities for these communities. These plans are required to set out clear priorities for improving local outcomes and tackling inequalities which agreed by the CPP and community. In South Lanarkshire these plans are referred to as neighbourhood plans.
- 3.2. The guidance makes it clear that participation with communities must lie at the heart of community planning and that the partners must engage with the communities identified as requiring specific attention and be more than just consultation but involve active engagement and empowerment.
- 3.3. At the 14 July 2017 meeting of the CPP Board, it considered the results of a statistical exercise which identified the areas experiencing the poorest outcomes in South Lanarkshire relative to the South Lanarkshire average position, which resulted in areas within 9 of the Council's 20 wards being identified as potential neighbourhood planning areas.
- 3.4. At its meeting of the 11 October 2017, the Community Planning Board agreed to pilot the use of neighbourhood planning activity in South Lanarkshire, and recognised that this approach required a longer investment of time within communities to engage and involve people and produce plans. The first 3 neighbourhood plans, for the pilot

areas of Hillhouse/Udston/Burnbank, Whitlawburn and Springhall and Strutherhill and Birkenshaw were published in January 2019.

- 3.5. The legislation further requires that reports are produced on a yearly basis which identify the progress made in relation to the plans. The purpose of these reports is for the communities involved to see and understand what has happened in their areas. The guidance accompanying the legislation states that annual reports should be published in an accessible and easy to understand way which enables communities to understand the direction and scale of progress. As a result, the manner in which reports are produced for communities will vary from the way in which partners may usually report.

#### **4. Progress to Date**

- 4.1. Learning from the phase 1 areas included the recognition that each area is individual in its capacity and the priorities which it identifies, and that the work which is carried out in neighbourhoods as a result must be individualised. In addition, the neighbourhood planning work should strengthen and empower the community within the neighbourhood, developing their capacity to both engage with potential delivery services and to create and deliver upon their own priorities where this is appropriate.
- 4.2. In September 2019, the Community Planning Board agreed the neighbourhood planning processes should be rolled out further areas, including Burnhill and Cambuslang east. Each community has individual levels of community capacity and support already in place and required individualised programmes of support, which were delivered by the Community Engagement Team (CET) alongside local partners and community groups. Plans for these areas were produced by March 2020, being published just as the COVID-19 pandemic began.
- 4.3. Annual reports for the Hillhouse, Udston and Burnbank, Fairhill and Strutherhill and Birkenshaw areas have now been produced for the year 2020/2021 and are attached as appendices 1 to 3. Progress has been made on delivering actions against the top priorities of all areas, despite the impact of the pandemic on engagement activities. Key progress in all areas has been the increase in the number of local people participating in neighbourhood planning processes, in particular participatory budgeting approaches and this again is outlined in the annual reports. Highlights of the work which are detailed within the reports for each area are:-

Hillhouse, Udston and Burnbank	The stakeholders have continued to make progress against 9 of their local priorities; in addition, 868 residents took part in the participatory budgeting vote, participation levels far exceeded any expectations.
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Strutherhill and Birkenshaw	The Community Group are working closely with a range of partners and have progressed 8 local priorities, including delivering physical environmental improvements, including play development and early discussions around the use of vacant land.
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Fairhill	The Fairhill community have progressed 5 of their priorities and pulled together to support one another through the pandemic, despite individually facing their own challenges; they ensured no one in the community was left behind.
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- 4.4 In Blantyre, work has progressed in a different way due to the pandemic and subsequent reallocation of resources from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust. Work is under way there to produce an action plan for the current year which creates identified and deliverable steps for the community and partners to take in order to progress the themes from the original plan. Reporting on this will begin in the 2021/2022 year.

## **5. Future Plans**

- 5.1. A neighbourhood plan is now under development within the Whitehill area, and work with stakeholders has commenced. Work on this plan has been slower than usual due to the restrictions of the pandemic making face to face work impossible for long periods of time. However, a local survey is open and will remain open until the target of 40% of all households in the area participating has been reached and the stakeholders are content that they have a representative view of Whitehill residents' priorities. As restrictions have relaxed, some face to face engagement is now possible using safe systems of working and this is being utilised where it can be.
- 5.2. Work continues with the existing areas to make certain that the priorities remain correct in the current times, and that progress is being made towards achieving them.
- 5.3. As the number of neighbourhood plans increases, locality priorities will begin to be developed by identifying key shared priorities across localities. This provides the opportunity for wider resources to support actions over localities with a view to improving outcomes and to work in partnership at a locality level across South Lanarkshire. This again offers a further chance for challenge and scrutiny between partners and communities. Initial conversations have been conducted with stakeholder groups and community councils to begin to identify these shared priorities and link them to the Community Planning process in a more strategic manner.

## **6. Employee Implications**

- 6.1. There are no employee implications associated with this report.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

- 8.1. There are no implications for climate change, sustainability or the environment in terms of the information contained in this report.

## **9. Other Implications**

- 9.1. There are no risk or sustainability issues associated with the content of this report.

## **10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required. Consultations on neighbourhood plans are carried out on an ongoing basis with each community involved in the process.

**Paul Manning**  
**Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)**

1 November 2021

**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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**Appendix 1: Hillhouse, Udston and Burnbank Neighbourhood Annual Report**

**Appendix 2: Fairhill Neighbourhood Annual Report**

**Appendix 3: Strutherhill and Birkenshaw Annual Report**