

Report

Report to:	South Lanarkshire Council
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2022
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	The Council Plan, Connect 2022 to 2027 and the South Lanarkshire Community Plan 2022 to 2032
----------	---

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:

- ◆ Present the draft Council Plan and the draft Community Plan, with a summary of how the two have been prepared and aligned.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the Council Plan for 2022 to 2027 be approved;
- (2) that the Community Plan for 2022 to 2032 be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council Plan, Connect is the key strategic document that shapes the work of the council. It sets out the outcomes to be delivered over five years, around a long-term vision supported by core values and priorities that influence how the council works. These in turn stretch out into all annual Resource Plans through what is known as the “golden thread”.
- 3.2. The last Council Plan, for 2017 to 2022, was formally approved by the Council on 6 December 2017. A mid-term review was conducted in 2019 that simplified the Council Plan and – following recommendations from the council’s Best Value Assurance Review (BVAR) – strengthened the links between the Council Plan and the Community Plan. As part of the BVAR, Audit Scotland also required the council to concentrate more on involving the community in decision-making through community engagement. With the Council Plan approaching the end of its five-year term, a new plan has been developed for the period 2022 to 2027.
- 3.3. In January 2019, the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board started a review of Community Planning and in July 2020 the board agreed that a full review of the Community Plan should be undertaken to ensure that the priorities for the work of the partnership had been informed by local communities. The Community Plan is the name used within South Lanarkshire for the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), which is a ten-year plan that Community Planning Partnerships have a statutory duty to produce, deliver and report on.

- 3.4. In line with the BVAR recommendations and to further align the work of the council and the partnership, these two exercises were undertaken as a joint review of the Council Plan and Community Plan, in order to:
- develop a common vision and common set of outcomes;
 - do so using an extensive and multi-layered engagement and consultation process; and
 - present the plans to Elected Members and the CPP Board at the first opportunity after the Local Government Elections of 5 May 2022.
- 3.5. Online seminars were held with Elected Members on 10 June 2021 and then again on 31 January 2022 to keep them updated on progress. Both events were well-attended, with Elected Members engaged and offering their support for the process. A further information session was held with Elected Members on 30 May 2022. The CPP Board also received regular updates.

4. Public engagement and development of the plans

- 4.1. As noted at 3.4 above, it was agreed that the new Council Plan and Community Plan should be built from communities up, using engagement to identify residents' views and aspirations. An initial phase of engagement therefore was carried out between March and August 2021, during which communities throughout South Lanarkshire were asked to identify the main priorities for their neighbourhoods.
- 4.2. This involved inviting residents to answer a short, open-question survey, which was promoted extensively through social media and the local media, and also by council and CPP staff. At the close of the engagement period on 8 August 2021, more than 3,300 responses had been received.
- 4.3. Initial examination of the survey responses identified themes around Education and Learning, Communities and Environment, Health Inequalities, Housing and Land, Children and Young People, and Our Economy. In-depth analysis of this feedback helped shape a further phase of engagement, when 'Community Conversation' focus groups took place between August and October 2021. These involved more than 200 residents taking part in 27 group conversations.
- 4.4. This was the largest consultation exercise ever carried out by the council. It added to a body of existing knowledge that had already emerged from community events and work developing a number of neighbourhood plans. With 17 communities already covered by such plans and five more in progress, the aspiration is that eventually all parts of South Lanarkshire will have their own community-led Neighbourhood Plan. These will continue to help inform and shape the council's broader strategic plans going forward.
- 4.5. Analysis of the community responses identified three cross-cutting themes, around People (in particular, the impact of poverty and inequalities), Progress (in particular, recovery from the pandemic) and Planet (in particular, sustainable development). Further analysis of what our residents and communities had told us resulted in six outcomes being identified for the Council Plan and the Community Plan:

Communities and Environment

Caring, connected, sustainable communities

Education and Learning

Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships

Health and Wellbeing

People live the healthiest lives possible

Children and Young People

Our children and young people thrive

Housing and Land

Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live

Our Economy

Thriving business, fair jobs and vibrant town centres

- 4.6. Following the public engagement exercise, a strategic session was held on 17 November 2021 at which lead officers from across the council and the partnership came together to discuss and agree the shared vision and direction for the new Council Plan and Community Plan. Thereafter, writing groups drafted the two plans, with an additional remit to further improve the accessibility of both plans through use of plain English and making the documents succinct.

5. Presentation of the plans

- 5.1. As well as sharing the same vision, priorities and outcomes, the Council Plan and Community Plan have a broadly shared structure, which is outlined below:

Introduction

Who we are and what we do

How we wrote the plan – what our communities told us, what we did with that

Our Vision – to improve the lives and prospects of everyone in South Lanarkshire

Our three cross-cutting themes – People, Progress, Planet

Our six Outcomes – Communities and Environment, Education and Learning, Health and Wellbeing, Children and Young People, Housing and Land, Our Economy

Delivering the plan – including how to find out more/get involved

The plan(s) on one page – graphical illustration

- 5.2. To further underline how the two plans are aligned, they have been designed as “companion” publications, with complementary layouts and use of colours.
- 5.3. However, the two plans are not identical. For example, the draft Council Plan features a summary of the council structure and the wide range of services provided. It also features the council’s values, though these are currently being reviewed and new wording may be brought forward at a future date.
- 5.4. Overall, the two plans retain the flexibility that will be needed for the council and the Community Planning Partnership to utilise their different resources and identify the specific actions each needs to take in order to deliver on the shared ambitions and meet statutory obligations.
- 5.5. The fully designed draft Council Plan, Connect 2022 to 2027 is attached as Appendix 1 for Council’s approval.
- 5.6. A final draft of the text of the Community Plan 2022 to 2032 is attached as Appendix 2 for noting. This will be presented to the Community Planning Partnership Board for approval on 22 June 2022.

6. Next steps

- 6.1. If approved by the Council, the Council Plan will be made available on our website and widely publicised across all our communications channels. This will make clear the vision, priorities and outcomes that will shape our work for the next five years, and it will demonstrate how the plan was developed by listening to what residents told us they wanted.
- 6.2. A further public consultation exercise is underway so the draft plans can be tested with communities, partners and other stakeholders. This is an opportunity to ensure both plans accurately represent the needs and aspirations of our communities. If this further consultation leads to anything other than minor changes the Council Plan will be brought back to Council to allow Elected Members to consider these.
- 6.3. Progress of annual Resource Plans is monitored through a number of performance measures that are reported to relevant Resource committees. A suite of these measures is nominated so that progress can also be monitored against the Council Plan, with reports being presented to the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum covering the period up to the end of Quarter 2 and Quarter 4 each year. These progress reports are also published to allow for wider public scrutiny.

7. Employee Implications

- 7.1. The Council Plan is the overarching strategic document for the council, and as such its objectives feed through the Resource Plans and their actions all the way to individual employees through their PDRs.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1. The Council Plan sets out the council's priorities for five years and therefore has clear financial implications. These are addressed by aligning the Council Plan with the council's financial strategy, which itself is an iterative process that takes account of the wider financial context in which the council operates.

9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 9.1. Both plans are undergoing a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and Section 15 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The 2005 Act requires all qualifying policies, plans, programmes and strategies (PPSs) to undergo an SEA, which provides a systematic process for identifying, reporting and mitigating the environmental impacts of proposed PPSs.
- 9.2. SEA screening reports were submitted and the relevant consultation authorities (Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency) agreed both plans required full assessments. Separate SEA scoping reports were completed for both plans and feedback on these has been received.
- 9.3. The SEA process then requires the full Environmental Report to undergo a six-week period of consultation with the consultation authorities and the public. This is being undertaken as part of the process outlined at 6.2 above. An adoption statement will be produced for both plans and ongoing monitoring carried out.

10. Other Implications

10.1 There are no other significant implications.

11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

11.1. The Council Plan and Community Plan are both being Equality Impact assessed, in line with good practice and in recognition of the strategic importance of the plans. Those with lived experience of inequalities are involved in this assessment.

11.2. Other consultation arrangements are as described at 6.2.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

17 May 2022

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values/Ambitions

- Achieve results through leadership, good governance and organisational effectiveness

Previous References

- Council Plan, Connect 2017 to 2022
- Community Plan 2017 to 2027

List of Background Papers

- None

Contact for Further Information

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

Tom Little, Head of Communications and Strategy

Ext: 4904 (Tel: 01698 454904)

E-mail: Tom.Little@southlanarkshire.gov.uk