

Report

Report to:	Hamilton Area Committee
Date of Meeting:	31 August 2022
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Neighbourhood Planning Update
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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 and the surrounding areas 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 which 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 one 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 Fairhill and recognise the work which had taken place to produce a plan already for Blantyre. 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. Whitehill was added in 2020 though engagement was limited due to the pandemic and work began seriously in 2021.
- 4.3. Annual reports for the Hillhouse/Udston/Burnbank, Fairhill, Blantyre and Strutherhill and Birkenshaw areas have now been produced for the years 2021/2022 and are attached as appendices 1 to 4. 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	Actions here include the delivery of a wide range of youth activity, including diversionary work; the operation of three community hubs and cafes; and the use of CCTB and safety systems resulting in people in Burnbank in particular reporting that they feel safer.
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Fairhill	Fairhill community has been central in providing support to each other throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As this need reduces, work is under way to reinvigorate the stakeholder group and find ways to focus the attention of the community and partners on delivering on their local priorities.
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Blantyre	Work has been carried out to re-establish the
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Strutherhill and Birkenshaw

stakeholder group following covid restrictions, identify the progress made on priorities so far and to check that the priorities of the Blantyre Futures plan remain current for the community.

Actions have included discussions with the school modernisation team, leading to the identification of funding to upgrade a local MUGA at Robert Smillie; discussions regarding the positive use of land and the reduction of fly tipping; and maintaining town centre connections through the shopping bus scheme.

- 4.4. In addition, a plan has now been completed for Whitehill and this is included as Appendix 5. Work has begun with the communities in Hamilton South ward to identify how they would like to progress with identifying priorities and the production of plans. In addition, the partnership recognises the work of the Larkhall Partnership in engaging with their community to identify and progress priorities across the wider Larkhall area, and the development of the community led plan in Bothwell.

5. Future Plans

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. 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.
- 5.3. The opportunity for other communities to create their own plans remains in place and advice and tools can be made available to any who wish to do so.
- 5.4. Within the Hamilton area, work has begun to develop a community partnership which will bring together groups who represent communities at neighbourhood level to identify and progress shared priorities at a locality level. This will provide 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 significant implications in terms of climate change, sustainability and environmental implications associated with 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. Consultation 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)

11 August 2022

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

Values

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs

Priorities

- ◆ We will work to put people first and reduce inequality
- ◆ We will work to recover, progress and improve

Outcomes

- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities

Previous References

- ◆ Hamilton Area Committee – 17 November 2021

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

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

Rhonda Leith, Community Engagement Manager

Email: rhonda.leith@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Hillhouse Udston and Burnbank Annual Report 2021/2022

Appendix 2: Fairhill Annual Progress Report 2021/2022

Appendix 3: Blantyre Annual Report 2021/2022

Appendix 4: Strutherhill and Birkenshaw Annual Report 2021/2022

Appendix 5: Whitehill Neighbourhood Plan 2022/2023