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**To: Leadership Board**

**On: 14 June 2023**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Local Partnerships – next phase of development**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Local Partnerships were established during 2019 following an extensive programme of consultation. Seven Local Partnerships were created, replacing the previous Local Area Committees that had been in place for many years.
- 1.2 This new model of community level governance was viewed as being critical to the Council changing the way in which it works with local communities, providing opportunities for communities to have a say on what matters at a local level and working together to achieve these ambitions.
- 1.3 Each Local Partnership initially identified its own priorities, with a view to these guiding local actions and activities and the allocation of grants. Further work planned to review and develop the Local Partnerships has not been fully implemented, with the Partnerships and Inequalities team being required to refocus resources to respond to the pandemic and then subsequently to the ongoing cost of living crisis.
- 1.4 It is important that the Local Partnerships continue to grow and develop, building on strengths which have emerged over time and implementing changes which will enhance both the operation and the future potential of the Local Partnerships.
- 1.5 Section 4 of the paper notes that a consultation and engagement exercise will be commence in Summer 2023 to inform the next phase of development of the Local Partnerships. Alongside side this exercise a range of actions will be progressed by officers as set out at section 5. A Local Partnership co-ordinator will also be recruited to provide the required capacity to take the development of the Local Partnerships forward.

- 1.6 An update on the consultation and engagement process, alongside any resulting proposals for development, will be submitted to the Board in Autumn 2023.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that elected members:
- Note the planned Local Partnerships consultation and engagement exercise which will commence during Summer 2023, with next steps reported to Board in Autumn 2023.
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## **3. Background**

- 3.1 In 2016, Council agreed changes to the governance arrangements for the Community Planning Partnership, and as part of this work it was agreed that a review of the Local Area Committees (LACs) would be carried out. In September 2018 and following an extensive process of engagement and consultation, Council agreed to establish 7 new Local Partnerships, which would replace the local area committee structure with immediate effect. This process took place over 2018/2019.
- 3.2 Local Partnerships provide the structure for community level governance in Renfrewshire, and there was an ambition agreed at establishment for these to continue to grow and develop to provide the community with the opportunity to have their say on local issues and make a difference to their local area. They have an informal and inclusive approach as part of a drive to ensure community voices are heard on local issues.
- 3.3 The broad aims of Local Partnerships are to:
- Make connections and networks between community groups and the wider community
  - Identify, set and share local community priorities
  - Listen to, consult and represent local communities
  - Distribute grants to support local priorities
- 3.4 The membership of the Local Partnerships is split evenly between all local elected members for the area and community representatives. Community representatives include the elected chairs of the relevant Community Councils, with the remaining places filled by representatives of community organisations in the area and these are decided by the Local Partnership members. Each Local Partnership is supported by a Lead Officer appointed by the Chief Executive.
- 3.5 The partnerships mirror the Community Council boundaries meaning there are seven and they are:

- Renfrew
- Erskine, Inchinnan, Bishopton and Langbank
- The Villages
- Johnstone and Linwood
- Paisley North, West and Central
- Paisley East
- Gleniffer

- 3.6 Standing orders and terms of reference were developed as part of the initial consultation on the establishment of the Local Partnerships. These set out the term of appointment for all Local Partnership members, including the requirement that community representative membership is reviewed every 3 years.
- 3.7 A key function of Local Partnerships is to distribute allocated grant funding in line with agreed local priorities, from both the General Fund and Common Good Fund. Youth Challenge funding is awarded by each partnership through the Celebrating Renfrewshire Programme.

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#### **4. Developing the Local Partnership model**

- 4.1 At the time of establishment it was agreed that the Local Partnerships would be reviewed after the first year. Due to the pandemic, followed by the requirement to focus on the response to the cost of living crisis, the review was not undertaken at that time. The planned recruitment of a Local Partnerships co-ordinator was not progressed at that time also.
- 4.2 In the intervening period Local Partnership meetings have continued to be held, and a number of opportunities to improve and enhance current governance arrangements have been suggested to officers.
- 4.3 It is now proposed that a process of engagement and consultation is undertaken to inform the next phase of development of the Local Partnerships. It is anticipated that this will commence in July 2023, and will be led by the Partnerships and Inequalities team, with a key focus on identifying what needs to happen to build on the existing strengths and potential opportunities which the Local Partnership model provides. It is anticipated that this exercise will involve engagement with Local Partnership Chairs and Vice Chairs, Lead Officers, elected members and community representatives.

4.4 Key areas to be explored include identifying options to:

- Enhance participation in Local Partnership meetings
- Facilitate greater engagement from Council services and partner organisations on issues which impact Local Partnership areas
- Develop meaningful local priorities and action plans
- Identify options for improving the grant allocation process

4.5 It is anticipated that the outputs from the consultation and resulting proposals will be brought back to Leadership Board in Autumn 2023.

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## 5. Wider developments

5.1 In addition to the proposed consultation and engagement exercise, a range of wider activities are also planned to support the development of the local partnerships. These include:

- A scheduled refresh of community level representation in Autumn 2023
- Work to ensure community development leads from within Community Learning and Development team are aligned to each Local Partnership area
- An engagement session for all Local Partnership lead officers during Summer 2023.
- A review of grant administration and processes is currently underway as part of the Connected Communities programme led by the Head of Policy and Partnerships.

5.2 Recruitment of a co-ordinator role has also commenced, in order to ensure that capacity is adequate to support the next phase of the development of the Local Partnerships.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Local Partnerships are a core element of community level governance in Renfrewshire.
4. **Legal** - none
5. **Property/Assets** - none
6. **Information Technology** - none
7. **Equality and Human Rights** – no issues identified. The consultation and engagement exercise will explore barriers to access as part of its approach.

8. **Health and Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – none
11. **Privacy Impact** – none
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – none
13. **Climate Risk** – none

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