



To: Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Board

On: 2 April 2015

**Report by:**

Alan McNiven, Chair of Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities

**RENFREWSHIRE FORUM FOR EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES – YEAR ONE PROGRESS REPORT**

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities is responsible for delivering the vision and four outcomes under the Empowering Communities theme. The Forum has recruited members from third sector organisations in Renfrewshire that have significant local and/or national influence.
- 1.2 In its first year of operation, Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities has established baselines for the impact measures that it has responsibility for, developed strong connections between voluntary and community sector organisations and the work of Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership and begun delivering against the actions in the Empowering Communities Action Plan.
- 1.3 In addition to progressing action to deliver against the four Empowering Communities outcomes, the Forum has also developed as a key vehicle for raising issues important to the third sector for discussion within the context of community planning partnership working in Renfrewshire.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Community Planning Partnership Board:  
Notes and agrees the progress made by Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities in delivering its outcomes.



### **3. Operation of the Forum**

3.1 Renfrewshire Forum for Empowering Communities draws members from local Third Sector and community operated organisations in Renfrewshire. The Forum deploys a member to attend each of the other 5 CPP thematic board meetings (Appendix 1). Each Forum member is supported by a member of Engage Renfrewshire staff. The Forum members are also active in a number of associated support groupings that are linked to the Community Planning agenda; a selection of which are identified as examples below the CPP thematic structure detailed in Appendix 1.

3.2 The present members are:

- Alan McNiven, Chief Executive, Engage Renfrewshire (Chair of the Forum)
- Lynne O'Brien, Assistant Director of Children's Services, Barnardos (Children & Young People Representative)
- Stephen Cruickshank, Chair, Renfrewshire Access Panel (Safer & Stronger Representative)
- Stephen McLellan, Director, RAMH (Community Care, Health & Wellbeing Representative)
- John Wilby, Paisley West & Central Community Council (Greener Representative)
- Ian McLean, Chief Executive, Bridgewater Housing Association (Jobs & Economy Representative)
- Adele Fraser, Chief Executive, Linstone Housing Association
- Kay Taylor, Manager, Paisley CAB
- Jon Kiddie, Manager, Renfrewshire Law Centre
- Nan Middleton, Renfrewshire CHP Public Participation Forum

3.3 The membership of the Forum has been developed to reflect organisations that have a spread of knowledge, important resources, operate as local employers and can help support general communications to a wide community of service users within the communities of Renfrewshire.

### **4. Year 1 Progress Report**

4.1 The vision for Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities is:

"Communities throughout Renfrewshire are enterprising, resilient and inclusive. Citizens are active in the development of personalised public services and participate in



local decision making. Communities fully utilise the assets at their disposal, using their own knowledge, experience and skills to achieve their goals and aspirations.”

- 4.2 The Year One Progress Report outlines the activity of Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities in its first year of operation and progress made in identifying baselines for performance indicators.

4.3 **Key achievements during Year 1**

- i. Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities has raised with statutory partners issues including constructing contracts that enable third sector organisations to meet the Living Wage and working to make the built environment more accessible to disabled people.
- ii. Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities had lead responsibility for 12 public engagement events during 2013/14 that provided an opportunity for public services to communicate messages about good performance in partnership working to communities. The Forum will continue to lead on engagement events throughout 2015.
- iii. The third sector contribution to the Tackling Poverty Commission has highlighted the importance of services such as the Credit Union to this work and the Advice Services Review reported through the Forum will lead to better customer experience.
- iv. The Education, Diversion and Engagement Group was established during the Summer of 2014, is chaired by Engage Renfrewshire and will lead to communities experiencing less antisocial behaviour and improving citizenship.
- v. On behalf of the Community Planning Partnership, the Forum For Empowering Communities had responsibility for developing and launching the Renfrewshire 2023 community planning website. The website was tested while in its development stage at the community planning conferences in autumn 2013 and was launched In April 2014. During April and May 2014, there were 152 recorded users on the website and a total of 242 sessions. By October and November 2014, these figures had increased to 559 users and 802 sessions. Engage Renfrewshire has also conducted social media training with community planning partners to raise awareness of how to improve communication with the public and increase public use of the Partnership’s web resources.
- vi. The launch of the Engage Renfrewshire training programme toolkit took place at Accord Hospice in 2014. Engage Renfrewshire has also worked with a number of local private sector firms offering volunteers through their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes and works with Renfrewshire Council’s Your Time To Give Programme to help place volunteers.





- vii. Through Engage Renfrewshire, community organisations are involved in eight cases of potential asset transfer and six cases of potential land transfer.

#### 4.4 Performance On Impact Measures Against Year 1 targets

Renfrewshire Forum for Empowering Communities Impact Measures	Current Status	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual
Outcome 01: Our communities will be confident, fully engaged with and regularly consulted by public services			
Increase the percentage of people agreeing that they can influence decisions affecting their local area	Baseline information was established from the January 2014 report of the Autumn 2013 Public Services Panel Survey. 21% of respondents stated that they “influence a lot” through involvement in a community group.		
Increase the level of satisfaction with local public services	Baseline information was established from the January 2014 report of the Autumn 2013 Public Services Panel Survey. 68% of people stated that they were “satisfied” with local public services.		
Increase the percentage of people using the Internet for engaging with the Community Planning Partnership	Baseline information was established from the January 2014 report of Autumn 2013 Public Services Panel. 33% responded “contacting public services directly” to the question “Which of the following do you use the internet for?”		
Increase the membership of Engage Renfrewshire with viable community anchor organisations	Information is reported from Engage Renfrewshire’s membership figures. Baseline as at December 2014 is 322 member organisations. This figure has increased from 290 organisations in May 2014.		
Increase the percentage of people using the Internet for personal use	Baseline information was established from the January 2014 report of the Autumn 2013 Public Services Panel. 10% of respondents stated that they “never access the internet”. This information was updated in the Winter 2014 survey, which reported that 9% of people do not use the internet.		
Outcome 02: Have the capacity and resources to lead projects and be involved in service delivery			
Increase Social Enterprise and Community Business growth	Baseline established in December 2014 of 43 Engage Renfrewshire organisations who are socially enterprising.		
Outcome 03: Have the capacity, enthusiasm and 'right to try' the management of local assets			
Increase the number of registered interests regarding local control of community assets which are to be used and managed for sustainable local initiatives	Baseline established in December 2014 of 8 live cases of expression of interest in asset transfer.		



Renfrewshire Forum for Empowering Communities Impact Measures	Current Status	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual
Increase the number of registers of interest regarding local control of public spaces and under used sites which are to be used and managed for sustainable local initiatives.	Baseline established in December 2014 of 6 live cases of expression of interest in land transfer; 1 potential expression of interest.		
Outcome 04: Value and promote equality and diversity and the role of charitable and voluntary work			
Increase the number of people registering to become a volunteer		614	1006
Increase the number of registered volunteers who have been placed		484	122

4.5 In addition to the indicators for the outcomes in the Empowering Communities theme, the Forum was asked to carry out the task of establishing the perceptions of Renfrewshire citizens relating to hate crime. The Winter 2014 Public Services Panel Survey reported that 23% of respondents feel that hate crime is a significant issue in Renfrewshire. 6% of survey respondents had experienced hate crime, 6% said they had witnessed this occur to a friend/family member and 8% had seen hate crime occur against another person.

#### 4.6 Areas for improvement and remedial action

The 2012/13 baseline for registered volunteers who have been placed by Engage Renfrewshire was 484. The 2013/14 figure is 122 confirmed volunteering placements through response to a survey, but it is recognised that this is likely to be an underestimate of the number of volunteers. Data collection arrangements will be reviewed to ensure that information about volunteers placed is captured as accurately as possible. Engage Renfrewshire is also looking to change its approach to volunteering to place greater emphasis on youth volunteering and campaigns related to need and community planning priorities. New data collection arrangements will include measures to track youth volunteers through Saltire Awards.

4.7 A new member of staff has been appointed to lead volunteer development through Engage Renfrewshire. As part of the new arrangements, a number of volunteer recruitment campaigns have been initiated for a number of organisations, including St Vincent's Hospice, Reaching Older Adults In Renfrewshire, Active Communities, Renfrewshire Environmental and Restoration Group, and Monte Carlo rallies. Links have also been made to existing community engagement to recruit volunteers. For example, twelve new volunteers have been recruited from young people engaging with Street Stuff.

4.8 Engage Renfrewshire is also working with organisations receiving volunteers to have in place supportive structures, policies and procedures that will ensure that volunteers have a positive experience and are able to make an effective contribution.

4.9 The development of community assets will be a key area for development and improvement for Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities. In the context of the Community Empowerment Bill being enacted in 2015, it is anticipated that this area



of work will grow over the coming years and Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities will seek to meet any increase in demand from community organisations for support regarding assets transfer, particularly that which will make a positive impact on community planning priorities.

#### 4.10 Revisions to Single Outcome Agreement

The baseline data provided in 4.4 and 4.5 above will be incorporated into the Single Outcome Agreement.

## 5 Emerging 'Work-streams'

- 5.1 The Forum's workload has been developing in response to the membership's demands but is also being shaped by the developing agenda of the Community Planning Partnership Board. A number of emerging 'work streams' have been identified below for comment, however, this is not an exhaustive list of current work.
- 5.2 **Accessibility, Equalities and the built environment:** Renfrewshire's Forum For Empowering Communities has agreed that discussions should take place with Renfrewshire Council, the Safer and Stronger Board, Jobs and Economy Board and Greener Board around the possibility of introducing safer pavements as an equality outcome for Renfrewshire Council and the Community Planning Partnership. The Forum has identified the potential capacity within the restorative justice programmes to make streets more accessible.
- 5.3 **Assets, Management Committees, and 'Stalled Spaces':** The Forum has looked to utilise and promote the use of community owned assets within the Community Planning engagement process. Officers from Engage Renfrewshire in conjunction with officers from Renfrewshire Council have begun a range of meetings with local management committees in a bid to promote where possible further community asset transfers. Part of this work will consider which assets could have a better links with the targets of the community plan. It should also be noted that the Greener Network which is supported by Forum representation will lead on an externally funded 'Stalled Spaces' initiative aimed at encouraging temporary landscaping of public greenspace.
- 5.4 **'Invest' - Social Enterprise Fund:** Information on the £100,000 'Invest In Renfrewshire' fund to support Social Enterprises was provided to the Forum members at the last meeting of the group. The Forum has been utilised to promote the fund and the Economic Development Officer from Renfrewshire Council charged with supporting the fund is working closely with Engage Renfrewshire officers to encourage applications and overcome barriers to social enterprise development.
- 5.5 **Integration of Health and Social Care – Engagement, communications:** Members of the Forum have been invited to participate in the first local Health and Social Care integration public consultation event (19<sup>th</sup> March 2015). The involvement of members of the Forum will help to illustrate the present 'Third Sector Experience' of supporting



local Health and Social Care issues and also the hopes and aspirations of the Sector for the proposed new approach. It is anticipated that the Forum will be utilised on an ongoing basis to support this emerging strategy.

- 5.6 ***The Tackling Poverty Commission – Initial Engagement and Developments:*** Now that the Tackling Poverty Commission report has been completed it is anticipated that the Forum will be utilised to provide further support in promoting the aims of an emerging Community Planning anti-poverty agenda.
- 5.7 ***Community Learning and Development Partnership Strategy:*** Scottish Government's National Strategic Guidance for Community Planning notes that local Community Learning and Development strategies should be aligned to community planning. It is noted in the guidance that Community Learning and Development (CLD) should play a central part in ensuring individuals, families and communities reach their potential. It is also noted that the available support and opportunities should be community-led and developed around local people's needs and aspirations. CLD officers from Renfrewshire Council have now begun to prepare a framework for a CLD plan which will include a timeline, resource section, key development areas and work required around 'gaps' in service. It has been agreed that this framework/draft-plan should be presented to the Forum for oversight and direction.



## Appendix 1 – Members linked to CPP thematic boards and Associated Groups

