



To: Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities Thematic Board

On: 30 August 2016

Report by:

Alan McNiven, Chair of Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities

**RENFREWSHIRE'S LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN – PROGRESS
AGAINST YEAR 3 TARGETS**

1. Summary

- 1.1 Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities is responsible for delivering four outcomes of the Renfrewshire Community Plan 2013-2023, supported by ten performance indicators.
- 1.2 Of these ten indicators, eight are on track to be delivered successfully at the end of Year 3. One indicator has a “warning” impact measure status and one has an “alert” impact measure status, both of which require remedial action. The position with these indicators and remedial action being taken is outlined in Section 6 of this report.
- 1.3 The Forum For Empowering Communities has a significant number of key achievements to report in Year 3, including significant increases in the number of volunteers recruited and placed, action to improve local environments and significant engagement of the third sector in strategic partnership projects and programmes such as the Paisley bid for UK City of Culture 2021, Tackling Poverty and the establishment of the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Forum For Empowering Communities:

- a) Notes the Year 3 performance of impact measures against our targets.
- b) Agrees that the performance report be submitted to the meeting of Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Board on 21 September 2016.

3. Background

The Renfrewshire Community Plan/Local Outcome Improvement Plan was approved by Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Board on 12 June 2013 and was subsequently “signed off” by the Minister for Local Government and Planning in August 2013. The Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities element of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan clearly sets out our agreed outcomes together with the one, three and ten year targets for each impact measure. This report provides the progress we have made against our year three targets.

4. Key achievements

The Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities key achievements include:











- Evidence from Renfrewshire Public Services Panel and Engage Renfrewshire members’ surveys indicate an increase in the percentage of people and organisations who feel that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, which is the main objective of the Forum.
- Due to a change in approach by Engage Renfrewshire to promoting, recruiting and placing volunteers, there has been a significant increase in the number of volunteers in Renfrewshire. An active Volunteer Managers Forum has been established in the third sector, with a membership of 48 organisations.
- The Chief Executive leads Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities, which is made up of senior third sector managers operating in Renfrewshire and is one of the six community planning Thematic Boards. The Forum has now been in operation since May 2013 and reviewed its progress in 2013. As well as securing the continued commitment of the third sector organisations to the Forum, there was agreement that the sector should focus its contribution to community planning in Renfrewshire on a number of strategic priorities. These priorities are: tackling poverty, Paisley’s bid to be UK City of Culture 2021, implementing the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, integration of Health and Social Care, digital participation, follow up to the 2015 inspection of Children’s Services in Renfrewshire, community justice and the response to the Syrian Humanitarian crisis.
- Engagement of third sector organisations through the Greener Communities Group has led to significant action to deliver environmental improvements by community-led organisations. In particular, through the Stalled Spaces fund, the Greener Communities Group has generated ideas and action from community groups that have brought neglected or underused spaces back into community use.
- Since January 2016 Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership has led 7 community engagement events (two community planning conference events on the Paisley 2021 bid, one community planning conference on the Community Empowerment Act, two community planning conference events on Regeneration, one event each co-produced with Elderslie and Foxbar & Brediland Community Councils). A further engagement event co-produced with Renfrewshire Disability Resource Centre took place in December 2015. The Community Planning Partnership team has also provided support for a further five events since January 2016 led by other service partners (Community Learning and Development, Open Data, Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan, Erskine Charrette, Early Years conference). In addition to these events, the Partnership also displayed a photographic exhibition of its work as part of Sma’ Shot Day.

- A Social Enterprise Network was established by Engage Renfrewshire during 2015/16 with 26 members, with a total of 53 Engage Renfrewshire member organisations now classed as “socially enterprising”. 18 funding bids have been supported including 12 to the Renfrewshire Council Social Enterprise Fund.
- 1220 volunteers were recruited during 2015/16 and 817 volunteers were placed with third sector organisations. 86 volunteers were successful in moving into paid employment from their volunteering opportunity and a further 100 volunteers moved on to further and higher education.
- 252 young people who volunteered during 2015/16 received the Challenge Award, 209 the Approach Award, 224 the Ascent Award and 11 the Summit Award.
- Discussions were progressed between Renfrewshire Council and the third sector about the potential for third sector employers to pay the Living Wage in Renfrewshire.
- The first “Living Streets” audit, which considers the quality of streets and public spaces from the perspective of people with mobility issues, took place in October 2015, looking at the area from Moss Street to Cotton Street in central Paisley. This work was supplemented by voluntary work by three STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) students from University of the West of Scotland who researched possible improvements in use of materials. The audit has now been reported back to the other community planning thematic groups in order to identify and implement practical improvements where possible.
- Discussion on the implementation of the Community Empowerment Act in Renfrewshire has taken place with the Leader of the Council and other key officers, particularly around issues of Asset Transfer. A working group has now been formed to look at arrangements to progress this and the Community Planning Partnership Board received a presentation on the Community Empowerment Act in May 2016. Following this presentation, partners are working on a Community Empowerment Toolkit for Renfrewshire. A Community Empowerment Conference attended by 70 people was held in Johnstone Town Hall on 20 May 2016 as part of Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership’s commitment to raise awareness of the Act.
- Members of Renfrewshire Forum for Empowering Communities have participated in the establishment of Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership through the Integrated Joint Board and Strategic Partnership Group. Forum members have also actively supported the Paisley UK City of Culture 2021 bid and the Tackling Poverty Strategy. In particular, the Chief Executive of Engage Renfrewshire has chaired the Community Engagement and Participation Workstream of the Paisley 2021 bid. Through its members’ contribution to the development of these significant strategic areas of work, Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities has strengthened the connection of the third sector with these areas of work and has also kept the wider third sector informed via distribution of Forum minutes as part of Engage Renfrewshire’s e-alerts to its 384 members.
- The third sector in Renfrewshire has contributed to the successful integration in Renfrewshire of families fleeing the humanitarian crisis in Syria, by acting as first point of contact for people wishing to volunteer to assist refugees and also by arranging volunteer places for some of the younger members of the Syrian families with a local third sector organisation.

- Renfrewshire Access Panel and Engage Renfrewshire have also contributed to the Joint Employability Project of the Tackling Poverty Programme. The first of two phases of this project supported 15 young people from Mary Russell School to have a work experience placement with either the Access Panel or the Environmental Training Team. The second phase of this work will provide work experience for Christmas 2016 leavers from Mary Russell school and potentially children with physical disabilities or additional learning needs from other schools in Renfrewshire.

5. Performance against year 3 targets

The table below highlights the year three performance against our targets:

| Impact Measures | Current Status | Baseline | Year 1 Actual | Year 3 Target | Year 3 Actual |
|---|---|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| Outcome 1. Our communities will be confident, fully engaged and regularly consulted by public services. | | | | | |
| Increase the percentage of people agreeing that they can influence decisions affecting their local area. |  | 21% (2014) | 21% | 23% | 24% |
| Increase the level of satisfaction with local public services. |  | 68% (2014) | 68% | 69% | 67% |
| Increase the percentage of people using the internet for engaging with the Community Planning Partnership. |  | 33% (2014) | 33% | 35% | 29% |
| Increase the membership of Engage Renfrewshire with viable community anchor organisations. |  | 322 members (2014) | 322 members | 327 members | 384 members |
| Increase percentage of people using the internet for personal use. |  | 90% (2014) | 90% | 92% | 93% |
| Outcome 2. Have the capacity and resources to lead projects and be involved in service delivery. | | | | | |
| Increase Social Enterprise and Community Business growth. |  | 43 (2014) | 43 | 45 | 53 socially enterprising organisations |
| Outcome 3. | | | | | |
| Increase the number of registered interests regarding local control of community assets which are to be used and managed for sustainable local initiatives. |  | 8 (2014) | 8 | 8 | 10 registered interests |
| Increase the number of registered interests regarding local control of public spaces and under used sites which are to be used and managed for sustainable local initiatives. |  | 6 (2014) | 6 | 6 | 12 registered interests (NB 7 of these were also queries about building assets) |
| Outcome 4. | | | | | |
| Increase the number of people registering to volunteer. |  | 614 (2013) | 1006 | 817 | 1220 registered volunteers |
| Increase the number of registered volunteers who have been placed. |  | 484 (2013) | 122 | 644 | 817 volunteers placed |

6. Areas for Improvement and Remedial Action

Under Outcome 1 (Our communities will be confident, fully engaged and regularly consulted by public services), the impact measure of “Increase the level of satisfaction with local public services” is measured through Renfrewshire Public Services Panel. The percentage of panel respondents indicating satisfaction with local public services has decreased slightly from 68% in 2014 to 67% in 2016.

Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities works primarily with the third sector in Renfrewshire to ensure strong connections between the sector and other community planning partners. The Forum has responsibility for delivering the programme of community conferences and engagement on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership, which focuses on listening to communities about ways in which public and partnership services can improve to increase overall levels of satisfaction.

The key area of activity for the Forum to improve the level of satisfaction with public services is by communicating the opportunities for communities to be more involved in improving outcomes through implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. The main role of the Forum will be to support communities to achieve their ambitions through the opportunities of the Community Empowerment Act.

Also under Outcome 1, the impact measure of “Increase the percentage of people using the internet for engaging with the Community Planning Partnership” is measured through the Public Service Panel. In 2014, 33% of Panel respondents said they used the internet to contact local public services but this had decreased to 29% in the 2016 survey.

Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership uses its website and social media to increase opportunities for people in Renfrewshire to get information and engage with public services. The Community Planning Partnership has its own Renfrewshire 2023 website, which includes information on the work of the partners in delivering community planning outcomes in Renfrewshire and also encourages local organisations to use the website to publicise their own events and activities. User traffic on the website increased significantly over the past year, with a 66% increase in sessions from 7178 in 2014/15 to 11,916 in 2015/16 and an 81% increase in users from 5,274 to 9,554 over the same period.

Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership has a Facebook page with over one thousand likes and set up a Twitter account during 2015/16. Increasing use of social media by partners should increase the ability to engage with people who would not otherwise visit websites and increase the number of people in total engaging with public services via the internet.

Through the Tackling Poverty Programme, the Digital Participation Strategy aims to increase the number of people who have access to the internet for personal use and, by extension, for contacting public services. The Chief Executive of Engage Renfrewshire chairs the group leading the Digital Participation Strategy and Engage Renfrewshire has, within the last year, started hosting a Council staff member working to increase digital skills within the voluntary sector. These actions should empower communities and voluntary organisations to increase the extent to which they engage with public services via internet.

7. Revisions to Renfrewshire’s Local Outcome Improvement Plan

There are no revisions at present to the Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities element of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. As a result of the development of the Renfrewshire Digital Strategy, new outcome measures for digital participation will be available later in 2016, which may then replace the existing digital participation measures in the Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities outcome measures.

8. Prevention

The purpose of Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities is to ensure that communities and the third sector are equal partners with the public and private sectors in Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership and that communities and the third sector are empowered to make their full contribution to improving outcomes.

During its three years of operation, the Forum and the wider third sector have contributed significantly to the prevention and early intervention agenda identified as a priority by the Christie Commission. The Forum has provided a key route to enable third sector partners to raise issues and initiatives with statutory partners, within the context of the Community Planning Partnership.

Renfrewshire Forum members have played a leading role as commissioners in Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Programme. This has set the policy and strategy for improving outcomes for people currently in poverty and for ensuring that fewer people experience poverty. The work of the Tackling Poverty Commission was based in part on the testimony of lived experience of poverty, drawn from the users of third sector organisations in Renfrewshire. The Forum has Tackling Poverty as a standing item on the Forum For Empowering Communities to ensure that the third sector addresses the issue on an ongoing basis and a third sector Tackling Poverty conference was held in May 2015, attended by around 80 local organisations, to ensure that community and third sector action is at the heart of the strategy to tackle poverty.

Through the Forum, Renfrewshire Access Panel raised the issue of the lack of work experience for school leavers with additional learning needs or physical disabilities. Through the Tackling Poverty programme, third sector agencies are engaged in a pilot programme providing work experience for these children leaving school in summer and winter 2016. The purpose of this intervention has been to enhance the employability of school pupils with disabilities or additional learning needs and reduce prospects of unemployment.

Additional resource provided to supporting volunteers in Renfrewshire has led to the establishment of Renfrewshire Volunteer Managers Forum. The significant increase in volunteer numbers recruited and placed has built the capacity of organisations to carry out work related to prevention across all community planning themes. 86 volunteers in Renfrewshire went on to find paid employment during 2015/16 and 100 went in to further education, demonstrating the effectiveness of volunteering as a route to build skills and prevent unemployment.

Recovery Across Mental Health (RAMH) raised the issue of the ability of the third sector to meet the Living Wage and contract relationships with the statutory sector. Although a solution has not yet been achieved regarding this issue, there is now a greater awareness of the context of the Living Wage in the third sector and its potential to address low income among third sector workers in Renfrewshire.

The Living Streets project initiated by Renfrewshire Access Panel is intended to improve the accessibility of the public realm in Renfrewshire in order to reduce inequality of access and the risk of accident and harm to people who have issues related to mobility.

Barnardos and Engage Renfrewshire participated in a national Scottish Government pilot project to embed Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) across third sector partners, with a second phase of this work now about to commence. This work will build the capacity of third sector organisations working with children to improve long term outcomes and prevent problems that drive future costs to the public sector.

Partners in Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities supported the integration of Syrian refugee families in Renfrewshire, primarily through Engage Renfrewshire and Barnardos working with Renfrewshire Council to enable volunteers to support integration have been professionally managed and members of the Syrian community have been able to access volunteering opportunities. This has contributed to addressing potential isolation faced by families arriving in a new country.

The Forum has played a key role in building awareness and support for the Paisley 2021 City of Culture bid through community engagement. A particular focus of this work has been on the power of culture to empower individuals and communities to build skills and enhance confidence, cohesion and employability.