

**To:** Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities

**On:** 14 June 2017

**Report by:**

Chief Executive, Engage Renfrewshire

**TITLE:**

Communication With The Third Sector In Renfrewshire

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities provides a link between the work of Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership and the wider third sector in Renfrewshire. Key opportunities for the Forum to communicate with the wider third sector are:

**Promoting the Forum, encouraging others to work with the Forum and sharing of Information**

It is important that the Forum's purpose continued to be developed by the members. The Forum should operate in a way that helps all members to work together to share information, build knowledge, develop expertise and solve problems. Agendas will often focus on a particular area of practice but members are encouraged to work across disciplinary boundaries and out with formal reporting lines. Members are very much encouraged to bring emerging issues for development to the Forum.

**Forum members – Making more of our networks**

The Forum members' commitment to using their own networks to share information is extremely useful in supporting the principal purpose of sharing knowledge. All Community Planning partners are charged with cascading information to as wide a range of interested parties as possible. If a member has a weekly bulletin it would be useful if key issues were promoted there. Where members have active social media outlets, seeking the other Forum members to connect would provide a better online profile for all. Wherever and whenever possible, members are encouraged to share all key information that emerges from the Forum.

## Renfrewshire Community Planning Conferences 2017

Renfrewshire's Community Planning Partnership annual community planning conference events provide fantastic opportunities for the Forum to engage with a wider range of third sector organisations and community members. The conferences looked at how Renfrewshire's communities can benefit from the important projects and developments under way in Renfrewshire. Members of the Forum are encouraged to promote and attend these events.

### Community Councils

Renfrewshire's Community Councils are voluntary organisations set up by statute by the Local Authority. Although supported by the Local authority they are operated by local residents to act on behalf of their area. Community Councils act to represent the community to the Local Authority and other public services and may be involved in a wide range of activities. Work is now underway to engage the local Community Councils regards the potential of links to the Forum.

### Forum – Papers & Plans

It is important the Information on the Forum is made available to any interested individual or groups. Engage Renfrewshire's weekly bulletin contains a link to the Forum's meeting information. All papers, minutes of meetings and agendas can be found on the 'Renfrewshire 2023' website:

<http://www.renfrewshire2023.com/community-planning/empowering-communities/meetings-and-agendas/> .

- 1.2 The following framework is proposed for communication between the Forum and the wider third sector in Renfrewshire. All members of the Forum are asked to support Forum communication wherever possible through the channels of their own organisation:

Communication Method	Purpose
Polls	<p>The wider third sector in Renfrewshire will be invited to participate regularly in social media polls. This will enable the Forum to gather views quickly and ensure that it is informed of the opinions and concerns of local third sector organisations.</p> <p>Polls will be issued on behalf of the Forum. Members will be asked to publicise the polls so that as many organisations and individuals as possible are encouraged to participate.</p>

Social Media	<p>Social media will be the primary communication channel of the Forum. The Forum will use Twitter, Facebook and other channels to communicate items of business and issues being addressed by the Forum and to enable the wider third sector and others to comment on this.</p> <p>Communication will be issued on behalf of the Forum. Members are asked to both retweet/like Forum communications and issue their own posts to their twitter followers/facebook friends etc.</p>
Website	<p>The existing Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership 2023 website will be used to host meeting agendas and papers and other relevant information.</p> <p>Forum members are asked to signpost people to the Community Planning Partnership website from their own websites and to raise awareness of Forum issues on their own websites as appropriate.</p>
Publications	<p>A link to papers from the Forum For Empowering Communities is issued through the Engage Renfrewshire e-bulletin.</p> <p>Forum members are asked to raise awareness amongst their audiences</p>
Events	<p>Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership and the Forum will organise community conference and other engagement events.</p> <p>Forum members are asked to encourage Renfrewshire residents that they are in contact with to attend events and also to raise awareness of the work of the Forum at their own events.</p>

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 It is recommended that the Forum:

- (a) Agrees the principles for communication with the wider third sector in Renfrewshire outlined in paragraph 1.1
- (b) Agrees the framework for communication outlined in paragraph 1.2

## **3. Background**

3.1 Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities is a key component of the revised structures for Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership, which were agreed in December 2016.

3.2 The membership of the Forum For Empowering Communities has been reviewed to ensure contribution from key third sector organisations across Renfrewshire. It is also recognised, however, that the Forum requires to communicate with the wider third sector in Renfrewshire in order to ensure a flow of information and ideas relevant to empowering communities in Renfrewshire.

**Author:** For more information about the report, please contact Stuart Graham, Partnerships Planning and Development Manager, Renfrewshire Council, 0141 618 7408