



## Minute of Meeting

### Forum for Empowering Communities Thematic Board

Date	Time	Venue
1 June 2016	916:00	RAMH, 41 Blackstoun Road, Paisley, PA3 1LU

#### PRESENT

A Clark, Create; A McNiven, Engage Renfrewshire; J Wilby, Paisley West & Central Community Council; S McLellan, RAMH; and J Cram, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership.

#### CHAIR

A McNiven, Chair, presided.

#### IN ATTENDANCE

I Cunningham S Miller, J Ferrie and K Miller (all Engage Renfrewshire); and S Graham, A Armstrong-Walter, D Dunn, S Tkacenko and C MacDonald (all Renfrewshire Council).

#### APOLOGIES

I McLean, Bridgewater Housing Association; S Cruickshank, Renfrewshire Access Panel; K Taylor, Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau.

#### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to commencement of the meeting.

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chair intimated that he proposed to alter the order of business to facilitate the conduct of the meeting by considering item 5 of the agenda before item 4.

## **SEDERUNT**

The Chair welcomed Alan Clark from Create on to the Board.

### **1 MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Forum for Empowering Communities Thematic Board held on 8 February 2016.

**DECIDED:** That the Minute be approved.

### **2 ROLLING ACTION LOG**

The Rolling Action Log was submitted for approval.

#### **RF.27.01.15(2) – Local Engagement Events**

S Graham advised that this action had been passed over to Development & Housing Services and it was agreed that this action be removed from the action log.

**DECIDED:**

- (a) That action RF.27.01.15(2) – Local Engagement Events be removed from the action log; and
- (b) That the rolling action log be approved.

### **3 TACKLING POVERTY UPDATE: AFFORDABLE CREDIT IN RENFREWSHIRE**

There was submitted a report by the Strategic Lead Officer (Tackling Poverty and Welfare Reform) relative to affordable credit in Renfrewshire.

The report advised that the Community Planning Partnership had given a commitment to reducing the causes and impact of poverty and the Tackling Poverty Action Plan included a range of activities focused on tackling financial exclusion, both a symptom and cause of poverty, experienced by citizens of Renfrewshire unable to access appropriate financial services or products.

The report intimated that Renfrewshire Forum for Empowering Communities Thematic Board members were from local Third Sector and community organisations within Renfrewshire. It had been developed to reflect organisations that had a spread of knowledge; resources; operated as local employers; and could help support general communication to a wide community of service users within Renfrewshire. It had, however, no representation from Credit Unions as Community Planning partners at present. The report recommended that the Forum for

Empowering Communities Thematic Board co-opted, for the duration of the partnership, a Community Planning Partnership representative with responsibility for affordable credit from the Renfrewshire Credit Union community. In addition, the report also requested that the Forum established, as a sub-group of the Renfrewshire Forum for Empowering Communities Thematic Board, a local affordable credit partnership which would include representatives from the advice and health organisations. It was envisaged that the credit partnership, as part of the Community Planning structure, would advance access to affordable credit in a strategic way throughout Renfrewshire and would be able to measure progress in this area. The partnership and representatives would tie in with further work being done with the funds remaining in the Credit Union Development Fund which would be used to facilitate further recommendations from the “Gateway to Affordable Credit” report published in February 2016 by the Carnegie Trust, such as improving credit scores for CU members and targeting those who would not be able to access mainstream finance.

**DECIDED:**

- (a) That it be agreed that the Forum for Empowering Communities Thematic Board would introduce a Community Planning Partnership representative with responsibility for affordable credit from the Renfrewshire Credit Union community who would be coopted for the duration of the partnership; and
- (b) That it be agreed that a local affordable credit partnership sub-group be established as part of the Renfrewshire Forum for Empowering Communities Thematic Board.

**4 NATIONAL THIRD SECTOR GIRFEC PROJECT - LEARNING REPORT AND NEXT STEPS IN RENFREWSHIRE**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive, Engage Renfrewshire relative to the national third sector GIRFEC Project learning report entitled “Are We Ready For The Community Empowerment Act?”, a copy of which was attached as an appendix to the report.

It was noted that Renfrewshire was one of nine community planning partnership areas in Scotland that had participated in the National Third Sector GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child) project. The GIRFEC report considered opportunities for the GIRFEC project to influence, develop and support the implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) 2015 Act in Renfrewshire, which was a key area of focus for the Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities Thematic Board. Additional funding for the GIRFEC project had been secured to March 2017 and proposals were currently being developed to ensure that this resource was used to build the capacity of local third sector organisations to be involved effectively in planning and developing children’s services.

**DECIDED:**

- (a) That it be agreed that the Board would endorse the proposal to use additional GIRFEC funding to build local capacity to participate in planning and delivery of children's services;
- (b) That it be agreed that the Board would endorse the proposal to present a report to the Children and Young People Board to discuss the development of third sector and community involvement in developing children's services; and
- (c) That it be agreed that the development of the Renfrewshire approach to the Community Empowerment Act would take account of the learning from the National Third Sector GIRFEC project.

**5 RENFREWSHIRE COMMUNITY PLANNING CONFERENCE FEEDBACK**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive, Engage Renfrewshire relative to a programme of Community Planning Conference events which were taking place between March and June 2016 at venues in Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew which focused on the Paisley UK City of Culture bid; Community Empowerment; and Regeneration. It was noted that third sector organisations had played a significant part in planning, supporting and presenting at events, which had been well attended by communities within Renfrewshire.

The feedback from the community planning conferences would be used to gather evidence of involvement to strengthen the UK City of Culture 2021 bid and influence the development of the bid, the implementation of the Community Empowerment Act in Renfrewshire and the way in which communities were engaged in the significant physical regeneration of Renfrewshire taking place over the next decade. The feedback from the conferences held to the end of May 2016 was attached as an appendix to the report.

**DECIDED:**

- (a) That the feedback from the community planning conference events held between March and May 2016 be noted; and
- (b) That it be agreed that a further report on the remaining conferences would be submitted to the next meeting of the Board.

**6 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015**

S Graham gave a presentation relative to Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership's response to the Scottish Government consultation on a number of aspects of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) 2015 Act. It was noted that the guidance which would emerge following the consultation would provide the framework for Community Planning Partnerships to work within when implementing the provisions of the Act.

The presentation outlined the questions and the proposed response from the Partnership relating to asset transfer, participation requests, community planning, community right to buy abandoned, neglected or detrimental land, and highlighted some of the feedback from the Community Empowerment Conference which took place on 20 May 2016. The development of the Community Planning toolkit was also summarised.

S Graham advised that the finalised guidance would be presented to the Partnership Board once it had been agreed by the Scottish Government.

**DECIDED:** That the presentation be noted.

## 7 CITY OF CULTURE

A verbal update was given by the Chief Executive, Engage Renfrewshire relative to an update on the Community Engagement and Participation Strategy and Action Plan.

He advised that the draft Strategy and Action Plan had now been developed as a collaborative piece of work between the Bid Team and the Community Engagement and Participation Work Stream Group. The branding 'packs' had now been developed and were ready to be promoted and a commitment had been given to establish five local 'info-desks' which would be located in each Local Area Committee area.

**DECIDED:** That the verbal update be noted.

## 8 UPDATE FROM THEMATIC BOARDS

Feedback reports from the members who had been present at the various Thematic Boards were submitted for noting.

**DECIDED:** That the feedback provided within the reports be noted.

## 9 COMMUNITY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

A McNiven advised that this item had been deferred to a future meeting of the Board. He expressed concern that no reports or presentations had been forthcoming with regard to the Community Learning & Development Strategy.

He intimated the Renfrewshire Community Learning and Development Partnership was to be a Sub-Group of the Forum for Empowering Communities Thematic Board and was in the process of being developed. However, it was vital that the Board had an awareness and understanding of the Strategy in order to undertake their governance role effectively.

**DECIDED:** That the update be noted.