Inverclyde Alliance

AGENDA ITEM NO: 9

Report To:	**Inverclyde Alliance Board**	**Date:**	**18 March 2024**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks** **Corporate Director Education,** **Communities & Organisational** **Development, Inverclyde Council**	**Report No:**	
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Subject:	**Locality Plans Review**		

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Alliance Board a proposed new approach to community engagement in the review and development of revised Locality Plans.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 As part of the community planning element of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Inverclyde Alliance has a responsibility to develop locality plans for those areas of Inverclyde which experience the greatest inequalities.

2.2 Six Locality Plans were produced in 2020 highlighting key priorities for each locality derived from various methods of community engagement. Although there is only technically a requirement to have Locality Plans for three of Inverclyde's locality areas (those that face the most inequality), Inverclyde opted for all 6 localities to have action plans because significant challenges exist across all six localities. This means many community efforts and organisations addressing inequalities operate throughout the entire authority area. Inverclyde Alliance are required to keep these Locality Plans under review.

2.3 While launched in 2020 to support engagement on Locality Plans, establishing Communication Engagement Groups (CEGs) across all six localities has faced challenges. Perceived complexity in locality planning arrangements, difficulty in securing consistent and broad participation at meetings, and overlap with existing community groups has hindered the success of this model.

2 4 This report contains a proposal in which to redesign the Locality Plan community engagement model. The aim is to create an Inverclyde-wide engagement network, based on a mixture of online and face-to-face engagements, that will drive the priorities in 6 revised locality plans. This model would be branded as the "Inverclyde People's Network" and would support and compliment the work of existing formal and informal community groups, community planning partnership groups, and Inverclyde Alliance Board.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Alliance Board:
   a. approve the changes in relation to community engagement on Locality Plans; and
   b. approve the timetable/plan to take forward the development of revised Locality Plans; and
   c. agree that each partner will provide a representative to act as a locality sponsor.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1   As part of the community planning element of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Inverclyde Alliance has a responsibility to develop locality plans for those areas of Inverclyde which experience the greatest inequalities.

4.2   Locality Plans aim to address specific needs within a local authority by targeting areas with considerably poorer outcomes compared to other areas within the same authority area or Scotland as a whole. While three of Inverclyde's six locality areas may seem to face greater inequality, it's crucial for Inverclyde Alliance to recognise that individuals experiencing significant challenges exist across all six localities. This means many community efforts and organisations addressing inequalities operate throughout the entire authority area. It remains the preference to keep 6 locality plans for this reason.

4.3   Locality Plans serve as guides for addressing key issues within specific areas. By analysing local data and actively engaging with communities, these plans distinguish priority concerns. Crucially, Locality Plans also outline collaborative actions that both Inverclyde Alliance and local residents will undertake to tackle these challenges.

4.4   Six Locality Actions plans were produced in 2020 highlighting key priorities for each locality derived from various methods of community engagement. Section 11 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires that each community planning partnership keep under review the question of whether it is making progress in improving the achievement of each local outcome in the locality plan. It must also from time to time review the locality plan itself and must publish any revised locality plan which results from such a review.

4.5   Progress against current Locality Plans during the period 2020 to 2023 has been reported to Inverclyde Alliance on 18 March 2024.

5.0   LOCALITY ACTION PLANS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: MOVING FORWARD

5.1   Community Engagement Groups (CEGs) were setup in 2020 to help provide a structure for engagement on the priorities highlighted within the six Locality Plans. However, this approach to community engagement, primarily through CEGs requires revision. Only a minority of CEGs attract consistent participation, raising concerns about their effectiveness and there is a perceived overlap with existing Community Council functions. The rigid format of monthly meetings hinders broader involvement, as many residents find them inconvenient. Additionally, many priorities identified in the Locality Plans are already being addressed by other groups. Finally, community members themselves express a clear desire for more flexible engagement options beyond fixed monthly gatherings. These combined factors necessitate a new model that maximises participation and offers diverse ways for residents to contribute to shaping Inverclyde's future.

5.2   Based on an evaluation of the challenges in forming successful CEGs, it is proposed to shift towards a new Locality Plan engagement model that embraces technology, accommodates diverse preferences, and empowers residents to actively shape Inverclyde's future, which will facilitate broader community participation in shaping Locality Plans. This report contains a proposal in which to redesign the Locality Plan engagement model towards an Inverclyde-wide engagement network, based on a mixture of online and locality-based face-to-face engagement. This model would be branded as "Inverclyde People's Network".

5.3   The Inverclyde People's Network (IPN) is proposed as an answer to the challenges identified in paragraph 5.1 of this report. This concept cuts across the limitations of the current CEG method and encourages more inclusive, flexible, and impactful community engagement. The IPN proposal is to replace a reliance on the CEG model as the primary method for community engagement on Locality Plans with a model based on a mixture of online and targeted face-to-face engagement methods. The IPN can be summarised as:

- Creating an Inverclyde-wide online engagement network utilising both social media groups and the Inverclyde Community Choices Platform, which will facilitate dialogue on both authority-wide and locality-based issues through ongoing community conversations.

- Under the banner of Inverclyde People's Network, each of the 6 locality areas will host community conversation week once per year to reflect on and co-produce their own Locality Plans, which would be supported by both digital engagement and a range of face-to-face engagement.

5.4 The Inverclyde Community Choices platform is Inverclyde's localised version of Consul, which is the recommended platform from COSLA in relation to community engagement. The Consul Democracy platform is a complete citizen participation tool for an open, transparent, and democratic government, with features such as community proposals, participatory budgeting, debates, and collaborative legislation. The platform has already been successfully trialled within Inverclyde for community engagement around the Meliora Festival in 2022.

5.5 This flexible model of an Inverclyde-wide online community engagement network, supported by locality-based community conversation weeks, could act as a central hub for information sharing, collaboration, and outreach. Community groups could showcase their work, attract new members, and avoid duplication of effort. Residents could find relevant support, connect with others, and participate in discussions. The network could also offer training, resources, and connect groups with volunteers.

5.6 The IPN would directly support the work of community groups and multi-agency partnerships by providing engagement opportunities on the development and delivery of the priorities within Locality Plans. This would include, but not be limited to, groups such as:

- CLD Partnership
- HSCP Locality Planning Groups
- Community Councils
- Parent Councils
- Pupil Councils / Youth Council
- Community Groups and TARA's

5.7 A proposed timetable is provided below to update Locality Plans:

Stage One
Use existing data from recent consultations to create mock up draft plans that would create the platform to stimulate conversation and community engagement at stage 2.

Stage Two
Each locality will host a Community Conversation Week, this will be an opportunity for communities to reflect on the progress made in relation to the locality action plan and co-produce an updated plan that reflects the needs of the locality. The community conversation will also be supported by digital engagement to capture wider community need and to maximise inclusion. All six locality action plans will be updated to reflect feedback from the Community Conversation. The intention would be to repeat this process every year.

Potential timeframe
- Dec – Feb 2024: Update the existing plans in relation to progress made.
- March – April 2024: draft "mock up" locality plans in relation to current data.
- April – May 2024: Host community conversation events to capture community feedback.
- June 2024: Alliance Board approval and publication of plans.

5.8 While some overlap exists between locality areas and political boundaries like council wards and community councils, it's important to streamline involvement to avoid duplicated efforts and meeting attendance. This can be achieved by focusing on areas where a significant degree of relevant crossover is identified. The proposed alignment of localities with Council Wards and Community Councils is presented within Appendix 1. This table also provides the suggested representative of Inverclyde Council and/or an Alliance Board partner who will act as a sponsor for their locality. By linking the locality engagement into the partnership, the sponsor(s) can help to ensure that the voices of the local community are heard in the community planning process. The sponsor arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis.

6.0   IMPLICATIONS

6.1   Legal: Section 11(2) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 places a duty on the community planning partnership to review each locality plan it has published and following such a review, may consider revising the plan.

Finance: none at present
Human Resources: none at present
Equality and Diversity: none at present
Alliance Partnership Plan: The development of revised Locality Plans cuts across all themes of the Partnership Plan but has particular relevance for Theme 1 – Empowered People as they aim to provide a platform to give communities a voice and influence.

7.0   CONSULTATIONS

7.1   None

8.0   LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1   None

APPENDIX 1

Mapping localities to Community Council Areas, Ward Areas, Council sponsor, CPP sponsor, and community groups/facilities

Locality	Council Ward Areas*	Community Council Areas*	Council Sponsor	CPP Sponsor	Community groups and facilities
Kilmacolm & Quarrier's Village	• Inverclyde East [1]	• Kilmacolm and Quarrier's Village	Head of Culture, Communities, and Educational Resources	To be confirmed	Groups • Kilmacolm Community Council • Kilmacolm CEG • Kilmacolm Residents Association • Kilmacolm Civic Trust Facilities • Kilmacolm Community Centre • Birkmyre Park Fitness Gym • Kilmacolm Library
Port Glasgow	• Inverclyde East [1] • Inverclyde East Central [2]	• Port Glasgow East • Port Glasgow West	Chief Officer IJB	To be confirmed	Groups • Port West Glasgow Community Council • Port Glasgow CEG • Slaemuir TARA • Chapleton TARA • Parkfarm TARA • Broadstone Gardens Residents Association Facilities • King George V building • 7 ½ John Wood Street • The Pantry • I-Youth Zone (Port Glasgow) • Boglestone Community Centre • Port Glasgow Town Hall • PG Library • Parklea
Greenock Central and East	• Inverclyde Central [3] • Inverclyde North [4]	• Greenock Central • Greenock East • Greenock West & Cardwell Bay	Chief Executive	To be confirmed	Groups • East End Working Group • Broomhill TARA • Greenock Central Association • Auchmountain Committee • Craigend Committee

Locality	Council Ward Areas*	Community Council Areas*	Council Sponsor	CPP Sponsor	Community groups and facilities
					Facilities • Craigend Resource Centre • Auchmountain Resource Centre • Crawfurdsburn Community Hall • Gibshill Community Centre • I-Youth Zone (Greenock) • Inverclyde SHED • Broomhill Gardens and Community Hub • Belville Community Gardens • Greenock Town Hall • Bank St Hub • Man On • Central Library
Greenock South & Southwest	• Inverclyde South [7] • Inverclyde Southwest [6]	• Greenock Southwest • Holefarm and Cowdenknowes • Larkfield, Braeside, and Branchton	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	To be confirmed	Groups • Greenock South West Community Council • Larkfield, Branchton and Braeside Community Council • Cowdenknowes Association • Greive Rd Committee • Branchton Committee Facilities • Youth Connections • Branchton Community Centre • Grieve Road Community Hall • Larkfield Tenant's Hall • Meadowlark Hall • South West Library
Greenock West & Gourock	• Inverclyde North [4] • Inverclyde West [5]	• Gourock • Greenock West & Cardwell Bay	Director Environment & Regeneration	To be confirmed	Groups • Gourock Community Council • Greenock West and Cardwell Bay CC

Locality	Council Ward Areas*	Community Council Areas*	Council Sponsor	CPP Sponsor	Community groups and facilities
					• Greenock West Comms and Engagement Group Facilities • Gamble Halls • Kirn Drive Community Hall • Shore Street Gardens • Gourock Library
Inverkip & Wemyss Bay	• Inverclyde Southwest [6] • Inverclyde West [5]	• Gourock • Inverkip & Wemyss Bay	Head of OD, Policy & Communications	To be confirmed	Groups • Blooming Inverkip • Wemyss Bay association • Inverkip and WB Community Council • Inverkip hub committee Facilities • Inverkip Community Hub • Inverkip Library • Wemyss Bay Community Hall

*Community Council and Ward areas have been matched to localities with >10% residential dwellings within their boundary