



AGENDA ITEM NO: 11

Report To: Inverclyde Alliance Board **Date:** 7 October 2024

Report By: Ruth Binks
Corporate Director of Education,
Communities and Organisational
Development, Inverclyde Council **Report No:**

Contact Officer: Hugh Scott **Contact No:** 01475 715450
Service Manager Community
Learning and Development,
Community Safety and
Resilience

Subject: Locality Plan Engagement

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 This report aims to inform the Alliance Board of the progress in piloting the community conversation week as a method of community engagement to bolster the six locality action plans. It also serves to update on the progress of the Inverclyde Community Choices platform (CONSUL) and the Alliance Board locality link roles.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 Under the Community Planning provision of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the Inverclyde Alliance is tasked with creating locality plans for the areas within Inverclyde facing the most significant inequalities. The Alliance board approved six new locality action plans on 17 June 2024.

2.2 On 18 March 2024, the Alliance Board approved a new approach to community engagement within the six locality areas. This approach employs the digital platform Inverclyde Community Choices (CONSUL) and promotes a 'Community Conversation Week' for each of the six localities to engage with the community. Additionally, it introduces the role of Alliance Board locality links to enhance community engagement efforts and strengthen the connection between the community and the Alliance Board.

2.3 This report proposes piloting the Inverclyde Choices Community Conversation week in three Inverclyde localities from October to December 2024, followed by the remaining three localities from January to March 2025. Engagement will be undertaken through the Inverclyde Community Choices platform alongside face-to-face engagement.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Alliance Board:

- a. Notes the updates on the Locality Plan community engagement process provided in this report.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director of Education, Communities and 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. The 6 new locality actions plans were approved by the Alliance board on the 17 June 2024.
- 4.2 On 18 March 2024, the Alliance board approved the adoption of a new community engagement approach. This approach involves using the digital platform 'Inverclyde Community Choices' (CONSUL) and transitioning to a 'community conversation week' model. Initially, this was to be branded as the Inverclyde People's Network, but after additional discussions with the corporate communications team, it was decided to rebrand it as 'Inverclyde Community Choices' to match the local designation for the CONSUL platform.
- 4.1 The Inverclyde Community Choices approach goes beyond simply sharing information and updates. It empowers residents to be active partners in shaping their communities. A foundation of this approach is the proposed "Inverclyde Choices, Community Conversation Weeks" held six times a year (once a year for each). During these dedicated weeks, residents join with the local authority and partners to co-produce and develop the Locality Action Plans. This collaborative spirit ensures that community priorities are not just heard but actively incorporated into effective action plans. Furthermore, Inverclyde Community Choices acts as a central space for communication and collaboration. It connects residents with the CLD (Community Learning and Development) sector and Community Councils, fostering a streamlined flow of information and decision-making. This transparency and collaboration empower residents to understand the processes shaping their communities and actively contribute to making informed decisions.

5.0 PILOT INVERCLYDE COMMUNITY CHOICES CONVERSATION WEEKS

- 5.1 The Inverclyde Community Choices Conversation Weeks aims to promote a localised approach to community engagement by offering a range of activities over the span of one week. The topics of engagement will be customised for each locality, reflecting themes from the priorities detailed in the Locality plans. Initially, the focus will be on generating opportunities for community input on vital themes like Community Empowerment, Community Safety, Before and After School Childcare, and Employability.
- 5.2 The pilot initiative plans to conduct Community Conversation weeks in Port Glasgow, Greenock East and Central, and Greenock South and Southwest from October to December 2024. This will be followed by sessions in Greenock West and Gourock, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay, and Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village from January to March 2025.
- 5.3 Throughout the Inverclyde Community Conversations weeks, a range of engagement methods will be employed, including digital engagement through the Inverclyde Community Choices platform, digital listening events, and face-to-face interactions targeting existing groups within community spaces like community centres, libraries, and warm spaces.

6.0 INVERCLYDE COMMUNITY CHOICES PLATFORM (CONSUL)

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 Progress has been made in the development of the Inverclyde Community Choices platform, with enhancements to its layout and branding. Where previously the sole access method for community members was through their Scottish Government My Gov account, they can now also sign in using Facebook, Gmail, or Young Scot credentials. On 28 September, a COSLA representative conducted an online demonstration for Alliance Board members, highlighting the platform's features and its

adaptability. COSLA will continue to provide ongoing support and development to enhance the community engagement platform for Inverclyde. Additionally, a test site has been established to aid staff development, allowing officers to familiarise themselves with and practice the platform's features. The subsequent steps include facilitating elements of the warm spaces fund process on the Inverclyde Community Choices platform to gather community feedback.

7.0 ALLIANCE BOARD LOCALITY LINK ROLES

7.1 On 18 March 2024 the Alliance Board approved a delivery structure and Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023-33. Included within the TOR was the expectation that Alliance Board members will act as locality area links with a representative of Inverclyde Council and/or an Alliance Board partner undertaking this role jointly. By linking the locality engagement into the partnership, the links can help to ensure that the voices of the local community are heard in the community planning strategic process.

7.2 Progress has been made with Alliance Board members agreeing to assume the new role of locality links. This role primarily entails the Alliance member acting as a liaison for the locality, ensuring community feedback is heard, and they will be supported in this role by officers from Community Learning and Development. Meetings with Alliance Board partner members to date have resulted in five partner members agreeing in principle to undertake the role. Efforts will continue to secure the support of the sixth alliance partner member.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Legal: none at present
Finance: none at present
Human Resources: none at present
Equality and Diversity: Community engagement will include various approaches to be inclusive as possible.
Alliance Partnership Plan: The proposed community engagement methods within this report will support Partnership Plan Theme 1 'Empowered People'.

9.0 CONSULTATIONS

9.1 None

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1
- Agenda Item 7: Inverclyde Partnership Plan - Delivery of Structure and Terms of Reference (18 March 2024 Alliance Board)
 - Agenda Item 9: Locality Plans Review (18 March 2024 Alliance Board)
 - Agenda Item 7: Locality Action Plans (17 June 2024 Alliance Board)