

Boundaries for Local Community Planning

The City of Edinburgh Council

23 March 2006

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report recommends the establishment of 12 local community planning partnership areas across the city. Additional matters in relation to community councils, the SIP transitional framework and the devolution of services are also considered.

2 Summary

- 2.1 Boundaries for local community planning areas have been considered over a lengthy period of time. Further information is now provided with regard to the management of local community planning structures, arrangements for Central Edinburgh and former SIP areas, the realignment of community council boundaries, and service devolution.
- 2.2 These matters, which were raised in the motion to the Council on 26th January 2006, are addressed in this report. It is concluded that the outstanding proposal for 12 geographic areas can now be approved. This will enable the necessary transition from Local Development Committees to a network of local community planning partnerships. A target date of April 2007 is proposed in this regard. If agreed, it is important that other partners are briefed through the Edinburgh Partnership at the earliest opportunity.

3 Main report

Background

- 3.1 The Council adopted the local community planning scheme for the city on 7th April 2005. A final decision on the geographical framework was continued, however, until the Boundary Commission proposals for new multi member wards were clarified.
- 3.2 This resulted in a further report to the Council on 15th December 2005, when it was recommended that local community planning boundaries should fit with the proposed local government wards. The specific proposal identified 12 areas,

comprising either one or two new electoral wards. The accompanying map is shown in appendix one to this report.

- 3.3 The matter was again continued, pending further information on the transitional framework for Social Inclusion Partnerships and the future role of the new Services for Communities grouping.
- 3.4 In terms of the Council Review 2007, a further report on establishing Services for Communities was considered by the Council on 26th January 2006. This confirmed the transfer of responsibility for local community planning to the new grouping, from 1st April 2006. It was also agreed to report in the next cycle on the final shape of boundaries for local community planning. A motion also called for further information on the following:
- (i) the number of local community planning areas to be established and their management arrangements;
 - (ii) the local community planning partnership arrangement for Central Edinburgh and the North Edinburgh SIP;
 - (iii) progress on the realignment of community council boundaries;
 - (iv) the services that will be devolved to local community planning areas in the first phase.

Local Community Planning Areas and Management Arrangements

- 3.5 The proposed alignment of local community planning areas with electoral wards has several advantages including the clarification of political representation in partnership arrangements. For this reason, the new arrangements for multi member wards (effective from May 2007) are an important geographic reference.
- 3.6 The Boundary Commission has published the new ward boundaries in draft. A period of public consultation on the proposals is now complete, and the final boundaries are to be confirmed shortly. It is expected that these will be approved in their current form, with only very minor changes. This means that 17 multi member wards will be created in Edinburgh, also shown in the map attached.
- 3.7 In order to make progress, the Council is recommended to now approve the outstanding proposal for 12 geographic areas. This structure ensures a more neighbourhood based approach, whilst reducing the administrative and bureaucratic burden of 17 local partnerships. It also preserves the (approximate) geography of the 5 higher order community planning areas.
- 3.8 With regard to the management arrangements for local community planning, resources to take forward this work will be directed towards the Performance Services grouping within Services for Communities. Once operational, it is envisaged that local Neighbourhood Managers will be the primary support mechanism. Further detailed reports on management and resource issues will be submitted in due course.

Arrangements for Central Edinburgh

- 3.9 The proposed map of 12 areas identifies the new Central Edinburgh multi member ward as a distinct local community planning partnership area. (This differs from the original proposal whereby the central area was split across parliamentary constituency boundaries.) Accordingly, the Central Edinburgh ward area is to benefit from local partnership working in keeping with the rest of the city.
- 3.10 While this area contains most of the world heritage site, and the main town centre shopping areas, it does not include all parts of the commercial centre and the transitional inner city tenement areas along the main radial routes into the centre. These have similar service needs, and management arrangements for services will ensure that standards are similar, even where a number of LCPP areas may coalesce.
- 3.11 The success or failure of local community planning and neighbourhood management will depend on how effectively the Council works across professional and geographic boundaries, introduces new ways of working and delivers efficient customer services. It is proposed to develop a set of operational protocols linking adjacent local community planning partnerships and service areas to ensure effective cross-boundary service delivery.
- 3.12 In order to build effective local community planning and neighbourhood management in the city centre, Services for Communities will:-
- appoint a Neighbourhood Manager for the Central Edinburgh Ward local community planning partnership;
 - develop, with partners and other LCPPs, a set of clear and simple protocols to ensure that services are effectively delivered across geographic and professional boundaries;
 - support the Central LDC in the transition to a Local Community Planning Partnership.

North Edinburgh and SIP Integration

- 3.13 The integration of regeneration partnerships, which include the North Edinburgh SIP, with local community planning arrangements is a key requirement of the SIP transitional framework (as set out by the Scottish Executive in 2003). The overall intention is to achieve more effective and joined up working through community planning partnerships.
- 3.14 Integration in the context of community planning means that the existing regeneration partnerships will merge with the new governance structures at the local level. Whilst regeneration budgets will continue to be ring fenced for eligible areas, the impact will be beneficial in that local partnerships will have greater scope to address the needs of communities. This is of particular importance given that regeneration budgets are in decline and there is growing pressure to mainstream key local services.

- 3.15 There is an acknowledged difficulty, however, with the proposed local community planning areas covering the community regeneration areas in North Edinburgh, West Edinburgh and Restalrig where they cross the boundaries of the new wards. This means that these regeneration areas would be split across two local community planning partnership areas, however, it is anticipated that the proposed protocol framework would also offer solutions in these circumstances.
- 3.16 In particular, with regard to the Community Regeneration Fund (formerly SIP), a suitable form of local protocol can be developed for each community regeneration area to ensure that the fund targets those areas identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004. It is proposed that in the interim the Community Regeneration Fund will continue to be allocated under existing arrangements until local community partnerships and appropriate protocols are in place.
- 3.17 It is also recognised that the political membership of the proposed local community planning partnerships will not be settled before the elections in May 2007. This point has been emphasised in North Edinburgh where strong partnership history and involvement of elected members is evident.
- 3.18 It may be therefore that the creation of local community planning partnerships and the integration of SIPs cannot be achieved fully until the new Council is in place. However, adoption of the scheme at this stage would signal progress and allow some new partnership development work to proceed. Local community council formation will assist in this process, following the Council's approval of a revised scheme for the city.

Realignment of Community Council Boundaries

- 3.19 The key role of community councils is integral to the agreed local community planning scheme. A report elsewhere on this agenda provides detail of the final changes to the community council boundaries in Edinburgh. Notably, a considerable degree of co-terminosity with the new electoral boundaries has been achieved successfully.
- 3.20 These changes mean that community councils will largely align with local community planning areas, thereby ensuring that local interests are properly represented in the new partnership structures. Significantly, in North Edinburgh steps are already being taken to create three new community councils. These will replace the existing Community Alliance and provide a model for other areas to consider.
- 3.21 In those parts of the city where there are no Community Councils a flexible approach will be taken to ensure that other representative groups are included in local community planning arrangements.

Services Devolved to Local Community Planning Areas

- 3.22 Further detailed work on the range of services to be devolved to the local community planning area level is to be undertaken through Services for Communities. A neighbourhood management approach to local service

management and delivery is assured, but fuller description will only be possible once service management arrangements are assessed for local application.

- 3.23 However, it is envisaged that local community planning partnerships will be able to hold Council service providers to account for service standards and performance. This was set out in the report to the Council on 7th April 2005 when it was also proposed that local partnerships would take on responsibility for matters such as traffic management issues, road maintenance and open space management, environmental improvement schemes and local grant giving. Beyond Council issues, it is anticipated that other partners will similarly identify suitable business for local consultation and decision making.

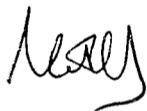
4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Council report previously confirmed that installing local community planning would be achieved within current budgets. As the Council's improved 'liveability' service is established in Services for Communities, it is anticipated that efficiency savings will allow the service change and support arrangements needed for operating LCPPs to be established.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Council:-

- (i) agrees the adoption of the 12 local community planning partnership areas for the city as shown in the map in appendix one, and that this be reported to the Edinburgh Partnership for final approval;
- (ii) agrees to the development of arrangements to allow the transition from the present system of LDCs to a network of Local Community Planning Partnerships, with a target date of April 2007;
- (iii) notes the requirements of the SIP transitional framework and the need to demonstrate progress towards integrated community planning arrangements;
- (iv) welcomes the final outcome of the Community Council Scheme Review, detailed elsewhere on this agenda, and the better alignment of boundaries with the new multi member wards;
- (v) notes the further reports anticipated on the service management arrangements in Services for Communities, and on the detailed timetable and implementation of the local community planning scheme across the city.



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15/3/06



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15/03/06

Appendices	Appendix 1: Proposed Local Government Wards and Local Community Planning Partnerships
Contact/tel/Email	Norma Cuthbertson: 469 3816: norma.cuthbertson@edinburgh.gov.uk
Wards affected	City Wide
Background Papers	None

PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT WARDS & LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIPS: APPENDIX 1

