

# North East Locality Committee

5.00pm, Thursday 26 April 2018

## Community Engagement with Locality Committees

Item number	7.3
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

### Executive Summary

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This report outlines existing arrangements and presents the options available for locality committees to enable greater community engagement

## Community Engagement with Locality Committees

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 To consider how the Locality Committee can engage with the community.

### 2. Background

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- 2.1 The locality committee agreed on 21 February 2018 to request a paper to explore how engagement with communities and community councils could be enabled.
- 2.2 The Edinburgh Partnership have agreed to carry out a review and consultation of community planning governance and partnership working arrangements during 2018. An update on this programme of work is provided elsewhere on the agenda. The outcome of this process will be of relevance to the Locality Committee and may lead to further revision and change. There is likely to be changes following the conclusion of this and matters contained may need to be revisited at this point.

### 3. Main report

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#### Current Governance Arrangements

- 3.1 Locality Committees are formal committees of the Council with delegated decision-making powers. Their aim is to make decisions for the Council at a local level. As stated in previous reports, the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 does not permit non-councillors to be members of a committee which has the power to make decisions. Thus, the involvement of non-councillors as members of the committee was not an option that could be pursued if the intention was to provide real decision-making powers for locality committees. As a result, locality committees are not a direct replacement for neighbourhood partnerships.
- 3.2 Neighbourhood Partnerships are advisory committees of the Council but they are also part of the community planning arrangements in the City. They do not have decision making powers and as a result they can have non-councillors as members of the committee. Subsequently, the role of neighbourhood partnerships is a different one from locality committees and is about engagement and guiding officers on the delivery of services rather than decision making and determining what services are provided.
- 3.3 The Edinburgh Partnership on 8 March 2018 agreed that neighbourhood partnerships should continue as part of the community planning arrangements

within the City pending the review and consultation of governance and partnership working arrangements. This review is currently ongoing and the timescale for the work is set out in a report elsewhere on the agenda. It is expected that the Edinburgh Partnership will agree a new community planning structure in late 2018.

### **Powers of the Locality Committee**

- 3.4 The report to Council on 23 November 2017 seeking approval for establishment of Locality Committees, contained, amongst others, the following guiding principles:
- 3.4.1 Have the power to set up working groups or sub-committees.
  - 3.4.2 Be held in public, invite local partners and community groups to attend and actively seek public engagement.
  - 3.4.3 Have a clearly defined structure and strategy for engaging with residents and the local community.
- 3.5 Locality Committees do have the power, as stated above, to create sub-structures below it if necessary. They can not have non-councillors as members of the committee, nor can non-councillors take an active role in decision making on the committees. However, it does not mean that community representatives and partners could not have a key role providing insight and information to aid the consideration of the committees.

### **Considerations**

- 3.6 In determining how the community can engage with locality committees, the following should be taken into consideration:
- 3.6.1 The Edinburgh Partnership Review of Community Planning – the Council should avoid duplication with any community planning structures that are created within the City. The Locality Committees are not part of this structure but should link in with these arrangements.
  - 3.6.2 Community participation is enshrined in the Community Empowerment Act 2015 and thus the Council has a commitment to participatory democracy;
  - 3.6.3 Community participation in the delivery of Council services should be part of how officers design and then deliver services and should just not rely on representation at meetings;
  - 3.6.4 Resources available to the Council to support sub-structures;
  - 3.6.5 How do the community, stakeholders and partners wish to engage with the locality committees? The Edinburgh Partnership consultation may provide the Council with sufficient information to guide an approach.
  - 3.6.6 Locality committees are representative decision-making committees of the Council where the community, stakeholders and partners can feed into via their elected representatives in the manner of other committees.

### **Options**

- 3.7 Given these powers and considerations, the following options are outlined:

- 3.7.1 Invitation - The committee could invite local groups to contribute at committee on specific and relevant items.
- 3.7.2 Sub Groups – Sub-groups may be established by the locality committee to carry out engagement. This could be reviewed when the Edinburgh Partnership Review concludes. Resources would need to be committed to ensure these groups are effective.
- 3.7.3 Communities could feed in to their elected members using existing channels. Items could then be added to the agenda via motions, petitions, through the work programme or raised by deputations.
- 3.7.4 Request that neighbourhood partnerships appoint one member from its non-councillor members to be invited to the Locality Committee to represent the views of the community at each committee meeting.

#### **4. Measures of success**

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- 4.1 In line with the Council Performance Framework and the outcomes assigned to each of the strategic aims.

#### **5. Financial impact**

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- 5.1 There is an impact on staff resources and additional costs surrounding meeting rooms if sub-groups are to be created and supported.

#### **6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 Initiatives must be in line with the Local Government (Scotland Act 1973, the Councils Standing Orders and the Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions.

#### **7. Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 Any engagement with communities should ensure that an inclusive wide range of people are included.

#### **8. Sustainability impact**

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- 8.1 Locality committees will support delivery of sustainability outcomes.

## 9. Consultation and engagement

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- 9.1 A meeting of Locality Conveners, Vice-Conveners and officers took place on 21 March 2018 to discuss community engagement.

## 10. Background reading/external references

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[The City of Edinburgh Council 23 November – Establishment of Locality Committees](#)

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## 11. Appendices

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