

SUBJECT: Strategic Direction for Community & Partnerships Development Team

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 6th September 2017

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All in Monmouthshire

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the findings and recommendations of a Community Engagement Review (Appendix A), requesting Cabinet endorse:
- the findings of the Review and associated conclusions / recommendations;
 - in so-doing approve the creation of, and financial implications arising from, a new operational structure for community and partnership development in Monmouthshire County Council through the formation of a Community and Partnerships Development Team.
- 1.2 The creation of the team will mean the Council is well placed to respond effectively to the priorities of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and Social Services and Well-being Act. The team will be an integral part of the new operating model of the Council which is being developed by the 'Future Monmouthshire' programme. The analysis and supporting evidence base and business case are summarised in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To endorse the findings and recommendations of the Community Engagement Review (Appendix A ~ 'Community Engagement Review').
- 2.2 To endorse the 'Way Forward' for a newly defined Community and Partnership Development Team (Appendix B – 'Community and Partnership Development Team – The Way Forward').
- 2.3 To agree to establish a Community and Partnerships Development Team, taking into account the financial implications (Appendix C - financial implications).
- 2.4 To approve the redundancy costs, funded from the service budgets if possible, or if not then funded from the corporate redundancy budget.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 In October 2015, a review of community governance was undertaken to analyse the role of local decision making within Area Committees and to understand the Authority's

level and type of community engagement and its direct relationship to how local needs and solutions are identified, developed and delivered.

3.1.2 Monmouthshire has four area committees; Bryn y Cwm; Severnside; Lower Wye and Central Monmouthshire. Their purpose is to:

- engage the community in area working to help the council shape major proposals affecting specific areas advising the Authority of the associated implications for the area;
- lead the community planning process;
- ensure services are properly co-ordinated on a local level;
- encourage effective cross sector collaboration; and,
- provide a forum for community debate and to make executive decisions on matters within areas provided they are within the Council's policies and budgetary allocations and do not adversely affect other areas.

3.2 REASONS

3.2.1 In October 2016, there was a recognition that in light of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and the Authority's evolving Future Monmouthshire programme, there was a need to extend the review to address the following objectives:

- Clarification of the strategic direction required to meet legislative requirements and enable asset and place based delivery;
- Repurposing of the Authority's Whole Place team;
- Identification of joint working opportunities internally to enable a streamlined approach;
- Assessment of new roles in the provision of impartial advice across the county's five strategic settlements – Abergavenny, Monmouth, Caldicot, Chepstow and Usk;
- Understand how Section 106, the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy and Area Committee Grants can be used strategically to address resource implications for a sustainable, place and asset based approach;
- Reconfiguration of the community governance model to preserve the leadership role of Council Members and encourage wider community participation.

3.3 REVIEW FINDINGS

3.3.1 The review identified the following findings:

Community Engagement and Partnerships

- The current lack of community engagement/partnership coordination is leading to missed opportunities to share and maximise resources and intelligence;
- The current lack of Town/Community Council engagement is resulting in an Authority and Public Service Board (PSB) disconnect and lack of knowledge of needs and priorities, which extends to surrounding local communities.
- A disconnect between the PSB, internal partners and funding opportunities to address local community needs and priorities effectively.
- All of the above leading to gaps in meeting legislation requirements to apply a strategic approach to enable cross county coordinated delivery.

Community Governance

- The role of ward Members is key to how communities participate and engage in their local area;
- Key legislation and the formation of the five cluster areas (in line with five strategic settlements) is important to the future shape of community governance and relationship to Area Committees;
- The role of Area Committees provide a clear link between Cluster Areas and Authority decision making; with a key opportunity for communities to have a voice and participate in local democracy. In March 2017, the Authority approved the piloting of a new model in Bryn y Cwm, whereby Area Committees will be retained as the sole structure, providing a clear link between Cluster Areas and Authority decision making with a view to supporting joint working and adopting a strategic approach to coordinated funding opportunities;
- The new Community Leadership Academy is designed to increase the participation and quality of community leadership by providing a suite of learning and development opportunities, upskilling Members as well as community organisations to enable a common approach;
- Area committee grants need to work in a more integrated manner, providing a smarter use of funding aligned to maximise impact and value;

Section 106

- Section 106 contributions are well managed with robust monitoring processes but are not focussed on outcomes or long term impacts that meet local or strategic needs;
- There is a current lack of strategic community engagement and data sharing resulting in missed opportunities to address medium to long term priorities;
- The current lack of promotion of section 106 projects results in missed opportunities to encourage wider community participation to address longer term needs.

3.4 REVIEW CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.4.1 As the Well-being of Future Generations Act requires co-delivery with partners, the disconnect between the PSB, the Authority and the local community needs to be addressed. To enable this, community engagement needs to be repositioned within a more centralised role. There is also a need to address the current lack of specialist support in strategic PSB areas such as health and well-being issues, isolation, ageing well, children and families and community cohesion.
- 3.4.2 The current structure also provides little support for the Authority in their Cluster Area activities whilst the current lack of direct Town/Community Council engagement/liaison is leading to a further disconnect with communities and a lack of knowledge of needs and priorities.
- 3.4.3 In making its recommendations the review addressed the current challenges advocating a restructure of two service teams i.e. Whole Place and Partnerships with the additional need to bring in the Programme Lead for the Community Empowerment which includes the Authority's volunteering programme 'A County that Serves' and the Community Leadership Academy, all working together as the newly defined Community and Partnership Development Team. Strategic, working links also being made to the future role of a Community Infrastructure Levy Officer and the existing Community Well-Being and Enterprise Development Leads, to ensure maximisation of funding resources and reduce the potential for service duplication (A full copy of the review can be found in

Appendix A with the proposed 'Way Forward' plan for the redefined team illustrated in Appendix B).

4. REASONS:

4.1 The reasons for the decision to create a Community and Partnerships Development Team are as follows:

- New team arrangements will join up strategic partnership direction and community delivery, in so doing meeting legislative requirements, enabling place based delivery and furthering the social justice priorities of the Council.
- The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act requires co-delivery with partners, the current connection between the PSB, the Authority and the local community needs to be strengthened through the new arrangements. The Social Services and Well-being Act requires the Council to have a coherent approach to the well-being of individuals within their communities and the new structure will improve the join up between work to support individual resilience and development of sustainable resilient communities.
- The new roles will allow for the provision of a consistent asset based community development approach across the five strategic settlements, whilst acting on local priorities.
- It will provide a greater understanding of section 106, community grants and other resources can be used strategically to support investment in place based approach
- The support to the new community governance model will support local democracy whilst encouraging wider community participation

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Appendix C sets out the detailed financial implications of the proposed structural changes. The deletion of 2 management posts and replacement with one Community and Partnership Development Manager will require a call on reserves to cover redundancy costs which were in the region of £77,000 as at June 2017.

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

6.1 The Community and Partnership Development Team aligns with the future generation well-being objectives. The creation of the team is critical to delivery of meaningful co-production by with communities, building on their strengths and assets. The new team will work by bridging the gap and balancing the community needs with the Council's priorities, to ensure Monmouthshire's future sustainability.

7. CONSULTEES:

- 7.1 The Strong Communities Select Committee on the 20th July 2017 undertook pre-decision scrutiny of this report and concluded “The Select Committee acknowledges the findings of the community engagement review and supports the strategic direction and recommendations on operational structure proposed in the report”.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix A – Community Engagement Review

Appendix B – ‘The Way Forward’ for the Community and Partnership Development Team

Appendix C – Financial Implications

9. AUTHOR:

Cath Fallon – Head of Economy and Innovation

Claire Marchant – Chief Officer, Social Care and Health

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633644023 / 01633 748316

E-mail: clairemarchant@monmouthshire.gov.uk / cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk

**SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS**

MEETING AND DATE OF MEETING:

TITLE OF REPORT:

AUTHOR:

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the report referred to above and make the following recommendation to the Proper Officer:-

EXEMPTIONS APPLYING TO THE REPORT:

FACTORS IN FAVOUR OF DISCLOSURE:

PREJUDICE WHICH WOULD RESULT IF THE INFORMATION WERE DISCLOSED:

MY VIEW ON THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST IS AS FOLLOWS:

RECOMMENDED DECISION ON EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE:

Date:

Signed:

Post:

I accept/do not accept the recommendation made above

Proper Officer: _____

Date: _____