

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1** This reports sets out a proposal to further enhance community engagement in the former Community Planning pilot area of Bute and Cowal and develop a model of localised community engagement, which if successful, could be replicated in other areas of Argyll and Bute.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** The remaining members of the Bute and Cowal Community Planning pilot group continue as a working group to develop this proposal.
- 2.2** Two consultation events are held annually to bring together members of the public to discuss and air their views on local issues. The events will be structured to illicit consensus views on specific themes.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** A pilot Community Planning project was established four years ago in Bute and Cowal which met with limited success.
- 3.2** An evaluation of the pilot agreed a new set of objectives for the Area Partnership which are:
- To broaden community involvement
 - To have a local influence on service provision
 - To identify areas of concern and address these via CPP partners
- 3.3** Community involvement has been encouraged through the local seminar held in Strachur Village Hall in December 2006 and the Biennial Community Planning Conference held on Bute in June 2007.
- 3.4** Discussions amongst the Bute and Cowal Community Planning pilot group have suggested that although the conference/seminar

model has a valuable role to play there is scope for more localised less formal models of community engagement.

- 3.5** This proposal consists of a twice yearly focus group featuring a representative grouping of members of the public from Bute and Cowal taking part in a debating event based loosely on the format utilised by the television programmes “One hundred Scottish Women/Men.”
- 3.6** Each event will incorporate inputs from alternative viewpoints on key issues/themes following which, there will be an open questions and answers session and each issue will conclude with a vote on a question relevant to the issue/theme.. Three or four subjects will be covered at each event.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1** To effectively broaden community involvement a range of differing methods and models will require to be utilised.
- 4.2** This proposal is intended to complement existing structures and events - not to replace them.
- 4.3** With further refinement, by the Bute and Cowal Community Planning pilot group, this proposal has the potential to stimulate community engagement, encourage discussion regarding issues in Bute and Cowal and raise awareness of Community Planning in the local community.

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