

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 Local Area Community Planning Groups are required to establish Local Area Partnership Agreements.
- 1.2 This agreement will be between the agencies, organisations and communities represented at a local level through the Local Area Community Planning Groups and will form part of the Governance and Accountability Framework for the Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership. This agreement will not be a legal document but sets out a set of principles and working arrangements to which members of the Local Area Community Planning Groups are committed.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A Local Area Partnership Agreement is a voluntary partnership agreement between a community, the local authority and other service providers. It describes the service standards which local people expect from the local authority and other agencies, as well as commitments from service providers, local groups and residents themselves to help meet local community priorities.
- 2.3 A Local Area Partnership Agreement can give communities an opportunity for greater participation engagement with partners involved in making decisions. The Local Area Partnership Agreement allows local people a direct role in influencing local services, enabling them to become more active in their local communities to take on responsibilities themselves, so that they can actively contribute to improvements, rather than just being passive recipients.
- 2.4 Local Area Partnership Agreements are being developed through the Local Area Community Planning Groups with service providers, and the community, through community level organisations such as Community Councils and Voluntary Sector Fora.
- 2.5 The aim of Local Area Partnership Agreement is to enable residents to become involved in decisions at a local level – decisions that are often critical to their quality of life.

- 2.6 A Local Area partnership Agreement therefore, gives communities an opportunity for greater participation and genuine engagement with local authorities and other public sector bodies involved in making decisions. The Local Area Partnership Agreement allows local people a direct role in influencing local services, enabling them to become more active in their local communities to take on responsibilities themselves, so that they can actively contribute to improvements, rather than just being passive recipients.

3. COMMUNITY PLANNING - Community Plan / Thematic Plans / Local Plans

- 3.1 Once agreed the Local Area Partnership Agreements will ensure community and user input to the work and planning of services through the Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership. This initiative will contribute to National Outcome 11 in the Single Outcome Agreement; *“we have strong resilient communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others”* and to National Outcome 15; *“our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs”*.
- 3.2 The Local Government Scotland Act 2003 requires that the Community Partnership engage with community bodies and organisations as part of the Community Planning Process. The Concordat between the Scottish Government and local authorities has led to the development of a more focussed approach in response to communities’ needs at a local level. Local Authorities and Community Planning Partnerships will be subjected to external scrutiny by Audit Scotland and HMIE on the following standards:
- Single Outcome Agreements.
 - National Standards for Community Engagement.
 - Scottish Community Empowerment Action Plan – Celebrating Success: Improving Change
- 3.3 The Argyll and Bute CPP Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan gives further commitment from partners to demonstrate that communities can and do influence decisions being made.

4. LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

- 4.1 There is no definitive model for Local Area Partnership Agreements. There are, however, some essential ingredients which differentiate them from other agreements or plans that may already exist in a local area. An effective local Agreement should:
- **Be an agreement between the local authority, its community planning partners, other service providers and the community**, rather than imposed from the top-down or a technical contract between service providers.
 - **Be based on both community priorities and needs identified by service providers**, making it unique to the local area.
 - **Identify and clarify the obligations of service providers, Community Planning**

Partners and organisations and residents, including service standards and any commitments taken on by the local community.

- **Give opportunities to tailor the provision of services locally**, by both modifying local statutory provision and clarifying any elements of delivery which have been devolved to other organisations.
- **Clarify the role of local councillors and strengthen their local profile.**
- **Complement existing local documents and feed into service plans and strategic Argyll and Bute wide documents**, rather than duplicating what is already available.
- **Empower local people, showing them how to get involved and in particular how they can hold services to account**, rather than just being a contact list or newsletter.
- **Be relevant to local people's understanding of an area or neighbourhood**, rather than covering large geographical areas.
- **Be a living documents in which priorities are set for a given period and then reviewed**
- **Be easy to read and written in plain English.**

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 It is recommended that Local Area Community Planning Groups members support the concept of the development of Local Community Partnership Agreements in Argyll and Bute between local residents and local service providers and approve the draft Partnership Agreement**

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 In order to progress the work of the CPP and the Local Area Community Planning Groups, it is recommended that the LACPG supports this initiative.**