

**Coatbridge Community Forum  
March 2013 Report  
To  
Local Area Partnership**

across sectors involved in delivering better quality Health and Social Care in the short, medium and long term.

The forum network have been engaged with NLC and VanI with regard to the attendance of a member from VSPG to the LAP meetings

**Issues for consideration at LAP**

(Issues that have been highlighted and agreed at the wider community forum meeting.)

The matter of the need for community facilities within the town centre was raised in our last report (December). The lack of facilities is of concern to local residents, and local voluntary groups, the Forum welcomes the inclusion of the need for a community facility as one of the five priorities of the Town centre framework consultations. The Forum would therefore wish to explore with elected members and council officials the available possibilities and a long-term solution to accommodate the wishes of local people with regard to a community facility within the town centre. The voluntary sector have been in consultation with several bodies/funders ect with regards to the future of The Carnegie library building, their summery report on the subject is attached

**Community Forum achievements/new developments**

(An opportunity for the Forum to highlight their achievements and positive developments.)

We are able to report the continued steady expansion of the Forum we are engaging in a meaningful way with more partner agencies this should have a long term benefit for our community The Forum has a clear message that it is here to promote dialog and understanding through a close working relationship between the voluntary sector and our partner agencies.

The Forum look forward to again working with Coatbridge Youth Forum and the local constabulary during the Coatbridge Festival on 26<sup>th</sup> July

# Coatbridge Community Forum March 2013 Report To Local Area Partnership

## Background

(Last Forum meeting, dates, times and venue, short introduction)

The full Forum has met on two occasions since the last LAP meeting. The meetings were held on the 7<sup>th</sup> February, and 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013. This report aims to give an outline of some of the business discussed at the meeting(s); some of the community issues raised, highlight specific issues for consideration at the Local Area Partnership, and give an update on progress to date.

## Community Forum Update

(Overview of forum activity and actions from recent meetings, forthcoming events or activities, etc)

The Forum was hosts to an informative meeting with Ms Emma Walker of TCA with regards to the public realm cctv system. The Forum also hosted a public meeting on the subject of the Coatbridge Town Centre Framework, Ms Jennifer Thomson from Planning and Development addressed the well-attended meeting, the content was very informative and a lively debate ensued.

Forum members continue to participate in several local initiatives; our secretary Pat Reilly has been active in the Gathering.

This was a collaborative event on *Third Sector Engagement with Health and Social Care*.

*It attracted*

110 exhibitors

42 events

3200 visitors

#1 twitter trend in Glasgow #G2013

Over 1200 tweets with the #G2013 hash tag

The keynote speaker was Derek Feeley the CEO of NHS Scotland.

The priority of the day was to establish the support needed from VHS and our partners to improve the PPF's own engagement

## **Report on The Carnegie Library, Coatbridge: March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013.**

### **Proposal draft: Cliftonville and Coatbridge Central Community Councils**

Community Councils in Coatbridge with the Coatbridge Forum, have undertaken a feasibility study on business use for the existing Coatbridge Library; 25 Academy Street. We aim to preserve the building and develop a community based hub/centre akin to Maryhill Burgh Halls, which parties may use with themes encompassing employability, culture and leisure. Whilst we are at the beginning of a lengthy project we have involved the Youth Forum and other bodies to provide us with feedback on potential business use.

We aim to create a cultural hub for the community of Coatbridge, to encompass activities for all with a focus on the Youth - including a sound studio, music room and café in the basement of the library. The ground floor may be used for performing arts and a theatre with cinema nights and other activities. The first floor will be divided into office space for businesses across the public, private and third sectors; of which several have expressed interest and I have contacted VANL to further determine exactly which bodies would be interested in relocating to this site (hypothetically) post development.

To date both Coatbridge Central Community Council (Chaired by Susan Flannigan) and Cliftonville Community Council (Chaired by Kieran Burns) have been working in partnership on this venture arranging meetings with Maryhill Burgh Halls Directors, Business Consultants, Architects, Chartered surveyors and engineers, Councillors and other officers within North Lanarkshire Council.

After a consultation on the matter included in part of a Coatbridge Forum report last year it was clear by public response that the majority (96%) of residents in Coatbridge wanted to see the library used as a community hub (26%), leisure/recreational facility (28%) and historical and cultural centre (35%). Additionally, a Framework Consultation by Planning and Development (North Lanarkshire Council) identified that the provision of community facilities in the town centre was one major priority that would increase footfall to the centre and was demanded by the public.

Senior Strathclyde Police officers in the area also support the proposal that we are putting forward as officers have identified a large number of youths who use 'The Basin' near the Fountain, Coatbridge to pass the evenings. The young people have reported 'there is nothing to do or nowhere to go in this town.'

Progress to date:

1. Identified the demand of such a facility in the town centre.
2. Approached several bodies to assist us in the feasibility study and business planning of the project.
3. Set up meetings with applicable bodies relating to the development of the project with a particular focus on disability compliance, building structure, parking and funding.
4. Launching an application for a grant for the feasibility study which has been encouraged by The Big Lottery.
5. Liaised closely with North Lanarkshire Council officers regarding progress and requirements from the Council to assist us in the matter.
6. Assessed the legal parameters for ownership and management of the facility.
7. Undertaken strategic steps to ensure the building will provide enough capital that the project is permanent with a focus on the long-term.
8. Establishing a consultancy board across parties to include representation from the Youth Forum, NLC and Politicians, Private, Voluntary and Third sector organisations.

Submitted by Kieran Burns.