

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Community Empowerment Committee

approval noting

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Strengthening the Delivery of Local Outcome Improvement Plans through a Community Concordat

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Executive Summary

In 2020, it was agreed by the Chief Executives of North and South Lanarkshire Councils and NHS Lanarkshire, that it would be useful to develop a Community Concordat with communities, primarily facilitated through the Community and Voluntary Sector to agree shared values and approaches to working together to improve lives through, for example, the effectiveness of North Lanarkshire's Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) and their governance arrangements.

At this stage in the development of Community Boards in particular, it is crucial that community planning partners engage effectively in realising the level of ambition that the Council has set in its *Delivering for Communities* approach. The work outlined in this report underscores the role of the Community and Voluntary Sector strategically and operationally at the core of this work.

Following in-depth discussions during 2020 regarding taking a pan-Lanarkshire approach, it was agreed in spring 2021 that the process of developing a community concordat should be undertaken separately through the respective Community Planning Partnerships. However, progress was delayed due to continuing COVID-19 pressures.

The methodology outlined in this report, as developed through initial discussion with Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire and subsequently consideration by the Council's Corporate Management Team, sets out the proposed approach to be taken forward in North Lanarkshire only. The output from which will also be shared with South Lanarkshire in the spirit of partnership reflecting the initial origin of elements of the ideas reflected in this report.

The methodology for this work will be underpinned by the following approaches and perspectives:

- The "[Better Way](#)" initiative, initially developed in England and Wales to date with support from Carnegie UK Trust but now UK-wide given its relevance and application to any locality and partnership
- [Appreciative Inquiry](#), which is a positive, strengths-focussed approach to helping different groups identify opportunities for improvement, agree priorities and work together to achieve these.

The high-level stated outcomes to be delivered through this of this community development work will be: -

- improved confidence in working collaboratively and trust between North Lanarkshire Partnership (NLP) stakeholders;
- improved collaboration between North Lanarkshire Partnership stakeholders in delivering:
 - The Plan for North Lanarkshire with a focus on associated plans covering key issues such as the climate emergency; digital inclusion; mental health and wellbeing; and tackling poverty;
 - the nine North Lanarkshire Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs); and
- a clear and shared commitment by North Lanarkshire Partnership organisations to further invest in community wealth-building and community-based and led initiatives to improve people’s well-being, strengthen equality, inclusion, sustainability, and deeper levels of collaboration

A one-off budget allocation of up to £60k has been identified within the current financial year to fund the work outlined in Section 2.4 of this report.

Recommendations

The Community Empowerment Committee is recommended to endorse :

- (1) the outline proposal, as set out in section 2 of the report, to develop a Community Concordat with communities, primarily facilitated through the Community and Voluntary Sector, to agree shared values and approaches to working together to improve lives through the effectiveness of North Lanarkshire’s Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) and their governance arrangements; and
- (2) the allocation of up to £60k 2021/22 to fund the work given role in supporting the implementation of the work set out in the Council’s *Delivering for Communities* report.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Enhance participation, capacity, and empowerment across our communities
Ambition statement	(20) Improve the involvement of communities in the decisions, and development of services and supports, that affect them

1. Background

1.1 North Lanarkshire Partnership (NLP)

1.1.1 Since 2019, NLP partners have made considerable progress in strengthening community planning processes and improving lives, despite the major challenge of COVID 19. Highlights include the following:

- agreement of the Plan for North Lanarkshire and excellent progress in delivery;
- reviewing and re-forming the NLP Strategic Leadership Board to better support cross-sector collaboration in delivering the Plan for North Lanarkshire, with a focus on the following priority themes:
 - Community engagement, including:
 - formation of nine community planning localities supported by Community Boards involving residents, CVS, and NLP partner organisations
 - development of the nine Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs)
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - Climate Emergency – Action on Climate Together – [ACT Now NL](#)

1.2 Community Concordat

1.2.1 In 2020, it was agreed by the Chief Executives of North and South Lanarkshire Councils and NHS Lanarkshire that it would be useful to develop a Community Concordat with communities primarily facilitated through the Community and Voluntary Sector to agree shared values and approaches to working together to improve lives through, for example, the effectiveness of North Lanarkshire's Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) and their governance arrangements.

1.2.2 At this stage in the development of Community Boards in particular, it is crucial that Community Planning Partners engage effectively in realising the level of ambition that the Council has set in its *Delivering for Communities* approach. The proposal outlined in this report positions the Community and Voluntary Sector strategically and operationally at the core of this recognising that *“engaging communities fully in services and decisions that affect their lives requires sustained organisational capacity, especially in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The structural realignments presented in this report are therefore essential to safeguard such capacity. It is also important in ensuring that resources are maximised, and the development and delivery of solutions and the delivery of care, supports and services are strengthened through an integrated council, partnership, and community approach which seeks to balance and sustain delivery”*.

1.2.3 Following in-depth discussions during 2020 on a pan-Lanarkshire approach, it was agreed in spring 2021 that the process of developing a community concordat should be undertaken separately through the North and South Community Planning Partnerships. However, progress was delayed due to continuing COVID-19 pressures.

2. Report

2.1 Underpinning Aim of the Development of a Community Concordat

2.1.1 The work to jointly develop and agree a Community Concordat between North Lanarkshire Partnership (NLP) stakeholders aims to establish shared values and approaches to empowering and investing in local communities to support more effective collaboration to improve local wellbeing, equality and sustainability and ensure effective delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plans. For the purposes of this collaborative development and engagement work, North Lanarkshire Partnership stakeholders are defined as being: North Lanarkshire residents; elected members, Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) serving North Lanarkshire, New College Lanarkshire; business sector serving North Lanarkshire; and North Lanarkshire Partnership organisations.

2.2 Outcomes

2.2.1 The high-level stated outcomes to be delivered through this of this community development work will be: -

- improved confidence in working collaboratively and trust between North Lanarkshire Partnership stakeholders;
- improved collaboration between North Lanarkshire Partnership stakeholders in delivering:
 - The Plan for North Lanarkshire with a focus on associated plans covering key issues such as the climate emergency; digital inclusion; mental health and wellbeing; and tackling poverty;
 - the nine North Lanarkshire Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs); and
- a clear and shared commitment by North Lanarkshire Partnership partner organisations to further invest in community wealth-building and community-based and led initiatives to improve people's well-being, strengthen equality, inclusion, sustainability, and deeper levels of collaboration.

2.3 Approach

2.3.1 The proposed methodology for this work will be underpinned by the following approaches and perspectives:

- The "[Better Way](#)" initiative, developed in England & Wales to date with support from Carnegie UK Trust but now UK-wide given its relevance and application to any locality and partnership; and
- [Appreciative Inquiry](#), which is a positive, strengths-focussed approach to helping different groups identify opportunities for improvement, agree priorities and work together to achieve these.

2.4 Process, Outputs and Timeline

Timeline	Action
March 2022	An initial, online NLP stakeholder survey to assess current views regarding what is working well; levels of trust; key challenges and barriers and solutions to these.
April-June 2022	<p>Workshops in the nine community planning localities and, where appropriate, North Lanarkshire wide, to support engagement by NLP stakeholders in the preparation of the draft Community Concordat.</p> <p>The workshops will be organised in such a way to maximise participation by equality groups and key communities of interest including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic groups; • unpaid carers; • LGTBi groups; • people with disabilities and long-term conditions; • older adults; • people from different faith communities; • people on low income; and • young people.
July – August 2022	<p>The following outputs will be prepared following the initial survey and workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • survey findings; • notes of each workshop covering key issues raised by participants; • a summary report on key issues and themes from the survey and workshops, highlighting variations by locality; sector; community of interest; and • a draft community concordat.
September – October 2022	The summary report and draft concordat will be discussed by NLP's Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) and Community Boards to support preparation of a final draft concordat for approval by SLB and NLP partners thereafter.
November – December 2022	Approval of Community Concordat by SLB, Community Boards and NLP partner organisations and work to embed key principles and values.
January – February 2023	Launch of Community Concordat with ongoing promotion.
March 2023	Stakeholder online survey to assess stakeholder views regarding the process.
March – May 2024	Final stakeholder survey to assess impact of concordat, with findings reporting to SLB, Community Boards and NLP partners.

2.5 **Management and Delivery**

2.5.1 Overseen by the Council's Community Partnership Managers, Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL), as Third Sector Interface, will host and manage this project as part of its intermediary support role for Community Planning and as an NLP partner, with lead officers being VANL's CEO and Senior Manager, CVS Development. Delivery will be supported by members of NLP's Joint Locality Teams for each of the nine community board localities, other key staff in NLP partner organisations including the Council's Community Champions.

2.6 **Costs**

2.6.1 A one-off budget allocation of up to £60k has been identified within the current financial year to fund the work outlined in Section 2.4 of this report. This funding will cover the following: -

- a temporary Project Co-ordinator employed by VANL for 12 months: £30,000.
- two independent Appreciative Inquiry Facilitators commissioned and managed by VANL: £30,000.

3. **Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty**

3.1 An integrated Fairer Scotland Duty/Equality Impact Assessment was carried out during the development of the strategic Framework for Working with Communities. Data gathered through the ongoing engagement with communities will be vital in informing/shaping future locality community planning linked to the LOIPs.

4. **Impact**

4.1 **Financial impact**

4.1.1 A one off budget allocation of up to £60k has been identified within the Communities division in the current financial year to fund the work outlined in Section 2.4 of this report. This funding will cover the following :-

- a temporary Project Co-ordinator employed by VANL for 12 months: £30,000.
- two independent Appreciative Inquiry Facilitators commissioned and managed by VANL: £30,000.

4.1.2 The funding will be added to the Council's current funding arrangements for VANL and progress will be monitored through already established liaison mechanisms between the Council and VANL.

4.2 **HR policy / Legislative impact**

4.2.1 None.

4.3 **Technology / Digital impact**

4.3.1 An online approach to community engagement, as mapped out in the table in section 2.4 of the report, will be carefully planned and deployed to ensure an inclusive approach in line with DigitalNL.

4.4 **Environmental impact**

4.4.1 None

4.5 **Communications impact**

4.5.1 A communications plan will be developed by VANL in consultation with the Council's Corporate Communications team.

4.6 **Risk impact**

4.6.1 The approach outlined within this report contributes to the controls associated with the corporate risk - engagement and consultation with communities, partners and stakeholders on the shaping and delivery of services.

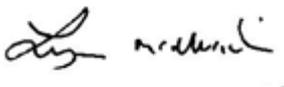
5. **Measures of success**

5.1 Improved confidence in working collaboratively and trust between North Lanarkshire Partnership (NLP) stakeholders.

5.2 Improved collaboration between North Lanarkshire Partnership stakeholders in delivering:

- The Plan for North Lanarkshire with a focus on associated plans covering key issues such as the climate emergency; digital inclusion; mental health and wellbeing; and tackling poverty;
- the nine North Lanarkshire Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs); and

5.3 A clear and shared commitment by North Lanarkshire Partnership organisations to further invest in community wealth-building and community-based and led initiatives to improve people's well-being, strengthen equality, inclusion, sustainability, and deeper levels of collaboration.



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