

**31 January 2022 at 10am.**

A Remote Meeting of the **COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT COMMITTEE**

**PRESENT**

Councillor Campbell, Convener; Councillor Woods, Vice-Convener; Councillors D. Ashraf, J. Ashraf, Brannan-McVey, Burgess, Cameron, Carson, Fotheringham, Goldsack, Gourlay, Hogg, Jones, Linden, MacGregor, Magowan, McKendrick, McManus and Quigley.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

In accordance with Standing Order 64(A) Councillor Paul Kelly attended as a substitute for Councillor McNally.

**CHAIR**

Councillor Campbell (Convener) presided.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

The Head of Communities; Head of Education (North); Head of People and Operational Development; Head of Strategic Communication; Active and Creative Communities Manager; Community Learning, Development and Resources Manager; Community Partnership Managers; Development Officer (Equalities); Development Officer (Information and Engagement); Financial Inclusion Manager; Leader and Talent Development Manager; Youthwork Manager; and Democratic Services Manager.

**APOLOGIES**

Councillors Douglas, McNally, Reddin and Weir.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN TERMS OF THE ETHICAL STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000**

1. Councillor Cameron, by virtue of being a Member of Utheo Ltd, declared an interest by virtue of a connection in respect of paragraph 9 – Grant Awards Programme, and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Linden, by virtue of being a Director and Chair of the Board of Bellshill and Mossend YMCA, declared an interest by virtue of a connection in respect of paragraph 9 – Grants Award Programme, and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR STRATEGY 2022-25 AND VOLUNTARY ACTION NORTH LANARKSHIRE UPDATE**

2. Maddy Halliday, CEO, Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL), provided a presentation on the North Lanarkshire Community and Voluntary Sector Strategy 2022-25, which included details of:-
  - How VANL had supported the development of the Strategy through extensive consultation with the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) throughout 2019, but with the onset of the Covid pandemic, the Strategy for 2020-23 had subsequently not been published or promoted, although VANL had continued to progress the Strategy, as well as updating it in 2021, in consultation with the CVS Partnership Group, for 2022-25;

- The Mission of the Strategy;
- How the Strategy supported the CVS's contribution to the delivery of the Plan for North Lanarkshire, together with the linked North Lanarkshire Partnership partner priority themes and related strategies of the Plan;
- How the Strategy was an umbrella strategy and how it was supported by a number of other complementary CVS Plans;
- How VANL had facilitated implementation of the Strategy by working with the CVS Partnership Group, the wider CVS and other statutory partners;
- Progress against each of the four objectives of the Strategy, and
- Opportunities and challenges for the CVS as well as VANL.

Thereafter, Ms Halliday responded to Members' questions and comments.

**Decided:** that the terms of the presentation be noted.

**PROGRAMME OF WORK PO05.2(4) - REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

3. With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee held on 30 September 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) providing information on the review of how the Council's approach to the implementation of the Fairer Scotland Duty had delivered on the duty to reduce socio-economic disadvantage; (2) advising that the review had also explored the synergies and opportunities between the Fairer Scotland Duty and the Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire Tackling Poverty Strategy; (3) outlining the methodology used in the review to understand the effectiveness of the Council's approach to implementing the Fairer Scotland Duty; (4) intimating that to assist with evidencing the active consideration required by the Duty, the Council had taken the decision to integrate the Fairer Scotland Duty into the Equality Impact Assessment process that was a requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty, as both duties were inextricably linked; (5) enclosing, within Appendix 1 to the report, the Scottish Government's revised Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance, which had been updated, enhanced and informed by the experience of delivering the duty since 2018 and (6) proposing the establishment of a plan of work, to be overseen by a new Equalities and Inclusion Board, to further support the delivery and implementation of the required improvements to the Fairer Scotland Duty.

**Decided:** that the development and delivery of a plan of work, to be overseen by an operational Equalities and Inclusion Board in line with the Council's Project Management guidance, to further support the delivery and implementation of the Fairer Scotland Duty as set out in section 2.2 of the report and incorporating the updated Scottish Government Guidance as referred to in section 2.4 of the report and included in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

**PROGRAMME OF WORK PO48 – ACTIVE AND CREATIVE COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC ACTIVITY FRAMEWORK FOR NORTH LANARKSHIRE 2020-2024**

4. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 23 August 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) providing an update on the agreed action plan to deliver and promote the Active and Creative Communities Strategic Activity Framework and its priorities of active living, sport, dance and play, creativity, and cultural; (2) advising that the plan aimed to deliver support in terms of health and wellbeing, the local economy, education, reducing inequality, and realising innovative future working with local communities; (3) setting out, within Appendix 1 to the

report, an update on progress to date with each of the five priority areas contained within the action plan; (4) providing details of two new projects that the Active and Creative Communities team had been working on which, subject to funding approval, would offer further possibilities for the communities of North Lanarkshire, and (5) indicating that the Council's ongoing partnership with other key stakeholders was key to the delivery of the Strategic Framework, and that, in addition to the continued close working with internal colleagues, the Active and Creative Communities team had continued to meet regularly with the NHS Lanarkshire Health Improvement team, SportScotland, the Scottish Football Association and representatives from local community groups and clubs.

**Decided:** that the approach being taken by the Active and Creative Communities team to deliver on the Strategic Framework Activity Plan, promoting increased engagement on the Health and Wellbeing and Prevention agendas, improved customer participation levels across a range of activities and enhanced contributions by the delivery vehicle to the health, wellbeing and socially inclusive ambitions be endorsed.

**PROGRAMME OF WORK PO56.1 (1, 2, and 4) – WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES MODEL AND SUPPORTING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

5. With reference to paragraphs 3, 4 and 13 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 1 November 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) providing an update position on work that had been carried out in line with three related areas of the Plan for North Lanarkshire Programme of Work, delivered under the workstream PO56.2 Working with Communities Model and Supporting Governance Structure, namely, PO56.2 reporting on (a) progress relating to the implementation of the nine Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs), PO56.2 (b) the establishment of a Community Board Development Programme, and PO56.2 (c) the creation of Participatory Budgeting Task/Reference Groups, respectively; (2) advising (a) that the LOIPs covering each of the nine Community Board areas had been launched and published on the Council's website; (b) that work was underway with partners and community representatives, and in some cases through the creation of Sub-Groups, to progress key priorities, a composite summary of which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report; (c) that work was ongoing with Council services and partners to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the work linked to key cross cutting themes; (d) that progress against LOIP priorities was provided to Community Boards on a regular basis, was reflected within the North Lanarkshire Partnership's Working with Communities Programme Progress Tracker, a copy of which was included within Appendix 2 to the report, and would be reported to the Community annually and published in line with the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, and (e) that the North Lanarkshire Partnership Strategic Leadership Board had approved an implementation plan for the creation of partnership teams, organised around the delivery of LOIPs and designed to build upon the positive and productive partnership approaches already in existence, and organised in a manner that would secure alignment to the nine Community Boards, but at the same time, reflecting the area-based responsibilities of partnership agencies; (3) informing that an area, known as the Community Board Member Development Hub, had been developed on the Council's Learning Management System, LearnNL, which housed all learning resources for members of the Community Boards to access a wide range of learning resources with a focus on the key requirements identified through the Training Needs Analysis that had been conducted with the nine Community Boards; (4) indicating that the Community Boards Development Hub, originally scheduled to be launched in January 2022, had required to be pushed back to April 2022 to allow sufficient time for the site to be built and members to be trained in its use; (5) setting out, within Appendix 3 to the report, the updated implementation plan for the Community Board Development Programme; (6) intimating that, following the presentation of a briefing paper to each of the nine Community Boards during the November/December 2021 cycle of meetings, a copy of which was included as Appendix 4 to the report, that had outlined the role and requirements of the Participatory Budgeting task/reference groups, each Community Board had been tasked with identifying the most appropriate local structure to be put in place, supported by Council officers, to progress Participatory Budgeting (PB) at a local level; (7) enclosing, within Appendix 5 to the report, the updated Mainstream PB Action Plan that would be used to finalise the initial timelines that the task and reference groups would work towards, and (8) highlighting that, as part of the ongoing development of PB at a local level, the new task and reference groups would be asked to identify a portion of budget, that was currently from the Local

Development Programme budget, to deliver a locality PB exercise that most suited the needs of their area focusing on local issues and LOIP priorities.

**Decided:** that the approach to date in respect of the Programme of Work areas PO56.2 (1, 2 and 4) Working With Communities Model and Supporting Governance Structure, as set out in section 2 of the report, be endorsed.

### COMMUNITY BOARDS – LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME – UPDATE

6. With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 1 November 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities providing an overview on the current status of the Community Boards Local Development Programme (LDP) projects previously approved, together with details of prioritisation and the timeline for delivery (1) outlining, within Appendix 1 to the report, the progress of projects supported through the LDP budget allocation for 2020/21 and fully delivered within that financial period; (2) setting out, within Appendix 2 to the report, projects previously approved by the Community Boards for support through the LDP budget allocation, subject to budget approval in future financial years, together with new projects proposed by local community groups that required approval in principle; (3) intimating that (a) a project proposal form had been produced that required completion by project proposers prior to any future projects being brought forward for approval at Committee and the Community Boards, and (b) proposal forms had been completed retrospectively for all currently approved projects to ensure feasibility, with local support and visibility prior to further progress; (4) advising that the Community Boards would play an increasingly influential role in the decision making processes around targeted use of resources to meet local need including identifying, agreeing and co-producing LDP funded projects going forward, and (5) informing that where there was a clear lack of local support, or emerging issues were identified that would prevent a project from being further developed and delivered, such projects would be deleted from the approved list for delivery, and a list of such projects would be retained for future reference and included in reports to Committee.

The Committee then heard the Community Partnership Manager, in supplement to the report, intimate that it was proposed that an element of the funding from each of the Community Boards Local Development Programme be reserved for partnership working with community planning partners, such as Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and NHS Lanarkshire, for partnership initiatives, with updates on the progress of these projects being reported to future meetings of the Committee.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the potential projects set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved in principle, and
- (2) that an element of the funding from each of the Community Board's Local Development Programme be reserved for partnership working with community planning partners, such as Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and NHS Lanarkshire, for partnership initiatives, with updates on the progress of these projects being reported to future meetings of the Committee.

### CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK – ACTIVITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVALUATION REPORT

7. There was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) advising of the Council's involvement in Challenge Poverty Week which had taken place from 4 to 10 October 2021; (2) intimating that the Week, which had been co-ordinated by the Poverty Alliance for the previous nine years, was an opportunity to highlight what was being done to address poverty and to commit to further action in the future through adjustments to the Council's Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire – Tackling Poverty Strategy, and (3) highlighting, within the Appendices to the report, details of the activities and

community engagement opportunities that the Council and its partners had provided during Challenge Poverty Week, together with the feedback generated.

**Decided:** that the ongoing work to strengthen locality approaches to tackling poverty through the Local Outcome Improvement Plans be endorsed.

### STRENGTHENING THE DELIVERY OF LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLANS THROUGH A COMMUNITY CONCORDAT

8. There was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) advising (a) that in 2020, it had been 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, and (b) that, following in-depth discussions regarding taking a pan-Lanarkshire approach, it had been agreed in Spring 2021 that the process of developing a Community Concordat should be undertaken separately through the respective North and South Community Planning Partnerships, however, progress was delayed due to continuing Covid-19 pressures; (2) indicating that the work to jointly develop and agree a Community Concordat between North Lanarkshire Partnership stakeholders aimed 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 LOIPs; (3) setting out the proposed methodology, outcomes and timeline for the development of a Community Concordat in North Lanarkshire that would be overseen by the Council's Community Partnership Managers, with Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL) as the Third Sector Interface, hosting and managing the project as part of its intermediary support role for community planning and as an North Lanarkshire Partnership (NLP) partner, with delivery supported by members of NLP's Joint Locality Teams for each of the nine Community Board localities along with other key staff in NLP partner organisations including the Council's Community Champions, and (4) intimating that a one-off budget allocation of up to £60k had been identified within the Communities division for the 2021/22 financial year to fund the work, with the funding being added to the Council's current funding arrangements for VANL and progress being monitored through already established liaison mechanisms between the Council and VANL.

**Decided:**

- (1) that 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, be endorsed, and
- (2) that the allocation of up to £60k in 2021/22 to fund the work supporting the implementation of the work set out in the Council's Delivering for Communities report be endorsed.

**Councillor Cameron, prior to consideration of the following item of business, having declared a connection by virtue of being a Member of Utheo Limited, left the meeting during consideration of this item.**

**Councillor Linden, prior to consideration of the following item of business, having declared a connection by virtue of being a Director and Chair of the Board of Bellshill and Mossend YMCA, left the meeting during consideration of this item.**

**GRANT AWARDS PROGRAMME 2022/23**

9. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 26 May 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) advising that the Grant Awards Programme sought to support community and voluntary organisations' contribution towards achieving outcomes included in the Plan for North Lanarkshire; (2) intimating (a) that the former Learning and Leisure Services Committee, at its meeting on 20 August 2013, had approved the arrangements for the introduction of the Grant Awards Programme, together with an associated scoring system against which all applications were assessed; (b) that the Council, at its meeting on 2 March 2021, had approved a Grant Awards Programme budget of £570,955 to support the 2021/22 programme, and (c) that it was assumed that a similar level of budget would be available for the 2022/23 programme; (3) providing, within section 2.6 of the report and Appendix 1 to the report, details of the organisations which had requested discretionary funding from the 2022/23 Grant Awards Programme, including ClubsportNL, together with recommendations for grant awards; (4) outlining, within section 2 of the report, updated guidance and criteria for the Grant Awards Programme that had been developed to reflect the priorities within the Plan for North Lanarkshire as well as the change in process for the allocation of funding based on scoring, and (5) proposing that an allocation of £6,470 from the 2021/22 Grant Awards Programme be awarded to the Lanarkshire Muslim Welfare Society.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the funding recommendations for the 2022-2023 Grant Awards Programme as outlined in section 2.6 of the report and Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
- (2) that the updated guidance and criteria for the Grant Awards Programme to reflect the priorities within the Plan for North Lanarkshire as well as the change in the process for allocation of funding based on scoring as set out in section 2 of the report be endorsed;
- (3) that an allocation of £6,470 from the 2021/22 Grant Awards budget to the Lanarkshire Muslim Welfare Society be approved, and
- (4) that the nil awards for Banton and Kelvinhead Community Centre Association and Kilsyth Old People's Welfare Committee be reviewed, and reported back to Committee if it is subsequently recommended that these organisations should receive an award.

**PROGRAMME OF WORK PO84(6) – BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND CAPABILITIES – PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMMISSIONING APPROACH (INITIAL PHASE)**

10. With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 26 May 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) setting out, within Appendix 1 to the report, the Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL) draft Service Level Agreement (SLA) and Funding Agreement, which recognised the role of VANL in supporting and co-ordinating activity that enhanced the involvement and capacity of the community and voluntary sector, with the 2021/22 level of core funding for VANL of £191,550 having been retained for 2022/23; (2) intimating that the SLA for 2022/23 also reflected an additional one-off payment to VANL of £60,000 related to engagement and co-production with communities and partners to develop a Community Concordat; (3) outlining progress in terms of the work with community planning partners, in particular, VANL, towards securing a more sustainable approach to supporting and resourcing the community and voluntary sector in North Lanarkshire; (4) providing an update on the work to scope and assess the best approach to strategic investment in, and support to, the third sector to enable effective partnership work with the sector in delivering outcomes in line with the Plan for North Lanarkshire; (5) summarising proposals to further explore the development of an approach to supporting the community and voluntary sector that begins to test opportunities working towards a shift from a traditional grant making model to one that is built on co-production, community capacity building and local community assets and reflects the needs, aspirations and circumstances of local communities, and (6) proposing the formation of a short

life working group from across key services to progress the development of a corporate community wealth building statement to be embedded across several policy and strategy areas.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the identified key areas of work contributing to the development of a more sustainable model for supporting the community and voluntary sector in North Lanarkshire be endorsed;
- (2) that the plans to further scope out opportunities to test approaches to funding and resourcing as outlined in section 2.4 of the report be endorsed, and
- (3) that the proposals to develop a corporate Community Wealth Building Statement be endorsed.

### YOUNG SCOT SERVICES IN NORTH LANARKSHIRE

11. With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 26 May 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) providing an update on the development and implementation of Young Scot services in North Lanarkshire in line with the North Lanarkshire Youth Work Interim Recovery and Renewal Plan 2020-22; (2) advising (a) that a range of digital services had been delivered within North Lanarkshire via the Young Scot National Entitlement Card and Young Scot on-line platform; (b) that the services had been designed to engage young people and support them in their daily lives by providing information and access to opportunities and services, locally and nationally, and (c) that utilising the Young Scot smart card and the services linked to the on-line platform had enhanced the Council's ability to deliver digital services directly to the 11 to 25 year old age group, in line with the DigitalNL transformation programme; (3) informing (a) that there had been over 29,977 page views of the national Young Scot website from North Lanarkshire residents, as well as 657 views of the dedicated North Lanarkshire pages between March and September 2021, which was a steady increase on the previous period; (b) that, in addition to 132 young people having participated in an on-line Young Scot survey, young people had also responded to the Lockdown Lowdown series of surveys which had gathered the views of young people during lockdown and the varying restrictions, with almost 300 responses having been received from a good geographical spread of young people based across North Lanarkshire, and (c) that the Young Scot web pages had not only been used by young people, but also by staff members to signpost young people to relevant information, with a recent example of the innovative use of the resources being the creation of a QR code by detached youth workers which provided a direct link to the Young Scot website, so that when they met young people out and about, they could quickly enable them to access the information that they needed on any given subject via mobile phone or hand-held device; (4) indicating that figures gathered at the end of September 2021 had shown that 59,220 young people in North Lanarkshire had a Young Scot card, equating to 98% of the estimated population of 11 to 25 year olds, which was one of the highest uptake rates in Scotland, and was a 2% increase compared with September 2020; (5) highlighting that, in addition to receiving a Young Scot card, 2,767 young people in North Lanarkshire had also signed up to become Young Scot members, which gave them access to Young Scot Rewards, on-line discounts, and bespoke and targeted entitlement packages; (6) providing details of the #YSCarers and #YSAttain targeted entitlement packages available via the Young Scot membership; (7) intimating that the Young Scot on-line platform and card had been utilised to engage young people in democratic processes such as Participatory Budgeting or on-line voting, with over 8,000 young people from North Lanarkshire recently using their Young Scot card number to cast their vote in the Scottish Youth Parliament elections, which resulted in North Lanarkshire once again enjoying the highest turnout in Scotland; (8) outlining that in North Lanarkshire free bus travel, using the Young Scot card, had been provided on First Bus services to members of the #YSAttain pilot project for almost two years, with the close and well established partnership with Young Scot meaning that the Council was in an excellent position to continue to build on the services that could be provided via the Young Scot card and capitalise on the anticipated popularity of the free bus travel scheme that would see all under 22 year olds receive free bus travel across Scotland on all bus services using their Young Scot card as of 31 January 2022, and (9) summarising details of the relatively new Young Scot Schools programme which helped schools make sure that learners had full access to the Young Scot Entitlement Card alongside the digital website information, discounts, volunteering opportunities and

enhanced entitlements, as well as helping schools to create strong links with educational outcomes, policies and procedures, such as, the National Performance Framework, Curriculum for Excellence, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Committee then heard the Community Learning, Development and Resources Manager, in supplement to the report, inform that at the annual National Youth Link Awards on 1 June 2022 (1) Kirstin Thomson, Development Officer (Information and Engagement) and the young people she had been working with had been shortlisted for an award for the Climate Change work that they had been undertaking; (2) the Youth Work Team had been shortlisted in the Team of the Year category, and (3) June Ford, Youthwork Manager, had been shortlisted in the Inspirational Youth Work Leader of the Year category.

**Decided:** that the approach set out in section 2 of the report and the associated Appendices be endorsed.

### CAMPSIES GRANT AWARD PROGRAMME

12. With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 1 November 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) providing, within Appendix 1 to the report, a progress update on the nine organisations that had been approved for Round One funding from the Campsies Grant Award Programme; (2) advising that all organisations had been notified regarding the outcome of Round Two applications, with feedback and further guidance having been offered to organisations whose applications had been unsuccessful; (3) setting out, within Appendix 2 to the report, the 23 organisations that had been recommended for approval in principle for funding from the second round of the Campsies Grant Award Programme, together with details of the new 1% reduction in grant award values for each organisation, to achieve a balanced budget; (4) informing that all successful organisations had been contacted to discuss the next steps, including confirmation of any conditions that required to be satisfied; (5) outlining, within Appendix 3 to the report, the commitments for both rounds of the Campsies Grant Award Programme, and (6) intimating (a) that an updated funding agreement had been prepared that would be applied to all organisations awarded £5,000 or more, and which required to be accepted and signed off by organisations before funding was released, and (b) that the funding agreement would be issued with a Table of Performance measures that each organisation was required to complete for performance and expenditure reporting purposes on a quarterly basis.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the funding agreement included within Appendix 4 to the report, which will be issued to all organisations in receipt of a funding award, be endorsed, and
- (2) that the performance measures, as set out in Appendix 5 to the report, which will be issued to each organisation for completion for reporting and monitoring purposes, be endorsed.

### COMMUNITY BOARDS – CYCLE 6

13. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 1 November 2021, there was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) advising that the sixth cycle of Community Board meetings had taken place during November and December 2021, with attendance reflecting a good mix of partners, Elected Members, community groups and local people; (2) highlighting that the Cycle 6 Board meetings had seen a continued involvement from seldom heard voices, including, Who Cares? Scotland, the Voice of Experience Forum, NL Disability Access Forum, and Lanarkshire Muslim Women and Families Alliance, as well as an increase in the level of youth representation having been noted at some of the Board meetings; (3) outlining the range of agenda items that had been put forward by community groups and organisations in advance of Board meetings; (4) listing the Cycle 7 dates for the Community Boards that were to be held during February

and March 2022, with the meetings continuing to be held on-line and live streamed to enable the wider community to observe the proceedings, and (5) intimating that the establishment of an evaluation framework for Community Boards would be progressed with input from the Community Champions, with reports being provided to Committee on a quarterly basis on the progress in terms of key deliverables identified via the framework that would also encompass wider Local Planning outcomes.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the ways in which communities have influenced the development of the Community Boards, and their associated Local Outcome Improvement Plans, as reflected in section 2 of the report, be recognised, and
- (2) that the establishment of an evaluation framework for Community Board as referred to in section 2.2.5 of the report, be endorsed.

**ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY PROJECT: GENDER BUDGETING: FROM THEORY TO ACTION**

14. There was submitted a report by the Head of Communities (1) providing details of a proposal for the Council to participate in an Action on Gender Equality Project with the Scottish Women's Budget Group (SWBG); (2) advising that the project aimed to support greater use of gender budgeting tools in local decision making in Scotland to reduce inequalities; (3) indicating that the aims of the project directly aligned with the Plan for North Lanarkshire and would have the benefit of strengthening the understanding of gender budgeting processes and embedding them across the Council to ensure challenging inequalities was at the forefront of the Council's decision making; (4) outlining the input and commitment that would be required from officers and Elected Members as part of the Council's participation in the project, and (5) intimating that the project would be undertaken over three years, commencing in January 2022 when briefing information on gender budgeting would be issued to Elected Members, before training proceeded with the new Elected Members after the May Election.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the participation in the Action on Gender Equality Project: Gender Budgeting: From Theory to Action be endorsed, and
- (2) that the implementation of the training as detailed in section 2.1.3 of the report be approved.

**CONTRACTS AWARDED BELOW COMMITTEE APPROVAL THRESHOLD**

15. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions providing, within the Appendix to the report, details of a contract which had been awarded, under delegated authority, during the period 1 October to 31 December 2021.

**Decided:** that the contents of the report and the accompanying Appendix be noted.

**CONVENER'S REMARKS**

16. The Convener indicated that, as this was the last meeting of the Committee prior to the Council elections, she wished to thank the Members and Officers for their participation and contribution to the work of the Committee.

The Convener also advised Members that it was Lizanne McMurrich, Head of Communities, last meeting of the Committee as she was leaving the Council. The Convener personally thanked Lizanne for her support and wished her well in the future.