

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 14 May 2019

Neighbourhood Networks

Executive/routine

Wards

All

Council Commitments

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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To agree to devolve decision-making on the Community Grants Fund to the neighbourhood networks as set out in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.7.
- 1.2 To note the next steps in implementing the community planning governance arrangements as described in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.3.
- 1.3 To agree to further work being carried out to identify opportunities for devolving decision-making and working with the neighbourhood networks in the development and shaping of Council services.

Andrew Kerr

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Neighbourhood Networks

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report considers the potential role of the new neighbourhood networks in influencing Council decision-making and sets out a specific proposal for the devolving of the Community Grants Fund.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council agreed at its meeting on 7 February 2019 to dissolve neighbourhood partnerships. This was informed by the Edinburgh Partnership's decision to establish neighbourhood networks, with the final arrangements subject to a period of further engagement.
- 3.2 The Edinburgh Partnership Board, at its meeting on 2 April 2019, agreed the final [governance framework](#). The new framework will comprise the Edinburgh Partnership Board, four city level partnerships, four locality community planning partnerships and 13 neighbourhood networks.
- 3.3 The locality community planning partnerships will be responsible for the development and delivery of the locality improvement plan to improve outcomes for those individuals and communities within their area experiencing the greatest inequality. The membership will comprise representatives from the public and voluntary sectors, together with one community representative nominated by each neighbourhood network and one councillor for each ward within the locality. The Council will consider the appointment of the councillor representatives as part of its annual appointment report in May. The existing arrangements for voluntary sector representation on the former locality leadership teams is likely to continue pending further discussion on future support and participation arrangements.
- 3.4 Strengthening community participation has been an important driver throughout the review process. The new neighbourhood networks will have a central role, enabling the community to influence the priorities and outcomes for community planning in the city by building effective and meaningful community participation.
- 3.5 The neighbourhood networks will be based on the boundaries of the neighbourhood partnerships but with one change. Following feedback from the engagement

session in the South East locality the South Central Neighbourhood Partnership will be divided in two, to form separate networks covering the Morningside and Southside/Newington wards. This approach reflects the establishment of ward sub committees in the area as part of the former locality committee structure.

- 3.6 The membership of the networks will include community groups in the area, such as community councils, residents' organisations and parents' councils, and councillors, together with voluntary sector organisations. This recognises the important role voluntary organisations have in contributing to the success of community planning in the city. The final membership will be for each neighbourhood network to determine, to ensure the diversity and demographic make-up of each individual neighbourhood is reflected and those communities experiencing the greatest inequality are involved. This decision reflects feedback from the engagement process, which identified the need for flexibility both in terms of the membership and operation of the neighbourhood networks allowing for these to be locally determined to suit the circumstances of each area. There is however a requirement for each neighbourhood network to hold an annual meeting. This will allow for the nomination of a community member to sit on the locality community planning partnership. Representation from councillors and the voluntary sector will be addressed separately.
- 3.7 In agreeing the new arrangements, the Edinburgh Partnership Board considered the resource requirements to facilitate and support their implementation. Initial support for the neighbourhood networks will be provided by the Council's Localities Teams whilst work is carried out to determine a future model of support, with further reports scheduled to be considered by the Edinburgh Partnership Board in June and September 2019.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The neighbourhood networks will play an important role in influencing the priorities and outcomes for community planning in the city. At a local level they will be critical to the development and delivery of the locality improvement plans. The Edinburgh Partnership Board agreed in December 2018 that the current plans should be reviewed to provide a greater focus on addressing poverty and inequality in each area. The review, which will be led by the locality community planning partnerships, has the potential to provide an initial focus for the neighbourhood networks, establishing from the outset their role within the new community planning arrangements.
- 4.2 Beyond this community planning role, there is scope for partners to work with the neighbourhood networks across a broad range of issues, strengthening the community influence in the development and shaping of individual services to meet their needs and priorities. For the Council, further work is needed to explore the opportunities presented by the new arrangements, with dialogue with the neighbourhood networks informing the approach. Other partners will also be

encouraged to discuss with the neighbourhood networks how they might influence and inform their individual services moving forwards.

- 4.3 The remit for the neighbourhood networks includes provision to have a role in deciding on the allocation of budgets devolved by partners.
- 4.4 The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, in the same manner that applied to neighbourhood partnerships, restricts the Council's ability to delegate power directly to neighbourhood networks. However, from a Council perspective, there is the immediate opportunity to involve the neighbourhood networks in the allocation of the Community Grants Fund. With the decision to dissolve locality committees, delegated approval for the Community Grants Fund sits with officers. It is proposed, in line with historic practice under neighbourhood partnerships, that consideration of the allocation of these funds is brought to the neighbourhood networks with the Locality Manager acting on their advice.
- 4.5 The budget allocation proposed for each neighbourhood network is set out below.

Locality	Ward	Neighbourhood Network	Allocation 2019/20 (£)
North West	Drum Brae/Gyle Corstorphine/Murrayfield	Western	37,565
	Almond	Almond	27,586
	Forth	Forth	25,112
	Inverleith	Inverleith	24,990
North East	Leith Leith Walk	Leith	44,624
	Craigentinny/Duddingston	Craigentinny/Duddingston	25,477
	Portobello/Craigmillar	Portobello/Craigmillar	22,637
South East	City Centre	City Centre	25,030
	Liberton/Gilmerton	Liberton/Gilmerton	26,451
	Southside/Newington	Southside/Newington	29,434
	Morningside	Morningside	27,320
South West	Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart Sighthill/Gorgie	South West	45,274
	Pentland Hills Colinton/Fairmilehead	Pentlands	44,179
Total			405,679

Table 1: Allocation of Community Grants Fund by Neighbourhood Network

- 4.6 The disaggregation is based on population. Work has been carried out in the last year by officers to review this methodology with consideration given to a range of other approaches such as using poverty and inequality data. Retaining population is considered to offer the most equitable approach given the purpose of the Fund in supporting community activity and participation across the whole population and its importance to local communities.
- 4.7 To ensure the Fund is managed effectively across the city and, in line with Council practice, it is proposed that the existing standardised approach and criteria agreed by the Culture and Communities Committee at its meeting on 19 June 2018 continues. This includes the requirement for all grants to be subject to the Council's standard terms and conditions of grant.
- 4.8 The neighbourhood networks will have flexibility to determine their own operating model. Whilst recognising this, there is also the need in considering the allocation of funds to ensure appropriate accountability and effective management arrangements are put in place. This could be through the establishment of a sub group, funding panel or participatory budgeting steering group. This will be decided locally, recognising previous practice and as appropriate to local circumstances.
- 4.9 Historically, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Fund have provided a means of influencing local priorities through devolved capital budgets. Initially these budgets were delegated to Neighbourhood/Locality Managers, with decisions being taken on the advice of neighbourhood partnerships, and latterly through the locality committees. The introduction of neighbourhood networks provides an opportunity to review these funds and consider where influence could be strengthened and capital investment prioritised at a locality level, enabling a more strategic approach to be taken with locally devolved budgets which would more closely align with the locality improvement plan priorities, particularly in the small areas through Placemaking projects and small-scale area regeneration initiatives. Scoping work on locally devolved Place capital budgets is ongoing and it is envisaged that a report detailing this work will be presented to a future Transport and Environment Committee.
- 4.10 There is also scope to identify opportunities across a range of other services to support the Council's ambition to strengthen local democracy and the role of communities in decision-making. Within this context, this activity will support and inform the Council's approach to mainstreaming participatory budgeting. Work on this is in progress, with a cross-Council officer working group taking forward a development programme. Progress on this activity will be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The Council Locality Teams are organising an initial meeting of each of the neighbourhood networks to take place in May 2019. This will focus on introducing

the new arrangements, allowing participants to discuss their ambitions for their area and how the networks might work, together with information on the next steps, including the nomination process for the locality community planning partnerships.

- 5.2 Edinburgh Partnership members have been asked to nominate officer representatives for the locality community planning partnerships. The Council will consider the appointment of the councillor representatives for the locality community planning partnerships as part of its annual appointment report in May 2019. The nomination of voluntary sector representatives will be subject to further dialogue with the Third Sector Interface, with the existing arrangements for the locality leadership teams continuing meantime.
- 5.3 Work to consider the resourcing of the community planning arrangements is ongoing with reports scheduled to be considered by the Edinburgh Partnership Board in June and September 2019.
- 5.4 Work will be carried out to identify further budgets that might be devolved, with this linking to the work of the Participatory Budgeting Officer Working Group. Progress on this activity will be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The resourcing of the neighbourhood networks and management of the Community Grants Fund represents a potential immediate pressure to the Council pending the outcome of the review of the localities model and the Edinburgh Partnership's consideration of future resourcing for community planning.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The Edinburgh Partnership governance arrangements have been informed by an extensive programme of engagement with community, public and voluntary sector partners. This has covered three phases; an initial review with stakeholders involved in partnerships in the city; a formal consultation; and a final period of engagement with stakeholders to define key aspects of the governance arrangements. This involved engagement with partnerships directly impacted by the proposed changes including four locality based sessions for members of the neighbourhood partnerships, together with discussions with each of the locality leadership teams.
- 7.2 This activity supports the delivery of the Council's duties under the Empowering Communities (Scotland) Act 2015, together with the Coalition Commitment to *'become a leading Council in Scotland for community engagement – 1% of the Council's discretionary budget will be allocated through participatory budgeting'*.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Edinburgh Partnership Governance Framework](#)
- 8.2 Culture and Communities Committee 19 June 2018 – [Community Grants Fund](#)
- 8.3 The City of Edinburgh Council 7 February 2019 – [Review of Locality Committees](#)

9. Appendices

None.