
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
20 February 2018
Cabinet

Title: Communities – Short Life Working Group

Purpose: To seek Cabinet's approval to reconvene the short-life working group comprising North Ayrshire Council and the North Ayrshire Federation of Community Organisations (NAFCO).

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

- i) Approves the request to reconvene the short-life working group comprising North Ayrshire Council and the North Ayrshire Federation of Community Organisations; and
- ii) Agrees to receive future reports in relation to themes which may emerge from the recommendations of the working group.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 There has been an ongoing process of reviewing, with the North Ayrshire Federation of Community Associations/Organisations (NAFCA/NAFCO), the role of Community Associations and how they work with North Ayrshire Council to provide services to our communities. In light of the significant financial challenges faced by the public and voluntary sector at present, NAFCO has requested that the short life working group is reconvened so that these challenges can be tackled in partnership.

2. Background

2.1 There has been an ongoing process of reviewing, with the North Ayrshire Federation of Community Associations/Organisations (NAFCA/NAFCO), the role of Community Associations and what they are responsible for. Much has changed since they were established and the relationships among associations, their communities and other agencies has also moved on.

2.2 A formal short life working group, established by the Council in 2013, and chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Community and Culture, focussed on developing an understanding of the purpose of modern community associations and centres. Ongoing work with NAFCO, including regular meetings with elected members and officers and contributions at AGMs, continues to inform developments.

2.3 The Scottish Government/COSLA Community Empowerment Action Plan also recognises that the ownership of assets (land or buildings) can have a positive influence in the empowerment of communities. North Ayrshire Council has already recognised the potential of this and has been involved in the transferring of assets to the local community over many years, ranging from the day to day management of community centres by community associations, key holding, service level agreements, long term leases and in some cases, full ownership.

2.4 Role of Community Associations

2.4.1 The agreed role of community centres and associations include the following:

- Service coordination and delivery mechanisms;
- Place making - looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular community, to discover their needs and aspirations;
- Community building— how we develop the individual and organisational capacity of a community, to help it achieve its aspirations.

2.4.2 The working group acknowledged the importance of the community centre as a community hub offering services to local communities and providing a place for social gathering and wellbeing. However, due to the general economic situation, it was recognised that savings in running costs, or additional income, and the importance of identifying new partnerships and co-location opportunities, have to be found.

2.5 Short Life Working Group

2.5.1 It is proposed that the short life working group is reconvened from 1st March 2018.

2.6 Remit

The remit of the Working Group shall be:-

- To maximise the extent to which Community Associations and Organisations, the Council and Community Planning Partners can work in partnership to benefit North Ayrshire and its people;
- To assess and mitigate the impact of Council budget savings and changes in working practice on the work of Community Associations and Organisations;
- To identify opportunities for Community Associations and Organisations which arise out of Council budget savings and changes in working practice;
- To identify practical support from the Council or Community Planning Partners which is required to enable Community Associations and Organisations to maximise opportunities;
- To liaise regarding potential Asset Transfer opportunities; and
- To maximise the involvement of Community Associations and Organisations in taking forward the priorities and actions of Locality Planning Partnerships.

2.7 Membership

2.7.1 The members shall include three representatives of NAFCO, as identified by that organisation. Additional community association representatives may be invited to individual meetings on a "Participation by Experience" basis, as agreed by the Chair of the working group. North Ayrshire Council shall be represented by the Head of Service, Connected Communities, the Senior Manager for Participation and Empowerment and other officers as required to discharge the work of the group.

2.8 Chair

2.8.1 The Chair of the Working Group shall be the Portfolio Holder for Connected Communities.

2.9 Delegated Powers

2.9.1 The Working Group does not have delegated powers, except for the delegated powers of the Council officers present. All other recommendations of the Working Group will be considered by Cabinet, and reported to all Elected Members in North Ayrshire News.

2.10 Meetings and Lifespan of Committee

2.10.1 The Working Group will have a time-limited lifespan from 1 March 2018 to 31 October 2018. The first meeting of the Working Group will be convened at a time and place to be determined by the Head of Connected Communities. The business of the first meeting shall be to agree a programme of work. Thereafter the Working Group shall meet monthly at such place as may be agreed by the Group.

2.10.2 The Chair or the Head of Connected Communities may convene Special Meetings if it appears to him/her that there are items of urgent business to be considered. Such Meetings will be held at a time, date and venue as determined by the Head of Connected Communities.

2.11 Procedures for Dealing with Items of Business

2.10.1 The Agenda of items for consideration will be issued by electronic means to all members no later than two days (not including Saturday and Sunday) prior to the start of the meeting.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet agrees to reconvene the short life working group between NAFCO and North Ayrshire Council.

3.2 It is proposed that Cabinet agrees to receive reports from the Executive Director of Economy and Communities in relation to themes which may emerge from the recommendations of the working group.

4. Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
Human Resources:	There are no human resource issues arising from this report.
Legal:	There are no legal implications arising from the report.
Equality:	There are no equality implications arising from the report.
Children and Young People:	There are no implications for Children and Young People associated with this report.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising from the report.
Key Priorities:	The proposal contributes to developing stronger communities.
Community Benefits:	There are no Community Benefit implications arising from the report.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with NAFCO, who in turn consult with a range of community organisations in North Ayrshire, and with Elected Members.



Karen Yeomans
Executive Director (Economy & Communities)

For further information please contact **Audrey Sutton, Head of Service (Connected Communities)** on **01294 324414**.

Background Papers

Nil.