

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 26 April 2016

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)

**SUBJECT:** Area Partnerships – Update and Devolved Budget

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide Council with an update on progress made by the six Area Partnerships, illustrating the progress made in developing Area Plans and the decisions made in relation to devolved budgets in 2015/16.
- 1.2 To present Council with the proposal for further devolution of funding to Area Partnerships in 2016/17.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members note the good progress in developing the six Area Partnerships;
- 2.2 That Members note the range of projects that devolved funding has been used to deliver;
- 2.3 That Members approve the proposal for devolving £100,000 to each of the six Area Partnerships to support educational initiatives that contribute to improving educational attainment and achievement and reduce the attainment gap (Sections 3.9 – 3.12).

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council took the decision to establish six Area Partnerships in November 2013 in furtherance of the Council Plan commitments to *“give people a real say in the decisions that matter most”* and *“to ensuring that communities are empowered to develop strategies and Local Community Plans tailored to their needs and that decision making is devolved to the most appropriate local level.”*

- 3.2 Six Area Partnerships were set up between February 2014 and June 2014 and quickly became established. They are continuing to evolve new ways of working, moving forward with the guidance of four Area Managers and independent Community Chairs. The last year of activity for the Area Partnerships has focused on producing community-led Area Plans and allocating the devolved budgets provided from the 2015/16 Council budget. All Partnerships have held annual public meetings which were used as opportunities to engage with the wider public on the development of priorities for action in the Area Plans and to promote the Area Partnerships and publicise their work.
- 3.3 All Partnerships now have independent Chairs and Vice-Chairs in place with the exception of North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership which opted to have Co-Chairs. The Chairs were appointed from a range of community members and groups with some having been involved in Area Partnerships from the outset and others being new to the process. The Chairs have been offered support from Council staff to assist with the development of their role. This has included an Induction evening in August 2015 and a reception event in January 2016 offering the Council Management Team an opportunity to meet the Chairs. They have also participated in other Council decision-making processes, including forming a panel consulted on recruitment of the Head of Adult Wellbeing. Area Partnerships are part of the structure of the East Lothian Partnership and their progress and Actions Plans are reported to the Safe and Vibrant Communities Partnership, most recently on 17 March 2016.
- 3.4 The Council appointed four Area Managers who are driving forward Area Partnership priorities in each area that are having a significant impact in improving the physical environment for local communities, and improving partnership working by instigating the formation of working groups and professional networks. They are further embedding East Lothian Council's commitment to devolving budgets and decision making to a local level through the Area Plans.
- 3.5 The six Area Partnerships are at different stages of producing their Area Plans:
- Musselburgh Area Plan has been adopted by the Area Partnership
  - Fa'side Partnership's Area Plan is well developed and further local engagement is about to take place ensuring the content is reflective of the community needs.
  - The Preston/Seton/ Gosford and North Berwick Coastal Partnerships have draft plans which are being further refined and prioritised. The draft plans are fully inclusive of the actions gathered from a Preston/Seton/Gosford public workshop and the North Berwick Coastal Partnership's "3 wishes" exercise.
  - Haddington & Lammermuir and Dunbar & East Linton Area Partnerships have agreed priorities and actions that are being further refined.

- 3.6 The report to Council (December 2014) set out the basis for the allocation of devolved funding across the six Area Partnerships. This funding came from three streams:
- £600,000 for services provided by the Council's Amenities Services
  - £300,000 for roads capital expenditure
  - £350,000 for non-recurring general services priorities from the Council's general services reserves in 2015/16.
- 3.7 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the projects and initiatives that were funded and supported by Area Partnerships in 2015/16. These included:
- Traffic calming measures
  - Improvements to paths and cycleways and public spaces
  - Initiatives to support and encourage 'Active Travel'
  - Investment in improving public buildings and venues
  - Development of county-wide rural broadband provision being led by Haddington & Lammermuir Area Partnership
  - Facilities and activities for young people such as skateparks and motorcycle projects
  - Older people's network to support dementia friendly activities in North Berwick.
  - Educational activity and counselling services around drug and alcohol misuse.
- 3.8 The 2016/17 – 2018/19 budget agreed by the Council on 9 February 2016 devolves a total of £1.85 million to the Area Partnerships, comprised of:
- £600,000 for services provided by the Council's Amenities Services
  - £300,000 for roads capital expenditure
  - £350,000 for non-recurring general services priorities now included within the Community Partnerships budget ('mainstreaming' the £350,000 which had been allocated from reserves in 2015/16)
  - a new allocation of £600,000 (also included in the base budget) to support 'educational initiatives'.

It should be noted that the new allocation of £600,000 has not been top-sliced or vired from the Education service or school budgets, but is new funding. It is proposed that this funding be apportioned equally (£100,000 each) to the six Area Partnerships/school clusters. The funding should be used by Area Partnerships, working in partnership with schools and the wider learning community in the area and using the intelligence from their Area Profiles, to

address the root causes of poor attainment, improve children and young people's preparedness to learn and improve their resilience. This funding has been devolved to Area Partnerships to support them and the schools in their cluster area to support innovative and creative initiatives that contribute to improving attainment and achievement, reducing inequalities and reducing the attainment gap. It need not be restricted to supporting school-age based initiatives but should be seen in the prevention and early intervention context as potentially supporting early year/ pre-school, post-school and inter-generational initiatives that can be seen to contribute to the aims of this funding stream.

3.9 Area Partnerships have already identified and supported initiatives that address these issues and provide examples of the type of innovative approaches it is envisaged would be supported through the new funding. For example:

- Dunbar & East Linton Area Partnership in partnership with pupils from the Grammar School are working on a range of projects such as after school study cafe and more frequent out of school gym times.
- Musselburgh Area Partnership initiated the Attendance Matters campaign, is supporting the 'Reading is Braw' initiative which promotes reading and aims to improve reading ability of children of all ages, and is supporting work to increase opportunities for young people to achieve accredited awards outside of the School Curriculum.
- Several Area Partnerships have supported health improvement projects aimed at young people such as educational talks to Knox Academy pupils on alcohol and drugs misuse and offering non-judgemental support to those who seek it; support for active travel / On the Move initiatives including safer routes to schools which will support and encourage young people to walk or cycle to school; North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership and the North Berwick Area Children and Youth Network have been exploring the development of a mental health pathway for pupils.
- The Fa'side Area Partnership is supporting the 'Raising Teens with Confidence' project in Ross High School.
- North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership has provided funding to the North Berwick Area Children and Youth Network to allow the local Support from the Start group to extend its bursary scheme to offer recreational activities to young people across the area.
- Haddington & Lammermuir Area Partnership has provided funding for a Bike Maintenance class at Knox, which offers pupils access to vocational learning and the opportunity to gain a qualification as well as supporting a healthier lifestyle. Also with the pupils teaching Bike Ability to local primary schools and nurseries more than 950 young people will ultimately benefit from this project and will also provide social inclusion in the community for disaffected pupils.

- 3.10 The £100,000 provided to each Area Partnership will allow the Partnerships, in association with the schools and wider learning community in their areas, to further develop and support these types of initiatives, and others that meet the broad aims of the devolved budget.
- 3.11 As with the other elements of devolved funding Area Managers will be responsible for managing the new funding. Suitable mechanisms for recording, managing and monitoring commitments will be put in place. It will be important to evidence the impact of the funding in relation to intended outcomes such as improvements in attainment and achievement indicators and the scores achieved in relation to the Early Development Initiative which assists in measuring children's preparedness to learn. Although some shorter term measurements will also need to be identified as these are long term outcome improvements.
- 3.12 It is proposed that the following process be adopted to determine how each Partnership's £100,000 allocation should be used.
- a) The funding should build on the partnerships that are already developing between Area Partnerships, schools, the wider learning community in their communities
  - b) Area Managers will co-ordinate meetings in each Area Partnership in May/ June, involving key Secondary and Primary Head Teachers from all the schools in the relevant cluster and representatives from the Area Partnership and wider learning community in the area to review:
    - i. evidence about educational attainment, disadvantage and other factors contributing to young people's preparedness to learn and their resilience;
    - ii. school improvement plans and cluster plans, the Area Plan and other relevant plans; and,
    - iii. initiatives and projects that meet the aims set out above (para 3.9)

This partnership working group would develop proposals for allocating the funding in the area and consider whether further consultation is required before the Area Partnerships allocates the funding.

- 3.13 This is not one-off funding as it has been built into the base budget so funding should be available in the following year for longer-term initiatives running over more than a single financial year could be funded.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The devolution of funding to Area Partnerships fulfils the Council Plan commitment to devolve decision making and budgets.

## **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 An impact assessment has not been carried out on this report as it does not directly affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy. However, the new funding devolved to Area Partnerships aims to contribute to contributing to improving attainment, reducing inequalities and reducing the attainment gap. Integrated impact assessments will be carried out on the Area Plans.

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – the devolved funding outlined in this report is in line with, and will be contained within, the allocation of funding to Area Partnerships included in the 2016/17 – 2018/19 Council budget.
- 6.2 Personnel – None
- 6.3 Other – None

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Area Partnerships – report to Cabinet; 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013
- 7.2 Area Partnerships: Devolved Budgets – report to East Lothian Council; 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014
- 7.3 Area Partnerships: Update on Progress – report to the Safe & Vibrant Communities Partnership; 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016

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## **Appendix 1: Update on Budget Allocations in 2015/16 and Work Under Way in the Six Area Partnerships**

### **Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership**

Funding has been granted by the Area Partnership to:

- install new lighting in the Craigs and Corn Exchange closes in Dunbar
- purchase a new speed reactive sign for deployment across the area and install new sign connection points
- repair / replac the pavement on the west side of East Linton High Street
- remove trees at West Barns
- reclaim Dunbar Town House garden as public space
- reclaim and upgrade the common good margin at East Beach in Dunbar.

Projects initiated and supported by the Area Partnership include:

- holding a public event to identify issues around Dunbar High Street and the wider conservation area,
- developing a searchable “Whats On” database across all six Area Partnerships
- supporting the installation of a new Big Belly compactor at Dunbar Harbour
- providing integrated travel information at bus stops
- working with Dunbar Grammar School to develop a range of projects identified by pupils such as an after school study cafe, more frequent out of school gym times and a skatepark.

### **Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership**

Funding has been granted by the Area Partnership to:

- assist Athelstaneford Parent Council build their skatepark
- develop the Haddington skatepark project including ground care works
- construct a large speed reducing platform on Whittingehame Drive to improve pedestrian safety
- deliver a RUTS project where a number of local young people were helped to develop their confidence and skills through a motorcycle and bicycle based programme
- assist the Amisfield Preservation Trust to fund the construction of a new community education building
- provide educational talks to Knox Academy pupils on alcohol and drugs misuse as well as offer non-judgemental support to those who seek it
- install 22 cycle storage racks at 5 separate locations across the town and repainting of some of the gold and black fingerpoint signs.

Projects initiated and supported by the Area Partnership include:

- supporting development of an access strategy for Haddington town centre, leading on the project to establish superfast broadband across the County

- supporting sustainable travel projects and working with Knox Academy to set up a homework club in the Nungate to help raise levels of attainment.

### **North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership**

Funding has been granted by the Area Partnership to:

- Support from the Start to their Bursary Scheme which will be extended to offer after school recreational activities to young people across the Coastal area
- the Older People's Network to support dementia friendly activities and IT equipment for the Day Centre
- the Oasis Project for drugs and alcohol counselling and support services
- the Hope Rooms in North Berwick where improvements to the kitchen and disabled access will be made
- Dirleton public toilets which will be repainted with improved landscaping, signage and lighting
- carryout a feasibility study to explore an all weather pitch in Aberlady
- the North Berwick Arts Centre Group received funding for their stage two feasibility study.

Projects initiated and supported by the Area Partnership include:

- the new Athelstaneford Skatepark, and the Beach Wheelchair Project
- Young people have realised their grand interior design ideas with a complete refurbishment at the North Berwick Youth Project and funding for a youth event
- Traffic calming measures include speed display signs installed in local villages, amber flashing units at school crossings and a new section of pavement linking North Berwick Tennis Courts with the all weather pitch at the recreation park
- The local environment, path and cycle network will help people get around easier with beach cleaning, path improvements, signage, cycle stands and additional seating.

### **Preston, Seton, Gosford Area Partnership**

Funding has been granted by the Area Partnership to:

- the newly formed Preston Seton Gosford Children & Youth Network to help shape youth provision across the area. This has already provided young people with the opportunity to take part in the Ruts Motorcycle Project and new equipment is being purchased for the youth club run by Pennypit Trust
- Cockenzie In Bloom and The Three Harbours Festival to continue their work for the community.
- Cockenzie House who have plans to refurbish the lower conservatory for community use
- Cuthill Park in Prestonpans who received funds to enhance the park including paths and signage.



Projects initiated and supported by the Area Partnership include:

- new lighting in the War Memorial garden in Cockenzie and resurfacing the car park and paths at Longniddry Tennis Courts and Bowling Club.
- plans for the Prestonpans War Memorial square to open up the space to make it more attractive and increase the civic presence and pride in the area. This will include the repair of the memorial statue and the redesign of the space surrounding the memorial. The long awaited Miners Statue for Prestonpans will be a step nearer to completion.
- a section of the John Muir Way at Prestonpans will be improved with new seating, landscaping, viewing points and signage.
- traffic calming measures including new speed display signs and amber flashing units at school crossings.
- Improvements to the local path and cycle network will help people get around easier with clearing sections of over grown paths, additional cycle stands, interpretation boards and seating.
- Forming a Children and Young People's network made up of professionals working in the area to streamline their work and to provide more opportunities for joint working and increase the range of activities for children and young people. The Network have been working toward producing a database that holds information on local activities and facilities that can be used by children and young people and using their budget to increase the range of activities available.

### **Fa'side Area Partnership**

Funding has been granted by the Area Partnership to:

- increase the use of the 'Disabled Go' website and the erection of a local community notice board to tackle gaps in information provision for community groups
- Tranent Fireworks to sustain this important local community event
- a history and heritage project within the town of Tranent, APOGI (A place of great importance) to assist with the erection of a wall
- support the extension of a pilot which will support a Breast feeding group in Tranent.

Projects initiated and supported by the Area Partnership include:

- the Gateway Signage project which through engaging with local communities in the ward area, seeks to provide a consistent, welcoming and safe approach (traffic calming measures) to accessing and exiting the town and each village. As part of this project each community had an opportunity to celebrate their cultural history or heritage. Work is almost complete on this project and publicity will be sought in the coming months to raise awareness.
- the provision of cooking resources for community groups which will allow the Partnership and other community groups to provide learning on healthy eating and food nutrition. This course is being run in conjunction with Community

Learning and Development staff and Ross High teachers 'Raising teens with confidence' and this is being delivered to pupils within Ross High.

- Support towards a volunteer post, working with residents to improve confidence, skills and providing much needed community resources to existing sports clubs in the area.

### **Musselburgh Area Partnership**

Funding has been granted by the Area Partnership to:

- Crossreach Counselling to pilot a project contributing to the objective of promoting teenage mental health in the Musselburgh area, the Clinic in Musselburgh Grammar School started in January 2016 and is now seeing young clients,
- Support from the Start for PEEP and Bookbug programmes, to extend the capacity of two key evidenced based programmes aimed at improving early development and in particular the school readiness of children in targeted communities.
- resurface the muddy riverside area at Shorthope Street, encouraging the use of the riverside area by improving the amenity and providing cycle parking near the centre of town, and resurfacing Shorthope Street Car Park to improve the look of one of the main car parks in the centre of Musselburgh and help to encourage visitors to the area,

Projects initiated and supported by the Area Partnership include:

- the Attendance Matters campaign where letters and leaflets went out to parents in the Primary Schools
- the "Reading is Braw" initiative which promotes reading and to improve the reading ability of school children. There were a number of launch activities including a mile of children reading from the Burgh School including Musselburgh High Street, a pop up library and Children from Wallyford Primary School Reading in Tesco and an event in the St Andrew's High Church garden including drama, Bible stories and displays
- helping to increase opportunities for young people to achieve accredited awards outside of School Curriculum. The Musselburgh Community Sports Hub has agreed to extend the work of a volunteer coordinator to further engage youth volunteers. The focus is on increasing the opportunities for young people to volunteer within local clubs, put them through youth accreditation awards and provide opportunities to achieve additional qualifications training and awards.
- Work is nearing completion on hot showers for beach users at Fisherrow Harbour, and work has started that will examine the accessibility and amenity of the Fisherrow Harbour, Promenade and Waterfront Areas.
- Stonework Repairs to the War Memorial, a bid has been submitted to the War Memorial Trust following a site meeting with representatives of the Community, War Memorial Trust, and officers of East Lothian Council and it is intended to complete this project November before Remembrance Sunday.