

**Wednesday 28th June 2023**

**2.00pm – 4.00pm**

**Teams Meeting**

**MEETING NOTES**

**Present:**

Monica Patterson, East Lothian Council

Douglas Proudfoot, East Lothian Council

Maureen Allan, VCEL

Benjamin Leathes, Police Scotland

Mark McMullen, Scottish Enterprise

Philip Conaglen, NHS Lothian

**In Attendance:**

Sharon Saunders, East Lothian Council Jamie Baker, East Lothian Council

Toby Renouf, East Lothian Council Paolo Vestri, East Lothian Council

**Apologies:**

Katie Dee, NHS Lothian Fiona Wilson, NHS Lothian

Audrey Cumberford, Edinburgh College Iain Gorman, Health & Social Care Partnership

David Girrity; Scottish Fire & Rescue Bettina Sizeland, Transport Scotland Lawrence Wyper, Scottish Enterprise

1. **Welcome and apologies**
2. **Note of 26th April Governance Group meeting**

Approved as a correct record.

**2a. Matters Arising**

**Community Safety and Justice Partnership**

Paolo Vestri noted that work is ongoing to schedule a meeting of the Community Safety and Justice Partnership – there has been a difficulty in finding spaces in diaries. However, the Community Safety and Community Justice supporting groups have started meeting; Ben Leathes noted that the Equally Safe group has not met yet due to a request from the Public Protection chair:. Paolo noted that there is still a need to organise administrative support for the three groups: a meeting will be arranged soon to discuss this.

**Response to Community Wealth Building Consultation**

Paolo updated members that the partnership’s response to the consultation had been submitted after the last Governance Group meeting, and that response had also been submitted on behalf of the council. The report on the outcome of this consultation will be released by Scottish Government, at some time later in the summer.

Paolo also informed the group that the working group that was setup to coordinate the response to the Community Wealth Building consultation has met a couple of times and will meet further to establish an action plan for community wealth building.

**Action: Paolo to report back to the Governance Group at the next meeting with an update on progress with community wealth building action plan.**

1. **Recovery and Renewal Action Plan**

Paolo summarised the cover report and final version of the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan that had been circulated.

* The partnership approved the COVID Recovery and Renewal Plan in October 2021.
* Plan was based on eight priorities with 36 detailed actions.
* Governance Group has been monitoring progress of those actions through 2022, and 2023
* The final update report includes a new column – progress status, this is to update members on whether an action has been completed/ carried forward
* Indicators have also been included for the actions – where possible the latest data and targets for each of the indicators have been included.

The recommendation is that having moved away from COVID and with a focus more on renewal than recovery, that we close the action plan after this meeting. Any actions in the plan will either be taken forward in the council plan, or will be taken forward by the Governance Group later in the year when the existing Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) is reviewed in the autumn.

Philip Conaglen asked Paolo about the possibility of linking partners in on the development of the new LOIP.

Paolo noted that this is planned. There is a meeting of the Officers Group coming up that will consider how we develop the new plan. Work has begun on the new Strategic Needs Assessment that will act as the basis for developing the outcomes and priorities for the revised plan. There will also be a reviewing of other plans, including the Health and Social Care Partnership’s Plan, the new local housing strategy and the Local Economic Strategy. Other partners will be involved in this process.

Douglas Proudfoot wanted to recognise all the work put into developing the recovery and renewal action plan and wanted to check that the Governance Group were content to close off this piece of work. Douglas noted that COVID is something that should be thought of as one of a number of concurrent risks: recovery economically is not just a COVID related component. The group agreed to approve the final update report and that the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan is closed.

1. **Strategic Needs Assessment update**

Carried forward to August meeting.

1. **Updates from Partnerships and Partners**

Monica Patterson noted that she had circulated an update on the council’s budget position, underlining the degree of challenge facing the council in terms of financial pressures. This is coming from both the level of financial settlement, but also the impact of growth on East Lothian. Representations are being made to ministers at Scottish and UK Governments. Cuts being considered, and likely to be implemented post March 2024, are likely to be very significant. Monica also noted that the council is working very closely with all partners to maximise what can be achieved on the ground, however this is unchartered territory in terms of financial pressures and there are no signs from the government that there will be additional resources.

**Douglas Proudfoot: Connected Economy Group (CEG):** CEG meetings are slightly out of sync with Governance Group meetings but significant focus will be given to strategy refresh and to the community wealth building considerations. Continued reference to strategic sites with particular focus on the QMU junction and site investigation for starting on the Innovation Hub, the first phase of the wider hub and business park. UK Government Levelling Up funding has been received to allow site preparation work to be carried out at the Cockenzie site. East Lothian will be chairing the Infrastructure for Recovery Group

**Ben Leathes (Police Scotland):** Despite a challenging climate, policing in East Lothian is largely unchanged in terms of numbers through 2023 (approximately 100 officers) but budgetary challenges are still severe. Various options are being considered in terms of ways to share resources and to make the best use of the six stations in East Lothian.

**Maureen Allan (VCEL):** The voluntary sector continues to feel the pinch. Ongoing issues with recruitment due to fixed term contracts. Only some funders are giving a cost of living increase. VCEL have continued to support working smart, and collaboratively within the community. Maureen noted the importance of continuing to invest in communities despite council budget constraints.

**Mark McMullen (Scottish Enterprise):** Scottish Enterprise are looking to close six of their offices (see previous meeting notes for more details), the northeast office will be the last of these to close. The footprint in the Edinburgh office has been reduced to one floor. Next corporate plan was due to be launched in May, this has been put back to September. In the process of undertaking a number of operational reviews, there will be a continuation of focus on the three I’s (International, Innovation and Investment). Mark will be in a position to provide an update at the August meeting on the revised corporate strategy.

**Katie Dee (NHS Lotian):** NHS Lothian managed to achieve a break even position for 2022/23. There is a significant financial gap for 2023/24 of £94 million. Efficiency plans are aiming to achieve £42million of that, but no concrete plans for the other £52 million. There was an inspection of the Royal Infirmary Emergency Department, highlighting significant pressures that the service is under, there is now a 26 week improvement programme to address this. Plans are in place for the junior doctor strike on 16th July.

1. **Any Other Business**

Paolo Vestri gave an update on the Government’s recent report on Community Planning. The report published by the Scottish Parliament’s Local Government Housing and Planning Committee was circulated to the group..

There are a number of recommendations in connection with community wealth building, these chimed with our response to the government’s consultation; also recommends that the Scottish Government should provide extra resources to meet additional statutory requirements coming out of the community wealth building agenda. There is also a recommendation that voluntary organisations become anchor organisations within community planning partnerships – Paolo noted the close relationship with VCEL through Maureen Allan’s place on the CPP.

There are also some points that need to be reflected on further, including one to ensure that there in effective community empowerment and community engagement.

The report and its receommendations will form useful background for the self evaluation the Partnership will undertake in the autumn in the lead up to developing a revised plan and to look at governance structures to ensure they’re still fit for purpose.

1. **Date of next meeting**

24th August 2023