

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO CABINET PANEL**

**29<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2016**

**Title:** Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) – further development

**Submitted by:** Sarah Moore – Partnerships Manager

**Portfolios:** Policy, People and Partnerships  
Leisure, Culture and Localism

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Purpose of the Report**

The report presents, following a previous report to Cabinet in March 2015 and subsequent debate at full Council, progress reports from each of the nine Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs), highlighting their achievements and outcomes, both financially and by the delivery of added value initiatives and partnerships, during the last twelve months in relation to the three key strategic themes prioritised by the Borough Council and its partners, namely:

- Health and Well-being
- Economic Development
- Stronger and Safer Communities

To seek Cabinet approval via the Cabinet Panel for the Council's ongoing support to assist in the further development of the LAPs in the nine localities across the Borough.

**Recommendations**

The report recommends that Cabinet:

- Acknowledges and endorses the progress reports produced by each of the nine Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs), which highlights their achievements during the last twelve months – Appendix A.
- Continues to support the work of the LAPs in the nine localities across the Borough and assists in enabling them to continue to contribute to the delivery of the Council's Co-operative Strategy through further development
- Encourages Council departments to proactively use the LAPs for consultation purposes, making information packs available to be disseminated to the groups and the wider community
- Provides feedback to the LAPs of the findings of the Cabinet Panel and encourages a dialogue to ascertain shared benefits of partnership working between the Council and the LAPs.

This report also recommends that the LAPs are supported and assisted to;

- proactively engage and continue to encourage new partnerships for the benefits of locality working in the Borough;
- continue to share information, disseminate good practice and raise awareness of activity;
- report further progress and activities back to Cabinet in 12 months time to review achievements and areas for improvement.

**Reasons**

One of the Council's key corporate priorities is becoming a co-operative council. A key element of co-operative working is focused on locality working – recognising diversity of the Borough's different localities and working with these communities in understanding their needs and issues and developing solutions to address these needs and deliver practical solutions. In order to deliver this priority it is necessary to ensure that the Borough's nine Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) are supported to work effectively to facilitate local performance and delivery.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has committed to, as one of its four corporate priorities, becoming a co-operative council and wants to work with partners towards making Newcastle-under-Lyme a co-operative Borough.
- 1.2 The Co-operative Strategy outlines the community leadership role for the Borough Council, working with other agencies and communities to deliver change and to ensure that people are able to influence issues, priorities and activities in their localities.
- 1.3 The Council has placed locality working at the heart of its priority to work co-operatively, as locality working empowers communities to develop their own approaches to dealing with issues affecting their own localities and enhances partnership working.
- 1.4 In the Borough, the Newcastle Partnership is the local strategic partnership. The Partnership represents the different sectors in the Borough and plays a vital role in bringing together a range of organisations with a shared purpose through co-operative and co-ordinated joint working that will improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing in the Borough.
- 1.5 Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) represent the Newcastle Partnership's established infrastructure for the delivery of locality working and offer communities access to a range of partners to address and deliver against local needs and priorities. In addition, LAPs assist in community engagement and empowerment and play a part in the achievement of improved community cohesion. There are nine LAPs in the Borough, which are made up of a range of partners from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors with an interest in their local area.
- 1.6 Following a report to Cabinet in October 2014, LAPs were challenged to produce progress reports to highlight their activity over the last 12 months contributing to the strategic priorities for the Borough Council and its partners, which are;
  - Health and Well-being
  - Economic Development
  - Stronger and Safer Communities
- 1.7 It was agreed that the progress reports would be reviewed by the Borough Council towards the end of the 2014/15 and a report would be brought back to Cabinet for consideration. It was also agreed that these reports would form the basis for the contribution to the further development of LAPs on the part of the Borough Council and its' partners in the Newcastle Partnership, including the LAPs future role in the administration of grants such as Community Chest.
- 1.8 The overview report and appendices outlined the considerable progress made by the LAPs over the twelve month period, in terms of formalising their constitutional arrangements and partners support, prioritising local needs through action planning,

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reporting on funding bid for and achieved and demonstrating a wealth of best practice and learning established in the period for the benefit of the wider community.

1.9 At a meeting of the Council dated 25th February 2015 it was resolved that;

*“3. That the current expenditure (estimated at £35,000+) on servicing the Local Action Partnerships be reviewed in order to:*

*a) investigate if it is giving value for money,  
and*

*b) explore alternative ways of operating local community partnerships”.*

1.10 A Cabinet Panel was therefore created and tasked with giving further consideration to the delivery of locality working in the Borough and more specifically the role of Locality Action Partnerships and whether;

- the support offered by the Borough Council assists the Council to meet its' objectives of becoming a Co-operative Council;
- the level of support contributed by the Borough Council in terms of Officer and Member time is appropriate;
- the support contributed by the Borough Council in terms of Officer and Member time is cost effective;
- the support could be delivered in an alternative way to achieve the same results.

1.11 The Cabinet Panel met in December 2015 and were given a presentation by the Partnerships Manager on the role of LAPs in the Borough in relation to locality working. The Scrutiny Panel requested and were given copies of previous LAP Progress papers reported to Cabinet. Members of the Panel were keen to establish views from other partners of the role of the LAPs and it was agreed that a LAP Feedback questionnaire would be distributed to obtain views for further consideration and discussion. Members were also keen to obtain an approximate costing to the Council for support given to the LAPs.

## **2. Issues for consideration**

2.1 A LAP Survey was created and distributed to partners, seeking views of LAPs, their function and effectiveness for delivery in the community. The feedback report from this exercise can be found at Appendix B. In summary, there were 15 respondents from a variety of partner organisations and each of the nine LAPs were represented by respondents.

2.2 The support currently offered to LAPs comes from a variety of partners, including but not limited to Parish, Borough and County Councils (both Officers and elected Members), Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, Housing Associations, the voluntary sector and members of the Community.

2.3 The Borough Council's Partnership Team provide administrative support to the LAPs, via the LAP Co-ordinator. The LAP Co-ordinator is also responsible for the administration of the Borough Council's Community Chest grant funding scheme. Additional support is given to the LAPs by the Partnerships Team and also by a number of other Officers on an ad hoc basis to support with community initiatives. The financial cost to the Borough Council in respect of Officer time in supporting the LAPs is therefore estimated to be £44,593.

2.4 The LAPs offer a variety of benefits to partners because they are able to offer the opportunity for partners to assist in the delivery in key services in the Borough. For

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example, Officers are able to use the LAPs as mechanisms for consultation which brings efficiencies for staff time and resources by attending one multi agency forum rather than a number of meetings.

- 2.5 The Council does not contribute any budgets for LAPs, they rely on partners goodwill and achieving external funding for activities, projects and community initiatives.

### 3. Summary of LAPs Progress

- 3.1 Each of the nine LAPs produced a progress report as requested by the Borough Council, see Appendix A, outlining activities and progress made over the last 12 months.

- 3.2 The key achievements for the LAPs during 2015 can be summarised as;

- All LAPs have had an AGM and confirmed the Chair/Vice Chair and signatory positions/arrangements.
- All of the nine LAPs are now fully constituted with bank accounts.
- £46,692.32 external funding has been brought into the Borough by the LAPs.
- All of the nine LAPs have refreshed their Action Plans, into a consistent format, with actions identified following consultation.
- Two of the LAPs have been administering the Community Chest grants on behalf of the Borough Council via a sub group, in the absence of an alternative Locally Based Body.
- The total number of attendees at LAP meeting during 2015 was 475. These attendances consist of a variety of partners from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

- 3.3 It was reported that the following challenges have been encountered;

- Difficulties engaging with the wider community in a number of areas.
- Lack of engagement in a number of areas from health partners.
- Closure of community facilities e.g. libraries, youth centres and children centres.
- Misunderstanding or lack of understanding of what LAPs do / unrealistic expectations.
- Limited funding opportunities for some activities.
- Responding to key issues and hotspots.

- 3.4 The LAPs reported the following regarding partnership participation;

- 3.4.1 Strengths identified included;

- All LAPs reported that they continued to receive support and involvement from key partners such as the Borough Council, County Council, Police, Aspire and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue.
- LAPs reported that they continued to receive and provide support and involvement from Resident Associations, Schools, Councillors, local churches, local businesses.
- LAPs reported improved relationships with and Town and Parish Councils.

- 3.4.2.1 Areas for improvement highlighted;

- Some LAPs reported the need to better engage with local businesses, schools, Councillors, community groups, doctors surgeries and other health professionals.
- The majority of LAPs reported the need to further improve relationships in the localities with health partners, although some progress had been made particularly with dementia projects and older people.

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- The majority of LAPs agreed that more promotion of LAPs was required in their communities to raise the profile of their work.

3.5 It is clear that partnership participation varies in each of the nine localities and there are lessons learned which can be shared between the LAPs to enhance existing partnerships. Further support for the LAPs is required to nurture existing relationships and to instigate new contacts to assist in partnership working e.g. health providers, schools and faith groups but positive progress has been made in a number of localities over the last 12 months.

3.6 The following activities were reported as having have been delivered by the LAPs during 2015;

Name of LAP	Health and Wellbeing	Economic Development	Stronger and Safer
Audley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skate Boarding Equipment at Wereton Road Community Park</li> <li>• Coffee mornings for older people</li> <li>• Fundraising for disabled residents</li> <li>• Annual Christmas Dinner event.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detached Youth workers to village hotspot locations.</li> <li>• Community Safety awareness and inputs in high school</li> <li>• Targeted ASB operations in Audley village</li> <li>• Community litter group</li> <li>• Responding to local community safety and environmental issues.</li> </ul>
Betley, Keele and Madeley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International women's day event.</li> <li>• Annual dog show event and community fun day.</li> <li>• Dementia friendly village project.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upcycle project</li> <li>• Responding to local community safety and environmental issues</li> <li>• Litter picking group.</li> <li>• Initiating activities for young people to prevent ASB using Joint Operations Group (JOG) and community funding.</li> <li>• Home safety devices for vulnerable residents.</li> </ul>
Butt Lane and Talke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reginald Mitchell Peace Garden Project</li> <li>• Dementia Project.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clough Hall Skate Park</li> <li>• Ski Slope Parking</li> <li>• Development of Text not delivered project</li> <li>• Responding to local community safety and environmental issues.</li> </ul>
East Newcastle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gating project</li> <li>• Dementia Project</li> <li>• Promotion of CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young) charity.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gating Project</li> <li>• Community Fun Day</li> <li>• Responding to local community safety and environmental issues.</li> </ul>
Greater Chesterton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooking on a budget</li> <li>• Fairy Jobmother</li> <li>• Fuel Poverty Advice Sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community tool hire</li> <li>• Money Advice Sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Litter picks</li> <li>• Estate walkabouts</li> <li>• Buzz in Fridays project</li> <li>• Community Safety</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of volunteers' training</li> <li>• Community Newsletter</li> <li>• Community Health event</li> <li>• Love Parks event</li> <li>• Sports Day Chesterton Park</li> <li>• Neighbourhood advice surgeries</li> <li>• Respect group established to plan and co-ordinate range of community events and activities with team of community volunteers.</li> <li>• Handball programme</li> <li>• Christmas event and lantern procession.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairy Jobmother</li> <li>• Fuel Poverty Advice Sessions</li> <li>• Cooking on a budget</li> <li>• Sponsorship to local community groups via Community Chest and other partners</li> <li>• Credit Union project</li> </ul>	<p>equipment in response to crime hotspots e.g. purse bells, wheelie bin locks and window and door locks for reassurance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halloween disco</li> <li>• Easter eggstraganza</li> <li>• Roman Project</li> <li>• WWI Memorial renovation.</li> <li>• Administration of the Community Chest on behalf of NBC.</li> <li>• Crime sub group establish to respond to Community Safety issues and hotspots in the Community</li> <li>• Responding to community environmental issues</li> <li>• Providing feedback to planning consultations.</li> </ul>
Kidsgrove		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership working with Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birchenwood Barriers</li> <li>• Trubshaw Court disturbances – signs put up (Aspire)</li> <li>• Community Speedwatch (Newchapel RA)</li> <li>• Responding to local community safety and environmental issues.</li> </ul>
Newcastle Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Youth Project/Youth bus.</li> <li>• Support for Loggerheads befrienders.</li> <li>• Chit Chat project started for isolated older people</li> <li>• Improved bus timetable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader programme commenced to link with Rural Deal</li> <li>• Support for community library provision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road safety campaign</li> <li>• Litter reduction projects</li> <li>• Recycling reward scheme.</li> <li>• Information point opened at Loggerheads Community Fire Station</li> <li>• Responding to local community safety and environmental issues.</li> </ul>
Newcastle South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of graffiti</li> <li>• British Sign Language course</li> <li>• Purchase of 'a' boards for displays of community information.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community speed watch project</li> <li>• Range of road safety initiatives with local schools using external funding.</li> <li>• Establishment of new youth group.</li> <li>• Rogue traders project.</li> <li>• Responding to local community safety and environmental issues.</li> </ul>
Partnership of Western Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer fun day</li> <li>• Upcycling project</li> <li>• Cooking on a budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loan shark educational programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversionary activities for young people.</li> <li>• Restorative Justice</li> </ul>

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	<p>project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation and planning for Ilkley Place Play area refurbishment.</li> <li>• Intergenerational activities with NULC.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling project</li> </ul>	<p>Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estate walkabouts</li> <li>• Responding to local community safety and environmental issues.</li> </ul>
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- 3.6.1 Like the previous year it is clear that the LAPs have had most success with activities focussed around the themes of Health and Wellbeing and Stronger and Safer Communities, which may be attributable to the availability of funding and volunteers to assist in these areas. Another reason may be because of the availability of information through partners, media and formal statistics. A range of small grants are readily available to use to respond to well-being and community safety initiatives and the LAPs are able to influence the inputs and contributions of partners in responding to these community needs.
- 3.6.2 The challenge of the lack of access to funding for economic development may improve over the coming year due to opportunities with funding being pursued by partners in relation to the financial inclusion agenda, which may present opportunities for the LAPs to explore for the benefit of their residents, particularly for those some of the Borough deprived wards or those in a more rural location with access difficulties. Some of the LAPs are already able to demonstrate success in the delivery of projects which contribute to supporting communities from a financial inclusion perspective e.g. Fairy Jobmother, jobs clubs, credit union outreach, cooking on a budgets projects and there is room for further development in the community.
- 3.6.3 Although the LAPs have begun to seek and obtain funding to deliver activities in their own right, it is evident that more work can be done. However, in order to access external funding support will be needed to enhance the skills of existing LAP members and to attract new members who are able to contribute effectively. The LAPs need to be encouraged to continue to focus on responding to local needs while becoming more ambitious with obtaining and influencing additional resources at a local level. This will need further support from a range of partners to increase LAPs awareness and confidence for continued improvement and will invariably require Officer input.
- 3.6.4 It is important to recognise that the LAPs have and continue to evolve and develop at different paces, this is largely attributable to differences in community leadership, partners involvement, appetite and involvement of the community and how local needs are being presented and considered. All of the LAPs have refreshed their action plans for 2016 and beyond, which have been created in a consistent format so that areas of similarity can be brought together for further joint working if appropriate.
- 3.6.5 Members of LAPs need to be further encouraged to contribute directly to the delivery of practical solutions if further progress can be delivered without further financial investment to support future growth. This may be particularly challenging when many partners are restructuring their resources and future commitment may not be as available because of other workloads and commitments.

**4. Options considered, Proposal and Reason for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 This report presents to the Cabinet Panel, the nine LAP progress reports produced by the LAP Chairs to demonstrate their contributions made to partnership working on the key strategic issues of health and well-being; economic development; and developing stronger and safer communities in the Borough.

- 4.2 This report gives two options;
- 4.2.1 Option A – that the Cabinet Panel acknowledges and endorses the progress reports produced by each of the nine Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs), highlighting their achievements during the last twelve months and continues to support the work of the LAPs across the Borough to assist in enabling them to continue to contribute to the delivery of the Council’s Co-operative Strategy (recommended).
- 4.2.2 Option B – that the Cabinet Panel does not endorse the reports and withdraws support for LAPs to continue to develop and deliver in their respective localities. This is not recommended because the Council would not have a mechanism to deliver the Co-operative Council objectives through locality working with communities. This report recommends that a further commitment is made by Cabinet to continue to support the ongoing development of the LAPs, which will enhance consistency for residents and partnership working in the Borough.
- 4.3 This report recommends that the LAPs are supported and assisted to;
- proactively engage and continue to encourage new partnerships for the benefits of locality working in the Borough;
  - continue to share information, disseminate good practice and raise awareness of activity;
  - report further progress and activities back to Cabinet in 12 months time to review achievements and areas for improvement.

## **5. Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 The recommendations above contribute to all of the Council’s Corporate Priorities namely; Healthy and Active Communities, a Cleaner, Safer and Sustainable Borough, a Borough of Opportunity and Delivering a Co-operative Council.

## **6. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 There are no specific legal or statutory implications for consideration within this report.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 There are no adverse equality issues identified as arising from this report.

## **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 There are no additional specific financial implications or commitments required for the implementation of these recommendations.
- 8.2 There are resource implications for Borough Council Officers and Members as part of their substantive duties who will continue to provide support to contribute to the development of the Locality Action Partnerships in relation to these recommendations. These implications include officer time in both the Partnerships Team and also in other departments across the Borough Council.

## **9. Major Risks**

- 9.1 In the event of an adverse decision the Council may be unable to deliver the Corporate Priorities effectively without a mechanism to support the further development of locality working in the Borough.

**10. Key Decision Information**

10.1 This report can be considered key in the following ways: -

- It results in the Borough Council committing existing resources for the function to which the decision relates and;
- It is significant because it affects more than two or more electoral wards in the Borough.

**11. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

11.1 Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) – further development – March 2015 and accompanying Appendix LAP Progress Report 2015. These papers were previously circulated to members of the Scrutiny Panel, following the first meeting in December 2015.

**12. List of Appendices**

12.1 Appendix A – Progress Reports for ;

- Audley LAP
- Butt Lane and Talke LAP
- Betley, Keele and Madeley LAP
- East Newcastle LAP
- Greater Chesterton LAP
- Kidsgrove LAP
- Newcastle Rural LAP
- Newcastle South LAP
- Partnership of Western Communities LAP

12.2 Appendix B – Locality Action Partnerships Survey Feedback Report 2015/16.

**13. Background Papers**

13.1 None

<b>Implications included</b>	<b>Head of Service agreed report, signed &amp; dated</b>	<b>Financial Implications signed &amp; dated</b>	<b>Legal &amp; risk implications signed &amp; dated</b>
<b>Financial</b>			
<b>Legal</b>			
<b>Risk</b>			
<b>Director Sign Off</b>			