Item 6 (b)

17th September 2024

Glasgow Community Planning Partnership
Southside Central Area Partnership

Report by Head of Policy and Corporate Governance,
Chief Executive's Department

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Neighbourhood Infrastructure Fund – community engagement update.

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Area Partnership with an update in relation to the process for engaging communities in relation to the allocation of the Neighbourhood Infrastructure Fund.

Recommendations:

The Area Partnership is asked to note the contents of the report.

Introduction.

1. In 2022, the Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI) within the Council's Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability was tasked with developing a community engagement system to support the input of local communities to the allocation of the Council's Neighbourhood Infrastructure Improvement Fund (NIIF) in each Ward.

2. The community budgeting system that was developed was piloted in two wards of the City (Greater Pollok and Calton) in conjunction with Community Empowerment Services (now the Communities Team) and the exercise was evaluated in late 2023. The full evaluation report was considered by area partnerships in April 2024. Among other things, the report indicated that responsibility for engaging communities on the NIIF would move to the Communities Team in the Chief Executive's Department.

3. Before that responsibility is transferred, the CCI has been working with the Communities Team to engage with local communities in the Govan ward. Work has included community sessions, drop-ins, assessments, voting and development of options over the last few months. The Govan exercise will be completed in October 2024.

NIIF Community Engagement.

4. Following the end of the CCI involvement in the NIIF process, a new model for delivering a community budgeting process needs to be developed. The Senior Officer (Communities) within the Communities Team is co-ordinating the new approach and working with the area teams, across the Council Family and with various service departments.

5. The new GCC/Family Community Engagement Group is looking to create new ways for council services to work together on consultations and engagement with communities – to avoid duplication and reduce the requirement for people to engage across several different strategies with similar themes. We will do this by working on projects together. At an early meeting, it was agreed that we should start this process by working on the NIIF.

6. The next agreed ward (and the first without CCI support) is Drumchapel/ Anniesland. An internal meeting before the Council summer recess identified the kind of 'people' resource that is needed, which at this stage, is predominantly: co-ordination, survey creation, people who can do community engagement with people in the area, and data analysis.

7. We still have the Communities Team to carry out much of the 'feet on the ground' engagement, with additional support from Glasgow Life and colleagues across different services in NRS. The Council's Corporate Policy and NRS will support the survey and data analysis. It should be noted that this is a one- or two-person resource and the NIIF project needs to be carried out on top of their normal duties, therefore we need to be realistic about the amount of time that data will take to code and analyse. In addition, we do not have a data inputting

resource, so it is likely that one online survey will be used, with targeted engagement to support people to fill it out.

8. The next step will be a meeting with wider stakeholders in the community, to establish any resources that they have for community engagement and understand any recent, relevant community engagement that could contribute to the NIIF. This will enable us to agree the scope and themes of the survey and engagement.

9. In the pilots, communities were asked for any ideas that fitted within the capital spend categories for the NIIF – greenspace, street furniture etc. This led to a high number of unique ideas to be costed and brought to the Area Partnership. In Govan, for example, this has created over 1200 ideas: a fantastic number in terms of getting good community engagement, but difficult to manage in practice.

10. In Drumchapel/Anniesland, and going forward to 2025, we know that a lot of engagement has already been done in the community. Community councils and Third Sector organisations have good evidence of the needs of local communities. There are also several Council consultations that will provide evidence that can feed into the local priorities for the NIIF e.g. local development plan, liveable neighbourhoods, active travel and so on. Schools and young people will also have identified issues.

11. The Council has also been working with other partners such as the HSCP on greenspace development, to improve mental health. There may also have been work done via Thriving Places, locality plans or by communities currently developing Local Place Plans. In short, in every remaining ward, there will be a number of community and partner priorities that are waiting for funding to be delivered. However, these should be used as the basis for further engagement on the NIIF, rather than ideas set in stone. In some cases, the data may not be robust enough due to small numbers, or local priorities may have shifted in the last couple of years.

12. The point is to start from where communities already are, rather than with a blank slate. This will help focus the engagement to ideas that meet current expectations and add value to projects that already exist or are planned. While we anticipate that there will be an online survey rather than paper and voting boxes, we will deliver a similar range of methods to the pilots, to target various groups and help people fill out the survey, for example:

    - Attending community events and projects
    - Going to community cafes and drop-ins
    - Engagement with schools and youth projects
    - Targeting of specific groups who may have specific needs e.g. elderly and disabled people
    - Community walk/wheel abouts

13. It is important that this is agreed with the wider stakeholders and that they can organise their own engagement events, encouraging people to use the survey, so that all data is in one place. As before, the initial analysis of ideas will be brought to the Area Partnerships to agree costed projects to go forward, then another round of engagement will follow that, with the Area Partnership making all final decisions.

14. We will evaluate and review this process so that we can develop a model that will work going forward, as from 2025, we will need to scale this up to deliver engagement across several wards at a time. At this time, we have no additional resources for this, so learning from communities and partners will be crucial in developing a workable model.

Current position.

15. There was a discussion at the previous meeting regarding members' approach to allocating the NIIF in this ward i.e. what level of community engagement was preferred. The Communities Team is developing a programme of community engagement for 2025 based on those discussions and an update will be provided in due course.

Recommendations.

16. The Area Partnership is asked to note the contents of the report.