

1. Purpose of Report

To provide NLP Board with a report on key developments and issues related to the community and voluntary sector across North Lanarkshire.

2. Voluntary Sector Partnership Group (VSPG)

2.1 Remit

VSPG's current Terms of Reference (TOR) (agreed in 2012) state that the remit of VSPG is to:

“offer volunteers, community representatives and voluntary organisations active across North Lanarkshire a representative mechanism whereby the sector generally can support and contribute towards the design, development and delivery of outcomes contained within the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and the Community Plan.”

2.2 Participants

Participation in VSPG is open with the goal of achieving involvement of “appropriate geographic and thematic constituencies” across NL. Currently participation in VSPG includes representatives from:

- Community Forums
- thematic networks such as employability, advice and information, children and families, health and social care
- organisations working on key issues such as wellbeing and mental health.

2.3 Meetings

VSPG currently meets every two months, with most recent meetings held in December 2018 and Feb. 2019.

2.4 Support

VSPG does not have its own funding and is supported through Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire, using funding provided by North Lanarkshire Council (NLC).

3. VSPG Work Priorities for 2019-20

At VSPG's recent meetings in December 2018 and Feb. 2019, the following were agreed as priorities for 2019-20, with implementation supported by VANL staff.

3.1 The current Voluntary Sector Strategy (which ran until December 2019) would be updated, informed by consultation with the community and voluntary sector during March 2019. The updated strategy would be launched at the annual Community and Voluntary Sector conference on 4th June 2019.

3.2 The updated Voluntary Sector Strategy 2019-2022 and associated Action Plan would direct the work of the VSPG over the next three years. This would include the following.

- Support to the community and voluntary sector to participate meaningfully in development, delivery, evaluation and review of the new NL Community Plan and Participatory Budgeting. VSPG and VANL submitted an interim response to the emerging Community Plan in December 2018 (see Annexe One) through an NLC Community Planning Manager. Further information regarding consultation and participation in the next phase has yet to be provided.
- Support to the community and voluntary sector to contribute meaningfully to improved outcomes on priority areas such as poverty; homelessness; community safety and resilience; mental health and wellbeing; transport and mobility; green and environmental issues.
- Review of VSPG's Terms of Reference and strengthening of VSPG's participation and communication to improve its reach and impact, in line with the new Voluntary Sector strategy and Community Plan.
- Development of a formal agreement between the community and voluntary sector and public sector to support improved practice on key issues such as communication, engagement, funding, evaluation and reporting.
- Improved monitoring and evaluation of VSPG's work, including activities, outcomes and impact.
- Quarterly and annual reporting on VSPG's work and impact, including reports to the NLP Board.

Cover Report prepared by:

June Vallance, Chair VSPG and Maddy Halliday, CEO VANL

on behalf of VSPG 20.2.19

Annexe One:

A Shared Ambition: Delivering Inclusive Growth for North Lanarkshire

An Interim Response from Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire and Voluntary Sector Partnership Group 12th December 2018

1. Introduction

This paper provides some initial feedback on the proposed new partnership, community plan for North Lanarkshire “Delivering Inclusive Growth”.

This paper has been prepared by Maddy Halliday, CEO VANL (Maddy.halliday@vanl.co.uk) informed by discussion at two third sector meetings:

- Voluntary Sector Partnership Group, 4th December 2018.
- Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL) Board, 11th December 2018.

Maddy Halliday also participated in discussions at the NLP Officers’ Group and the CLD Partnership meeting during December 2018, where similar issues to those set out below were discussed.

2. General

2.1 The intention of having one, unifying plan for the statutory and third sector the whole of NL is welcomed.

2.2 The Plan must fulfil statutory requirements for a Local Outcome Improvement Plan and should be delivered through alignment of finance and all other strategic plans for the area including physical planning, housing, education, health and social care, public health, community learning and development, culture and leisure, voluntary sector development etc. **In other words, the Plan should be an integrated economic, social and environmental Plan for NL.** (The Plan could therefore readily encompass the existing LOIP priorities of building resilience, reducing poverty, reducing homelessness and improving wellbeing of looked after children and young people – plus other relevant outcomes.)

2.3 Development of the content, delivery and evaluation of the Plan must involve all sectors and partners, with genuine and meaningful involvement of citizens, communities and the third sector, as well as the public and private sectors. **VANL can support third sector involvement directly and work with the third sector and other partners to support citizen and community involvement.**

2.4 Progress must be evidenced and reported using reliable performance measures, which link to the Scottish Government’s national performance framework. Use of **Gross Value Added (GVA) measures should include quality dimensions in terms of inclusion and sustainability, as well as the monetary value of increased goods and services.**

2.5 There should be annual review of the Plan by all partners against progress with adaptations made if required.

3. Focus and Content of Plan

3.1 The plan should set out a clear vision is to improve quality of life, well-being and equality in NL through inclusive **and sustainable** growth - that is development of “a wellbeing and green economy and society”.

3.1.1 By **quality of life** we mean people’s social and economic circumstances and their built and natural environments are good and support their well-being **throughout life**. This includes:

- clean air and water and prevention of climate breakdown
- supportive and loving relationships
- adequate income
- affordable housing, transport and food
- life-long learning
- meaningful work (paid and volunteering)
- access to effective and timely health and social care.

3.1.2 By **wellbeing** we mean maximising people’s objective and subjective physical and mental health, which is strongly influenced by their quality of life.

3.1.3 By **inclusive** we mean an economy and society which:

- creates good employment that pays well (at least real living wage) and is fair and more secure
- ensures citizens maximise access to benefits they are entitled to
- provides affordable housing, transport and food
- provides access to supportive services including health and social care
- promotes equality and protects the human rights of everyone, with focussed support for all equality groups including women, disabled people, older people etc.

The above would increase individual and household income, reduce inequality and poverty (including in-work poverty) and reduce preventable demand for some public services, including health care.

We are particularly keen to see growth in NL community-based, not-for profit organisations, including trading charities and social enterprises to provide local jobs, goods and services with asset-lock, with any surplus re-invested back into the local economy and community.

3.1.4 By **sustainable** we mean two things.

- Economic growth is within environmental capacity and supports Scottish Government environmental policies, including green space, conservation, pollution and climate change targets. The Plan must minimise or eliminate negative impacts on the natural environment and create healthy built environments to protect public health and improve quality of life and wellbeing.
- Progress is sustained over time to maximise and continue improvements for current and future generations.

North Lanarkshire Voluntary Sector Partnership Group
Report to North Lanarkshire Partnership Board, February 2019

3.2 The Plan should refer explicitly to **people and** place, not only place, given evidence shows that place-based regeneration is most effective when combined with investment in “social infrastructure” including individual, family and community development, such as learning; family and parenting support; caring support; community cohesion and mutual aid supported by community groups, volunteering and community amenities.

3.3. In addition to investment in affordable housing, the plan must also deliver improved and affordable public transport that supports people’s access to learning, employment and amenities and to enable social connections and support. It is vital that public transport for rural areas and between the north and the south of NL is improved.

Annexe One ends