

Cabinet Meeting Resolution

Executive Forward Plan Reference	E2719
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Connecting Communities: Update

Date of Meeting	3-Dec-14
The Issue	<i>Sets out progress so far on the programme including on the Connecting Communities Forums, an update on Bath City governance, and recommends next steps</i>
The decision	<p>(1) To NOTE the progress made in implementing the Connecting Communities programme, particularly the establishment of the three Connecting Communities Forums in the Keynsham, Chew Valley and Somer Valley areas;</p> <p>(2) To NOTE the removal and reduction in duplication of meetings and therefore savings in staff time arising from this work;</p> <p>(3) To ASK the Divisional Director (Strategy and Performance) to continue to develop the work of the Forums in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Better understand local needs and priorities b) Engage effectively with parishes, partners and local people c) Continue to streamline local partnership arrangements and remove duplication <p>(4) To EXTEND the Connecting Communities Forum approach to Parish Cluster Groups 2 and 3 (encompassing Bathavon North, Bathavon South and Bathavon West wards);</p> <p>(5) To NOTE that the fourth Bath City Conference is currently proposed to take place in June 2015; and</p> <p>(6) To REQUEST officers to begin planning for a “conference”- style event for the parished area, comparable to the Bath City Conference.</p>
Rationale for decision	The establishment of Connecting Communities Forums in Keynsham, Chew Valley and Somer Valley has delivered a significant rationalisation of local engagement and reduced duplication and deployment of officer time at meetings. It has also laid the basis for longer-term, constructive conversations between Bath & North East Somerset Council, parish councils, partners and local communities. It is therefore considered appropriate to extend the approach to the remaining part of the parished area. In Bath, which is unparished, it is considered appropriate to await the outcomes of the review of community representation in the City before proceeding with the establishment of Forums. However, the Bath City Conference and other local engagement in the City will progress the overall approach to Connecting Communities, for example by “joining up” consultation events.
Other options considered	The option of not proceeding with the Connecting Communities “Forum” approach in the remainder of the parished areas was considered but it was considered that this would lead to less effective engagement with parishes and elected members in these areas.

The Decision is subject to Call-In within 5 working days of publication of the decision