

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	2nd March 2011	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2252
TITLE:	Community Enablement in Bath and North East Somerset	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1 – Community Enablement Fund: Profile		
Appendix 2 – Community Enablement projects in Bath & North East Somerset		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed framework for delivering investment in Community Enablement following budget decisions made at Full Council on 15th February. It proposes an overall approach to enabling communities in Bath and North East Somerset to address local needs and concerns.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet:

- 2.1 Agrees the overall approach to community enablement across Bath and North East Somerset as set out in this report
- 2.2 Notes the arrangements for each element of the Community Enablement Fund set out in Appendix One
- 2.3 Notes the examples of local initiatives identified in Appendix 2, along with potential next steps, and agrees that where possible the Community Enablement Fund will be used to build on and extend learning from this work
- 2.4 Agrees to update the Local Strategic Partnership on this report and to consider the appropriate LSP governance arrangements relating to the LAA Reward Grant

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The approach set out in this report will be delivered through a combination of existing budgets and the elements of the Community Enablement Fund which follow from decisions made at Council on 15th February.

4 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- *Building communities where people feel safe and secure*
- *Promoting the independence of older people*
- *Improving life chances of disadvantaged teenagers and young people*
- *Improving school buildings*
- *Sustainable growth*
- *Improving the availability of Affordable Housing*
- *Addressing the causes and effects of Climate Change*
- *Improving transport and the public realm*

5 THE REPORT

5.1 Bath and North East Somerset's 2009 Sustainable Community Strategy makes a commitment to "create communities where everyone contributes and everyone takes responsibility". As part of this commitment, the Council and its partners have undertaken a number of different initiatives designed to support and "enable" communities- and in particular to harness and support local "community capacity". Examples of some of these initiatives are set out in Appendix Two of this report, alongside options for further developments to build on this work.

5.2 The Localism Bill, published in December and currently at Committee Stage, provides an overall national context for many aspects of this work. For example, the proposed new "community rights" to "buy" and to "challenge" contained in the Bill may have the potential to involve communities more closely in service delivery and, where appropriate, in controlling local community facilities and assets. In addition, the Academy programme and GP commissioning present additional new ways of working with a more locally-based focus.

5.3 It is timely therefore to set out an overall approach to enabling and supporting communities across Bath and North East Somerset, and which the Community Enablement Fund is designed to further support and develop. The suggested approach builds on the learning from a number of the projects undertaken as well as on our key community strengths within Bath and North East Somerset. These include

- the highest participation in volunteering of any comparator area
- a high and growing satisfaction with involvement in decision-making.
- effective working relationships with the VCS, including work with the Compact
- our LSP Stronger Communities Delivery Partnership, which involves a wide range of local communities including Parishes, equalities and residents' associations

- 5.4 The range of projects set out in Appendix 2 also shows the impact achieved by the Council from supporting, enabling and, where appropriate, “pump-priming” initiatives that address specific local needs from the “bottom up”. In addition, they show the long-run benefits from working in areas most in need of help and support to develop their own capacity to improve their areas.
- 5.5 There is now the opportunity to use the Community Enablement Fund to extend the scope of this work, encourage innovation and spread the benefits of working with localities, more widely. The Community Enablement Fund comprises four different funding streams but which together are designed to progress this. The funding streams are:
1. The LSP Performance Reward Grant fund - £1.3m
 2. Council Youth Community Empowerment Fund - £150,000, of which £70,000 has already been allocated (see Appendix 1)
 3. Council fund to help disadvantaged communities, regeneration and localism projects - £336,000, of which £192,000 was allocated under the budget (see Appendix 1),
 4. The Ward Councillor Initiative - £130,000 per annum
- 5.6 The Cabinet will be considering the potential to top up the Community Enablement Fund to reflect allocations already made under the budget.
- 5.7 It should be noted that 1-3 in 5.5 above are purely one-off allocations so it will be vital to ensure that projects are agreed on this basis, are sustainable and boost long-run capacity in communities.
- 5.8 More details of these funds is set out in Appendix One, which also sets out the Council’s decisions with regard both to earmarking specific projects against headroom funds and delegations for decision-making. The following key principles are suggested to provide an overall framework to ensure the most effective use of these funding streams:
- Helping those who need it the most
 - Promoting civic pride
 - Local involvement in local solutions
 - Promoting democratic accountability
 - Investing for the long term
- 5.9 Examples of how these principles have been delivered in practice locally, and the outcomes achieved, are attached at Appendix 2. This also sets out a range of potential next steps to deliver each of the principles set out above. It is envisaged that whilst each fund will be managed as described, each of the funds will seek to work within the overall framework set out in this paper in order to maximise value and outcomes for the community. Final details, processes and timescales for these funds are currently being put in place.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 The development of the Council’s approach to enabling communities has been subject to testing against equalities criteria including analysis of “hard to reach” groups. Data on needs across our localities will continue to be analysed in detail to assess how best to help our most disadvantaged communities.

8 RATIONALE

8.1 It is appropriate for the Cabinet to receive a report on the approach to this issue given the decisions made at Council.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 Cabinet members; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer

10.2 Discussions have taken place on the Localism Bill with the LSP Stronger Communities Delivery Partnership and with Parishes Liaison.

11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

11.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Human Rights; Corporate; Health & Safety;

12 ADVICE SOUGHT

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

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Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	