

COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR BARROW

Meeting date: 17 March 2023

From: Assistant Director - Customer and Community Services

BARROW AREA PLANNING REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 *This report brings together information from across the Community teams including Community Development, Archives and libraries, and provides an update on work and agreed activity since the last meeting of the Committee.*

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

2.1 *The County Council's vision set out in the Council Plan 2018-2022 is to be "a Council that works with residents, businesses, communities and other organisations to deliver the best services possible within the available resources." The approach and work of the Local Committee directly contributes to this, and area based working, and shaping services locally is one of the key ways of delivering this vision.*

2.2 *The work of Barrow Local Committee, through its Area Plan and projects helps to achieve the Council Plan 2018-2022 outcomes, which are:*

- *People in Cumbria are healthy and safe*
- *People in Cumbria are well connected and thriving*
- *The economy in Cumbria is thriving and benefits everyone*

2.3 *The development, operation and monitoring of the Council Plan requires a focus on the Council's performance against the identified outcomes, increasingly understood through localities. Barrow Area Plan sets out three targeted priorities for the area, which are:*

- *Improving health and well-being and tackling poverty*
- *To support Cumbria's Early Help strategy which enables support for children, families, and young people*
- *Promoting sustainable economic growth and creating jobs.*

2.4 *The locally devolved funding is available for Local Committees to allocate within the area to support positive outcomes, targeted and mainstream, designed to improve outcomes for the communities of Barrow. This funding can be targeted to initiate new activity or to enhance/complement existing provision according to locally determined need.*

2.5 *Local Committee is mindful of equality issues and duly considers that its actions and decisions do not result in inequality of service provision or exclusion from participation. The work of Local Committee directly supports the Council's wider equalities agenda.*

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 *That Members note the updates in this report.*

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 This report provides Members with an update of the work of Barrow Local Committee and the Community Services Teams since its meeting of 16 January 2023 and outlines provisional and actual expenditure against Local Committee's budget as of 31 January 2023.

4.2 The team continue to lead, support and progress a range of work as outlined in this report. Members also continue to meet informally through virtual meetings to share information, discuss issues, and recommend courses of action. Both as part of Informal Local Committee, and as separate workshops, a range of discussions have taken place since January including

- 17th January - Children and Families Partnership
- 20th January – Know Your Neighbourhood Fund Discussion
- 30th January – Environment / Tree Group
- 3rd February – Cycling and Walking Update
- 8th February – Health and Wellbeing Partnership
- 23rd February – Joint Rural Committee
- 1st March – BAE Local Liaison Committee.

4.3 In addition to these specific meetings, Members also hold ad hoc meetings and workshops as needed, and also continue to be kept informed through regular communications from the Area Manager and Community Development Team.

Area Working and Community Services Update

4.4 As Local Committee are aware, the team locally continue to work to support area planning activity and priority areas of work including the cost-of-living crisis, Barrow Town Deal, and Borderlands. Key areas are highlighted below for Members' information.

4.5 **Barrow Town Deal Community Hubs and Earnse Bay Outdoor Centre-** This continues to be a major area of focus for the team and Members with each of the four centres progressing, and more detail is outlined below. The Monitoring & Evaluation Plan has also been developed and is currently under review.

- 4.6 Bram Longstaffe - The capital programmes team are currently working alongside appointed consultants to progress the tender documents to appoint a contractor to undertake the capital works at Bram Longstaffe.
- 4.7 A workshop also took place in January with members of the steering group to review the current community hub activity, utilisation, and review the finances for the community hub. Following this meeting an action plan was drawn up to support the further development of the community hub. The plan is split into three areas:
- Communications and Engagement (including leaflet promotion, social media development/promotion, website design, branding design)
 - Finance (including a focus on the community hub income and expenditure, grant agreements, room rental charges)
 - Community Hub Activity Delivery (including developing additional opportunities for hub activities and monitoring of town deal outcomes).
- 4.8 At the last project group meeting, there was also a discussion around the opportunity to develop some unique branding for the community hub including a name for the hub and a logo. The name that was agreed by the project group and Bram's Trustee Board was 'Bram Family & Wellbeing Centre'
- 4.9 This will be promoted via key communication channels including leaflets, banners and through the development of a new website and social media pages to further promote the centre in Barrow Island.
- 4.10 Town Centre Hub – As has been reported previously, Barrow Borough Council and The Forum are leading on the development of the town centre community hub.
- 4.11 As part of the work around this, a number of events and training programmes have commenced within the town centre hub, including:
- Digital Marketing attended by Barrow Market traders and levy payers from the Barrow Bid.
 - Business Start Up training delivered by Cumbria Chamber of Commerce on a quarterly basis.
 - A Brilliant Barrow Inspirational Speaker Event took place in February to inspire and further motivate the town to embrace change from an individual and business perspective. The event was attended by 72 people made up of key stakeholders, Council Members and the general public.
 - Twilight Event Barrow Market – A Taste of things to come event to give the general public a sense of how the Market will evolve into an evening shopping and entertainment venue
- 4.12 Consultation is also planned with Public Health, NHS and County Council Officers to discuss the Health and Wellbeing element of the Town Centre Community Hub to ensure service delivery are not duplicated.
- 4.13 Ormsgill – The Ormsgill Centre continues to thrive with a wide range of activity and service delivery taking place.

4.14 Family Action are providing some additional universal groups as the current groups are currently over-subscribed. A library volunteer co-ordinator has also started to work with Family Action's early year's groups to encourage further use of the library at Ormsgill.

4.15 Ormsgill Stronger Together have undertaken an annual review of their activity provision which includes:

OST Activity	Outcome
Community Fridge (operational since May 2022)	The team have received 3,735 visitors to the fridge and saved 29,735.65KG of food from landfill.
Christmas Hampers (2022)	The team handed out 26 food/care hampers and 12 gift bags
Bingo (commenced March 2022)	257 people attending overall and approximately 28 people attending monthly.
Coffee morning (commenced February 2022)	Numbers have increased to approximately 40 people a month. 311 people have attended the coffee morning in total.
StitchAbility	12 members are in the group currently and the Asda Foundation have donated 3 sewing machines. The class are currently making draught excluders, and these will be donated to the community fridge for people in need.
Warm Spot (commenced January 2023)	14 people attended opening day.

4.16 Earnse Bay - The planning application for the Earnse Bay Outdoor Centre was discussed by Barrow Borough Council. The application has been referred to Central Government office who will have 21 days to review the application and make a decision as to whether the application is referred back to the local planners, called in to the Secretary of State, or ask for a further extension to consider a decision.

4.17 Additional work is taking place to develop the operating model for the Earnse Bay Outdoor Centre including understanding potential running costs for the building.

4.18 A small working group has also been established to look at ways the Earnse Bay Outdoor Centre and Community Hubs projects can be further promoted. An A4 leaflet is being developed to promote the Earnse Bay work and community hub activity. For example Banners are being developed which will be located at key locations throughout the Borough.

4.19 An information board for Earnse is in development which will be located near the site and will contain information about the project which will be updated as the project progresses.

- 4.20 Pop-up boards and banners have also been requested so that they can be taken to a range of engagement events to promote Earnse Bay and the Community Hubs project, as part of the ongoing work of the Community Development Team and partners.
- 4.21 **Dalton Borderlands Place Programme** – The Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) have been received and reviewed by Ekosgen consultants who have been liaising individually with project leads to undertake a clarification process to ensure all relevant information is considered.
- 4.22 Four PIDs were developed for Dalton which focussing on:
- Highstreet grants scheme (including links to capital grants to support culture, heritage and arts)
 - Dalton Station Gateway Improvements
 - Connecting Dalton through Active Travel
 - Active Lifestyles (Developing a community hub within Dalton Leisure Centre)
- 4.23 The PID's were submitted for consideration at the 2 March meeting of the Dalton Town Team. Members of this group discussed the proposals and put forward their suggestions. This feedback is now being reviewed by officers and the consultants.
- 4.24 The Borderlands programme will move across to the new Westmorland and Furness authority. The next steps will be for the consultants' recommendations to be presented for approval to submit to the Borderlands Partnership and facilitate the process for schemes to move to the next stage of developing project level business cases
- 4.25 The Community Partnership also continues to meet regularly and is supporting a range of work including on-going progress of developing the community plan for Dalton. The partnership is also progressing some 'quick win' project ideas which were highlighted at a working group workshop in November. One of these projects includes the development of a 'Dalton Day' celebrating Dalton which is scheduled to take place on 10 June. The Chair of this partnership continues to sit as part of the Town Team and feeds in the activity, views and issues from this partnership for wider consideration.
- 4.26 **Cost of Living** – As Members are aware, and as has previously been reported, the rising cost of living poses significant challenges and hardship for many families and individuals, and this has become a key area of focus not only for Local Committee, but also for the Barrow Local Resilience Group and partners across the area.
- 4.27 Local Committee has continued to use its funding to help, including using the recent additional Household Support Fund money which is now supporting a number of schools to provide food and activity outside of school time.
- 4.28 Community Prosperity Partnership (CPP) – The CPP is bringing together third-sector organisations who are supporting the communities in the Barrow Borough area to work collaboratively. It is focusing on the cost of living with three main key themes as part of its work – warm spots, food and fuel and emergency referrals. Funding of £200k has been awarded by Barrow Borough Council to support this.

- 4.29 The partnership is keen to ensure the work it undertakes is more sustainable and maximises funding through various sources, and doesn't keep applying the 'sticking plaster effect.' Many of the warm spots set up by community groups and volunteers are building up relationships and trust with residents; engaging and connecting, meeting needs and reducing social isolation. The partnership wishes to see the provision of warm welcome spots all year round to enable those connections continue.
- 4.30 Community groups providing food and fuel support are seeing newly vulnerable residents. In addition, churches and other community venues are building those relationships, trust, and connections with residents through their own services and activities. Agencies are seeing the value of providing outreach support to these places and groups who are supporting these social connections. Residents can then access the 'right front door' for them and their needs, depending on where they have the relationship and trust. From there, organisations work together to support the individuals and families to try to address root causes of situations.
- 4.31 Running in parallel to this work is the Harri Bus programme, going right into the heart of communities and demonstrating good qualitative and quantitative data through conversations between agencies and residents who may not be engaging with services. The joining up of this work through feeding into the partnership provides additional opportunities to understand, learn and develop services to meet community needs.
- 4.32 Organisations within the partnership are also starting to work together to understand what each other's core offer is, and how they can all add value to each other's organisations, services, and residents. Each organisation does not have to provide everything to each resident, rather they need to be able to connect the individual or family to the right support through the relevant organisation, using their relationships and knowledge.
- 4.33 At the last meeting, the partnership had developed its brand Furness for You supporting residents to Get Help, Give Help. This is engaging residents who are in need to then become more confident, resilient to want to help others. Residents may already be able to give help. The ethos is getting communities to support one another initially enabled through support from organisations and services.
- 4.34 To enable this to happen the Partnership is developing a collaborative project, and has identified a need for a community connector/volunteer co-ordinator role, to be the link between organisations and communities. This is not a new concept with a similar type of role having been identified through the Community Renewal Funding bid. Sitting alongside this will need to be an organisation that can support with social media, marketing, and communication.
- 4.35 For the project it is envisaged that there would be a tiered approach with tier one as a universal offer for the Barrow Borough, tier two – supporting the most vulnerable, tier three – Central and Hindpool targeted intervention project. This will build on all the good practice galvanising the current work that is going on in the community. Tier 3 also aligns with the ICC and Population Health priority wards work and funding which is looking at the

current Population Health and ICC data whilst also understanding qualitative research and community engagement. This is alongside looking at other social issues and wider determinants faced by residents and families in Hindpool and Central wards.

- 4.36 Sources of funding to apply for have been identified and a small grants sub-group will be set up to look to progress the project through a collaborative funding bid.
- 4.37 All this work can look to link and further influence the Furness Opportunities and Challenges report produced by Cumbria Community Foundation.
- 4.38 **Priority Wards Work** - as noted above, the Community Development Team are working alongside NHS and Public Health colleagues focussing on two priority wards in the borough, Central and Hindpool. These two wards have the highest non planned admissions/attendances to A&E and are also amongst the most deprived wards nationally.
- 4.39 Health funding will allow a 6-month project to be undertaken to understand the issues around why the admission rate is greater in these areas. To do this the team are working within these communities to capture conversations, conduct targeted surveys and hold focus groups to start to really understand why those communities access the services, and what can be offered in a local setting to reduce A&E admissions to better serve the needs and wants of the community.
- 4.40 As pressure mounts at Furness General Hospital, and within the Primary Care Network, it is recognised that services need to work with communities to help and educate them to 'choose well'* when they are ill/injured.
- 4.41 The Group are also funding Furness Education and Skills Partnership to create and deliver a project that will involve all 6 primary schools in these wards. The project will involve engaging teachers, children, and their families/carers to start to think about their choices re. accessing health services. They will also host focus groups; have conversations, and run a competition to design a fridge magnet (every family will receive one) about 'choosing Well' that the children and families can relate too.
- 4.42 All these strands of information will be collated and written into a report that will be presented to Population Health Strategic Group to help them reshape service provision based on the feedback of the two priority wards.

*Example of Risedale Surgery Choose Well Poster



Barrow Libraries and Archive Service

- 4.43 **Libraries** - There has been a significant increase in people attending regular and one-off events in our libraries throughout December and January. There was also a surge in new memberships across the Barrow network in December with more people joining in Barrow Group than any other library in the county. In December we engaged with 1,931 people and 848 people in January. Engagement takes place both in and outside the library.
- 4.44 The Service has been able to increase the number of activities across the Barrow group due to the appointment of 2 new full-time staff. A new Story Craft session has been launched every Saturday which has attracted high numbers of young people attending. So much so that we have split the session in to 4 after 91 people turned up to take part. In January, we welcomed a storyteller to share the Japanese tradition of Kamishibai street-theatre. The aim of the storytelling is to help fine motor skills and support literacy and reading. Lots of positive feedback was received from parents. We hosted an all-day Lego session as part of International LEGO Day where fantastic creations were constructed, and children participated in a LEGO minifigure treasure trail and coloured in fantastic drawings. This was a Feed & Read event, so 20 families also went away with the ingredients to make a meal at home.
- 4.45 The English Café continues to support foreign nationals and numbers are increasing. In December library staff donated items to create Christmas stockings for 40 men containing toiletries, chocolates etc and in January we commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day at the café with support from BarrowFull by creating an Ordinary People themed display. People continue to benefit from the Databank project by receiving free SIM cards through funding from Good Things Foundation. The Library Outreach Officer also visited St Mark's Clothing Bank to provide those living in data poverty with SIM cards.
- 4.46 As part of the January Challenge, (a library initiative to support mental health where people are challenged to undertake a daily craft activity throughout January), the Outreach Officer visited the Salvation Army and promoted our Reading Well for Mental Health Resource Boxes and Mind in Furness Men's Group. An Interview took place with Cando FM for their Saturday Health & Wellbeing show to promote these resources and the library in general. Several boxes have been delivered to Family Action Ormsgill to support adults, Teens and Children. We also launched our Book Bingo which is like the Summer Reading Challenge but for adults. It's designed to encourage adults to read more books and they have the chance of winning a prize.
- 4.47 We have welcomed many schools back into our libraries with class visits on a weekly basis in Barrow, Roose and Walney.
- 4.48 Barrow Library also has a new Friendship group which is run in partnership with the Council's Health & Wellbeing Team. Around 12-15 people regularly attend each week. People can talk about reading and crafts to support events on the library calendar. A new friendship group will be set up at Dalton Community Centre from February.

- 4.49 The service has also welcomed Scouts and cubs into the library to support their Reading Badge, promoted library resources at the Baptist church for older adults with the support of Age UK, visited The Croft to support adults with disabilities and visited families in Ormsgill Community Centre as part of National Storytelling Week.
- 4.50 **Archives** - The Archivist gave a talk called Barrow 155 covering the history of Barrow from 1867 when the charter was granted and Barrow became a borough, to 2022.
- 4.51 In January local historian and author, Gill Jepson, alongside archivist Susan Benson gave a talk to a large audience on the history of Furness Abbey with supporting archives. Susan also hosted a training session for Cumbria County History Trust whose volunteers are researching the listed buildings in Barrow
- 4.52 Over recent months, James Fisher and Sons PLC deposited some of their older archives for permanent preservation in Barrow Archive Centre. Collection includes photographs, details of ships, minutes of the Seamen's Mission and Home on Barrow Island
- 4.53 The Advisory Board of the Regional Heritage Centre, Lancaster University celebrated its 50th anniversary in January, which the Barrow Archivist as the representative of the Archive Service, attended.

Local Committee Budget

- 4.54 Members have continued to monitor and review their budgets in line with the significantly changed situation, including the additional funding that was received to support communities and activity during the pandemic and more recently the Cost-of-Living Crisis. The full discretionary budget delegated to Local Committee is detailed in Appendix 1, providing the latest financial position including the committee expenditure and the remaining unallocated resources up to 31st January 2023.

5.0 OPTIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information only.

6.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report which is for information.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This report provides the Local Committee with a comprehensive update on its budgets and related matters delegated to the Committee

Simon Higgins
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03 March 2023

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Local Committee Budget

Electoral Divisions: All Barrow

Executive Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny? If so, give details below.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A

N.B. If an executive decision is made, then a decision cannot be implemented until the expiry of the eighth working day after the date of the meeting – unless the decision is urgent and exempt from call-in and necessary approvals have been obtained.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

No previous relevant decisions

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Not considered by Overview and Scrutiny

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers

REPORT AUTHOR

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