

## **WEST Lothian COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS NETWORK (CEPN)**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **1. Objective**

The West Lothian Community Engagement Practitioners Network is the lead group that will progress the actions detailed in the Community Planning Partnerships Community Engagement Plan. The main aim of the Community Engagement Practitioners Network is to improve and embed community engagement across West Lothian Community Planning Partnership.

#### **2. Context**

West Lothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is fully committed to the principles and practice of community engagement. There is a renewed emphasis on Community Planning Partnerships to improve their approach to community engagement. This is evident in both in the guidance on Single Outcome Agreements and in Audit Scotland's report on 'Improving Community Planning in Scotland' which states *that 'CPP's need to extend and improve their approach to engaging with communities if the potential of local people to participate, shape and improve local services is to be realised' (March 2013)*

A Community Engagement Plan has been developed as part of the Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2023. This plan is one of the enabling strategies that will support delivery of the outcomes set out within the SOA. The plan aims to further embed community engagement across the Partnership and develop clearer more consistent structures to improve community engagement practice.

#### **3. Activity**

The main activity of the Community Engagement Practitioners Network will be to progress the actions detailed in the Community Engagement Plan. The Network will largely focus on practical actions that will improve community engagement practice across the partnership, utilising existing links and structures within organisations and the community.

The network will be involved in taking forward activities that will help to;

- Develop an agreed understanding of community engagement and its desired outcomes across all partners
- Build the capacity of staff, community groups and individuals in relation to community engagement
- Share and learn about community engagement practice
- Develop structures to share information on planned community engagement activity
- Develop structures to share findings of community engagement activity between partners
- Develop processes for determining who needs to be engaged with at what level
- Develop processes which consider the most appropriate ways to involve and engage communities.

#### **4. Membership and Structure**

The membership of the CEPN is open to any individual from across the Community Planning Partnership who is involved in developing and delivering community engagement. There is no limit to the number of representatives who can participate and members can self select or be invited to join.

The CEPN will meet on a quarterly basis and report directly to the Community Planning Steering Group. Meetings will be scheduled prior to the Community Planning Steering Group to ensure that work is reported on and recommendations can be made and work taken forward as a result. Work to progress the community engagement plan will be ongoing.

##### **4.1 Role of Chair**

The group will be chaired by the Community Planning Officer. The role of the chair will be to provide leadership to the groups work and coordinate meetings and activities. The Community Planning Officer will ensure that progress from the CEPN is reported to the Community Planning Steering Group.

##### **4.2 Role of Group members**

Group members will be representatives from organisations from across the Community Planning Partnership as well as community representatives and other stakeholders. Their role will be to take an active part in developing and delivering activities to roll out the actions in the Community Engagement Plan. They will also help to strengthen and promote the work of the CEPN through their respective organisations. Members will be encouraged to use their experience and knowledge of community engagement to help shape activities and develop practice to improve community engagement across the partnership.

#### **5. Resources and timescale**

The CEPN will not require any additional resources to function. Members of the group will participate in the CEPN as part of their workload. The group will be supported by the Community Planning Partnership. The CEPN will meet on a regular basis and there is no fixed timescale for its existence.