

Report Title	Community Power
Meeting	Communities and Environment Scrutiny Committee
Meeting Date	23 April 2024
Report Author	Tracey Ingham, Assistant Director Safe and Strong Communities
Lead Cabinet Member(s)	Cllr Virginia Taylor - Cabinet Member for Sustainable Communities and Localities
Wards Affected	All
Public. Part Exempt, or Fully Exempt	Public
Appendices (if any)	Appendix 1: Community Power update presentation

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Community Power project has progressed significantly following the presentation to scrutiny in 2023.
- 1.1.1 New Local commissioned as our strategic partner
 - 1.1.2 Project commencement and progress with engagement activity
 - 1.1.3 Identification of pathfinder activity progressing
 - 1.1.4 Successful growth bid
 - 1.1.5 Training package commissioned
- 1.2 The attached presentation updates the committee on the project and its next steps.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, Communities and Environment Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Receive the Community Power project update including;
- 2.1.1 Project timeline
 - 2.1.2 Engagement activity undertaken,
- 2.2 Provide feedback and input regarding the strategic vision for community power

3. Information: the Rationale & Evidence for the Recommendations

- 3.1 The Community Power project is progressing at pace and the vision and strategy will be taken to Cabinet in July and Full Council in September.
- 3.2 Pathfinders for the organisation are currently being identified and scoped, to ensure a spread of activity organisationally and geographically. This will include activity focussing on place, system wide projects and internal processes.

4. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (People, Climate, Communities, Economy and Culture, Customers, Workforce)

- 4.1 For communities – confident, empowered, resilient communities. Outcomes for the project include:
 - i. Strong, vibrant, and resilient communities with greater social connectedness
 - ii. Communities are happier, and healthier with better long-term health outcomes.

5. Consultation Outcomes

- 5.1 There has been wide ranging engagement including with Cabinet, Locality Boards, officers, partners, local stakeholders and communities through workshops, one-to-one interviews, community drop ins and facilitated events. The headline findings from this activity will be provided to the Committee in the presentation.

6. Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 **Do nothing** – Continue to operate in the current way we do and not move to develop community powered ways of working beginning with this initial phase of developing a vision and strategy. This is not feasible as work has already commenced and expectation raised. In addition, this is built into the community focus element of the Council's operating model.

7. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 7.1 To ensure Scrutiny can continue to influence and shape the strategy and vision for Community Power in Westmorland and Furness.

8. Climate and Biodiversity Implications

- 8.1 The development of a vision and strategy will not result in climate and biodiversity implications however, the subsequent ways of working, projects and pathfinders initiated will and as such an impact assessment will be required as part of the projects. It is expected that working with our communities in this way will have a positive impact on climate and biodiversity as we continue to work to have strong, vibrant, and resilient communities that are happier, and healthier with better long-term health outcomes.

9. Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.** There are no direct legal and governance implications arising from the report. Advice will be provided in relation to any arising legal and governance aspects of the Community Power project as it develops. (JK 15.04.24)**Human Resources Health Wellbeing and Safety Implications**

10.1 There are no HR Health Wellbeing and Safety implications based on the information contained in the report.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 There are no Financial Implications based on the information contained within the report.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications (please ensure these are compliant with the EIA Guidance)

13. An equalities screening has been completed. Developing the Council's ways of working in this way will ensure communities are at the centre of our ways of working and decision making, including those with protected characteristics therefore having a positive impact on marginalised communities.

All Equality Protected Characteristics will have positive impacts through the outcomes, for this programme.

14. Background Documents

14.1 None