

EX90. Closer to Communities & Community Choices Report

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on the progress of the Closer to Communities and Community Choices Change Project. This was a Council of the Future priority project. It reported to the Communities Workstream Board and supported the Council's Corporate Plan Community Priority and delivered on the Enabled Communities outcome.

Throughout the project's three-year timeline, there would be fifteen anchor organisations established with the knowledge, skills and confidence to take leadership in their own community development and organisational management. This would reduce the need for direct Council development support and increase community capacity to collaborate with Falkirk Council to meet shared aims. Council support would take a more enabling approach and increase the use of third sector services that also offer support.

Whilst the projects had already made significant progress there were future benefits which included a potential saving of £480,000 over 3 years through reduced staff costs and a reduction in hall maintenance costs from the Community Learning and Development Budget.

The Community Choices and Closer to Communities project provided the opportunity to radically change the relationship between communities and the Council from a dependency culture to one of independence where strong community organisations had the knowledge, skills, confidence and resources to take forward activities and initiatives that met their community needs best.

Over the next 6 months there would be focus on progressing the delivery of Pilot Phase 2 of Community Choices, work towards the delivery of key performance targets, develop capacity building and anchor organisation plans across the Council area. There was also work with CVS Falkirk to develop a Community Leadership Network/Forum and to support the transfer of 5 Community Assets.

Decision

The Executive noted:-

- (1) the progress of the Closer to Communities and Community Choices Project, and**
- (2) that the savings from this project had been agreed in the business plan.**