



## FULL COUNCIL

Wednesday, 23 November 2022

<b>Subject</b>	Continuation of East Suffolk Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets
<b>Report by</b>	Councillor Letitia Smith, Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism
<b>Supporting Officers</b>	Nicole Rickard, Head of Communities <a href="mailto:Nicole.rickard@east Suffolk.gov.uk">Nicole.rickard@east Suffolk.gov.uk</a>  Luke Bennett, Partnerships Manager <a href="mailto:Luke.bennett@east Suffolk.gov.uk">Luke.bennett@east Suffolk.gov.uk</a>

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is <b>NOT</b> in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards

## Purpose and high-level overview

### **Purpose of Report:**

To seek commitment to continue to support the East Suffolk Community Partnership Board and eight individual Community Partnerships, and the Councillor Enabling Budgets, including by investing the necessary resources and funding to enable their continuation.

### **Options:**

- i) Invest funding and other resources as laid out in this report to further embed Community Partnerships as an effective mechanism for Councillors to engage with their communities and work in partnership with other stakeholders to deliver lasting solutions to local priorities. To continue the Councillor Enabling Communities Budgets.

#### Advantages:

- Build on the excellent impact Community Partnerships are already having on the ground in East Suffolk Communities as laid out in this report.
- Continue to increase the total value of the match funding and resources levered in by the Community Partnership Board, and the eight individual Community Partnerships, against their core budget.
- Further increase the Council's reputation as an organisation that takes an innovative, collaborative approach to working with its key stakeholders, including East Suffolk communities, to meet its vision and objectives
- Enable Councillors to continue to support small scale grassroots projects emerging within their wards through the Enabling Communities Budgets.

#### Disadvantages:

- None identified – other than the financial investment

- ii) Continue the Community Partnership Board, Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets but invest a reduced amount of funding and resources than those laid out in this report.

#### Advantages:

- Reduced investment by the Council.

#### Disadvantages:

- Reduced impact of Community Partnerships in their communities
- Potential reduction in value for money as match funding reduces.
- Reputational risk amongst communities and partner organisations who have invested time and resources into making the Community Partnerships work.
- Reduced impact at ward level in terms of number of projects funded through Enabling Communities Budgets

- iii) Discontinue Community Partnerships and identify an alternative way/ways for the Council to develop solutions to local issues in collaboration with their communities.

#### Advantages:

- None identified, during the development of Community Partnerships, extensive work was carried out to identify, and plan in detail, the best model for East Suffolk.

**Disadvantages:**

- Another solution would need to be developed to address the concerns raised during the consultation on the creation of East Suffolk Council over the combined effect of fewer councillors with larger wards and populations to serve.
- Potential reputational damage amongst communities and partner organisations who have worked with us to invest time and resources into making the Community Partnerships work.
- Loss of momentum and three years of effort to maximise the impact of the Community Partnerships and Board, including through the Covid-19 pandemic
- Loss of impact at grassroots level after four years of investment through Enabling Communities Budgets

**Recommendations:**

**That Full Council:**

1. Agree the recommendation of Cabinet to continue to support and enable the Community Partnership Board and the eight Community Partnerships (one for each of the areas shown on the map at Appendix 1 to this report) until the end of March 2027.
2. Agree to continue to support the Enabling Communities Budgets at the current level (£7,500 per Councillor) until the end of March 2027.
3. Commit the £1,064,000 funding per annum for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years from New Homes Bonus, and to fund at a similar level for the following two years, subject to the funding being available
4. Endorse the purpose, remit, governance and structure of Community Partnerships in East Suffolk, as set out in this report, and continue to review the impact of the Community Partnerships annually through an annual monitoring report

## Corporate Impact Assessment

**Governance:**

During the consultation process on the creation of East Suffolk Council concerns were expressed about the larger wards which were proposed, and the increased populations in each, then averaging 3,670 residents per Councillor, and now 4,552 per councillor. There was also concern about the size of the geographical areas of each ward to be covered by the 55 newly elected Councillors. It was anticipated that it would be a challenge for Councillors to develop and maintain good working relationships with the Town and Parish Councils in their wards, as some would have more than 40 Parish Councils and Meetings to attend.

Therefore, the Constitution and Governance Working Group of the Shadow Authority for the Council, at its meeting on 22/10/19, endorsed the concept of Community Partnerships as an effective means to address these concerns. The Council's Constitution acknowledges the importance of collaboration in assisting it to meet its vision and objectives.

Since their establishment, the Council has been the accountable body for Community Partnerships. The Chair of each Community Partnership is an East Suffolk Councillor, with several Vice Chairs from partner organisations.

A role description has been developed for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of a Community Partnership, to assist them in their role and this can be found in the Council's Constitution. The role description covers Accountability, Purpose and Activity, Governance, Ethical Standards and Relationships. The Community Partnership Chairmen are also entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA), which is currently £2,587.57 per year. It is proposed that this allowance should continue.

To facilitate collaborative working and secure maximum buy in from our key partners, it is proposed that Community Partnerships should continue to host interactive and participatory meetings and workshops rather than formal 'area committees'. Meetings will be held in the Community Partnership area in a suitable, accessible venue and/or online.

The Enabling Communities Budgets are administered by the Funding Team, which sits within the Economic Development and Regeneration Service, working closely with the Head of Communities.

**ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:**

At Paragraph 13 of the Summary of the Council's Constitution, on page 15, under the heading "Partnership Working", ESC acknowledged the importance of collaboration, in assisting it to meet its vision and objectives. It specifically stated that the Council may establish up to eight Community Partnerships which would cover the district.

The first priority of the 'Enabling our Communities' section of the Council's Strategic Plan states: "We will facilitate Community Partnerships, to connect people and places at a local level, encourage collective problem solving and ensure a needs-based approach to delivering local solutions to local issues...enabling East Suffolk voices to be heard."

The Council's Enabling Communities Strategy explains more about how our ambitions around enabling our communities are being delivered through Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets. The Strategy is accompanied by an Enabling Communities Toolkit which has been used by individual Community Partnerships to support problem solving in their Community Partnership area.

**Environmental:**

To date the eight individual Community Partnerships have generally not identified the environment as a priority, feeling that this agenda was already being progressed through other partnerships and organisations. The exception to this is the Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership's 'Environmental Care' initiative. Going forward the Partnerships would continue to have the potential to deliver environment impacts and benefits in their communities.

The Community Partnership Board Transport and Travel Programme is helping enable the delivery of East Suffolk Council Strategic Plan's Environment Theme aspirations in several key areas. In particular, the programme is supporting the 'Caring for our environment' pillar of the ESC plan on the 'Lead by example' and 'Protection, education, influence' priorities by improving access to demand responsive public transport in rural areas. This

will help reduce car journeys, supporting Suffolk and the nation's net zero emissions targets.

**Equalities and Diversity:**

The ambition of the Board and Community Partnerships is to focus on the issues that really matter to local communities, considering and reflecting the needs of all ten local protected characteristic groups. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken when the Community Partnerships were first established, and is still relevant, and EqlAs are undertaken on individual projects developed by the Board and eight Community Partnerships where appropriate.

The Board has funded a rural proofing programme, led by Community Action Suffolk, to ensure benefit across all parts of the District and that all Community Partnerships are thinking 'rural' in commissioning, developing and delivering project activity.

**Financial:**

The total cost of supporting the Community Partnerships, Board (and associated delivery activity) and the Enabling Communities Budgets at the current level of £7,500 per Councillor for all 55 Councillors is currently £1,064,000 per annum. The total cost of continuing Community Partnerships, the Board and the Enabling Communities Budgets for four years is therefore just over £4.25 million.

It is proposed that this funding should come from the New Homes Bonus (as in the last four years). Whilst there is uncertainty as to whether there will be a further round of NHB funding in 2023/24, there is sufficient funding in the NHB pot to enable the full costs of both Community Partnership and ECBs to be met in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Council's NHB allocation, if any, will be notified in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement due in December 2022.

The CP budgets are/and will continue to be allocated against clear criteria (linked to the ESC Business Plan) designed to ensure that funding is not used for purposes beyond the ESC's powers or indeed the law. A robust assessment of each project is currently, and will be in the future, undertaken by the Funding Team of all projects and this is/will be presented to the Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism for sign off. Monitoring would be undertaken to ensure that each project achieves its intended outcomes.

Similarly the ECB's are allocated by Councillors against clear criteria set out in the guidance notes [ECB-Guidance.pdf \(eastsoffolk.gov.uk\)](https://eastsoffolk.gov.uk) and within the application form which can be found at [ECB-Application.docx \(live.com\)](https://eastsoffolk.gov.uk) .

The proposed funding allocation for four years through the New Homes Bonus is shown below. It is proposed that Cabinet recommend that funding be agreed for FY 2023-24 to ensure that Community Partnerships continue to operate, and each Councillor has an Enabling Communities Budget until the new Council is in a position to decide on funding after that.

	2023/34 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	Total £'000
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Community Partnerships [8 x £25,000)	£200	£200	£200	£200	£800
Community Partnership Board	£300	£300	£300	£300	£1,200
Resourcing and Engagement [Partnerships Manager, Lowestoft Communities Officer 0.5FTE, Funding Officer 0.5FTE, Room Hire, VCSE Engagement, Town and Parish Council Engagement]	£152	£156	£160	£164	£632k
Enabling Communities Budgets	£412	£412	£412	£412	£1,648
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,064</b>	<b>£1,068</b>	<b>£1,072</b>	<b>£1,076</b>	<b>£4,280</b>

**Human Resources:**

Currently the funding available through New Homes Bonus supports three staff – the Partnerships Manager and two part time roles in the Communities and Funding Teams to provide additional support for the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership area due to its size (almost double the population of other Community Partnerships) and funding processes associated with the Community Partnerships respectively.

**ICT:**

There are no ICT implications associated with the proposal to extend the Community Partnerships or Enabling Communities Budgets.

**Legal:**

Legal and Democratic Services are full embedded in the planning and operation of the Community Partnerships and Community Partnership Board. The Head of Service is part of the Community Partnership Delivery Group.

**Risk:**

The key risk of not continuing to fund and support the Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets is a reputational one – significant investment of resources has been made into establishing the Community Partnerships and Board, sustaining them through the Covid-19 pandemic and continually seeking to improve the way in which they work and their impact. Particular effort has been made to engage Town and Parish Councils and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in the partnerships, working collaboratively with (and providing funding to enable this) with Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) and Community Action Suffolk (CAS).

The ECBs have operated since 2014 in the Suffolk Coastal area and since the new Council was formed in 2019 across the whole East Suffolk area. More than £1.4 million has been allocated since May 2019. In 2020 all Councillors allocated £1,000 each to the Covid Community Response Fund to enable the response to the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2022/23 almost all Councillors have allocated £1,000 to the Ease the Squeeze programme to mitigate the impacts of the rising cost of living.

**External Consultees:**

In 2021, a 'deep dive' Peer Challenge of East Suffolk Community Partnerships was undertaken in advance of the full LGA Peer Challenge of East Suffolk Council.

The Peer Challenge Team consisted of:  
Steven Pleasant, Chief Executive, Tameside Council & Accountable Officer at Tameside and Glossop CCG  
Cllr Isobel Darby, Buckinghamshire Council  
Rachel Joyce, Director of Corporate Affairs, Harrogate Borough Council  
Rob Gregory, Assistant Director Communities and Neighbourhoods, Stevenage Borough Council

And was supported by:  
James Mehmed, LGA Peer Challenge Manager  
Rachel Stevens, LGA Project Support Officer

The challenge took place over three days 12 – 14 October 2021 and focussed on people, process and outcomes. Feedback from the team was hugely positive, highlighting the 'scale of opportunity' for Community Partnerships. See section 1.2 below for the key outcomes of the Peer Challenge.

A selection of statements of support from Members of the Community Partnership Board are below:

*"East Suffolk Council showed vision and a desire to take practical action to support local communities by the setting up of the Community Partnership structure covering the whole of the Council area but localised to deliver the vision and financial support through 8 local Community Partnership groups. The 8 groups involve a range of stakeholders and have already promoted a compelling range of practical projects and support for those led by others. Local, especially rural, transport needs are very much on the Community Partnership radar, and I continue to be proud to have been asked to chair the Transport and Travel Group reporting to the CP Board."*

Alexander Nicoll, Board Member and Chair of the Transport and Travel Task and Finish Group

*"From their conception I have always been a huge supporter of community partnerships. They really represent the new way of working in local government by reaching out to communities to understand their concerns and then helping to empower them to find solutions. Through empirical evidence and practical experiences we manage to drill down to get the help where it is needed most. The variety of projects across the district clearly illustrates that no two communities are the same and by allowing the local community partnership autonomy in their decision*

*making, East Suffolk continues to embed community first into its projects”*

James Mallinder, Chair Woodbridge, Melton and Deben Peninsular CP

*The approach taken by East Suffolk in establishing the Community Partnership model is unique and effective. I know this through involvement in other organisations, such as the East of England Leadership Board of Business in the Community. Several businesses are keen to get further engaged with their local communities and to help tackle the difficult challenges we are experiencing post pandemic and in the cost of living crisis. Many of the ideas generated in the BitC network are already well developed by the CPs and the overall Board. I have raised the CP model here as a perfect way of businesses, local authorities, the voluntary sector and communities working together and identifying efficient and productive ways of making a real difference to those most in need in our local area. After undertaking some research into other districts and boroughs in the six counties of the East of England, no other has adopted such an approach. In my view this means it is harder to coordinate, inform and make a difference. We are lucky to have our Community Partnerships, the full throttled support of councillors and officers. Bravo East Suffolk!*

Tom McGarry, Board Member

*“Community Partnerships cast the widest possible net in order to ensure that every community partner who may have interest and/or involvement is invited to attend. This includes educations, mental health providers, medical providers, and any services that address issues affecting our communities...the more community involvement, through mechanisms like Community Partnerships, the better-quality services communities/families will receive.”*

Tony Cooper, Chair, Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages Community Partnership

## Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the <a href="#">Strategic Plan</a> which are supported by this proposal: <i>(Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)</i>		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
<b>T01</b>	<b>Growing our Economy</b>		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T02</b>	<b>Enabling our Communities</b>		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>T03</b>	<b>Maintaining Financial Sustainability</b>		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T04</b>	<b>Delivering Digital Transformation</b>		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T05</b>	<b>Caring for our Environment</b>		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>XXX</b>	<b>Governance</b>		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>How does this proposal support the priorities selected?</b></p> <p>Community Partnerships are a specific priority within the Strategic Plan and the breadth of reach of both the Community Partnership/Board and the Enabling Communities Budgets means that they positively impact almost all other priorities in the Strategic Plan, with a particular impact on Health and Wellbeing, Community Pride and Taking Action on What Matters Most. The work of the Community Partnerships had been data-led with each agreeing its priorities for action based on a data pack combined with local intelligence.</p>			

## Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	<p>The key background information relating to the establishment of the Community Partnerships and overarching Board is set out in the two reports below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">1. Report to Cabinet 3 September 2019</a> on the establishment of Community Partnerships and <a href="#">minutes of the meeting</a></li> <li><a href="#">2. Full Council report September 2019</a> on the establishment of Community Partnerships and minutes of the meeting</li> </ol>
1.2	<p>The key recommendations from the LGA peer challenge of Community Partnerships, undertaken in October 2021, were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take time to reflect, review and reset the compass for Community Partnerships.</li> <li>2. Celebrate what you have achieved.</li> <li>3. Manage the transition from virtual meetings to an increased face-to-face format to support relationship building.</li> <li>4. More effective communication within and across the CPs and the CP Board</li> <li>5. Further engage with communities of interest e.g. young people</li> <li>6. Invest in creating increased capacity and capability in the wider system.</li> <li>7. Create a learning and development plan to support the next phase of delivery. (Chairs, Vice Chairs and Officers)</li> <li>8. Quick win – Improve communication between CPs and outwards with localities</li> <li>9. Consider strategic sponsorship of CPs from across the organisation</li> <li>10. Build stronger linkages through locality teams e.g. economic development and health</li> <li>11. Ensure all related processes and commissioned support are congruent with your vision for CPs</li> <li>12. Review grant and funding processes</li> <li>13. Move away from traditional meeting style</li> <li>14. Understand how you identify success, impact, and ROI</li> <li>15. Make the shift to more facilitative problem solving</li> <li>16. Develop a robust evaluation framework.</li> <li>17. Strengthen oversight – ensure grip.</li> <li>18. Engage all stakeholders internal and external on the next steps for Community Partnerships</li> </ol> <p>See <a href="#">Community Partnership Board Report on the LGA peer challenge of Community Partnerships</a> for more detail.</p>
1.3	<p>These recommendations have been turned into an Action Plan, which is overseen by the Community Partnerships Delivery Group, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism. See <a href="#">Draft Action Plan</a></p>
1.4	<p>The impact of the Community Partnerships and the Board is highlighted in more detail in the next section but a good overview is provided by the <a href="#">Annual Report 2021-22 presentation</a> to the Community Partnership Board on 13 June 2022.</p>
1.5	<p>As an important part of the Councils approach to enabling communities, the Enabling Communities Budget provide an opportunity for each of the 55</p>

	Councillors to support grassroots projects within their ward which may align with the priorities of the Community Partnership for that area but equally may be for something that is seen as a priority at a very local level. Each Councillor has had an allocation of £7,500 for the initial four years of the Council.
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## 2 Current position

2.1	<p>Each of the eight Community Partnerships set their own priorities in late 2019 based on the contents of a new data pack for their area and the outcomes of their own community stakeholder workshop. These priorities can be categorised under social isolation and loneliness; mental and physical health and wellbeing; transport, travel and road safety; support and facilities for young people; tackling inequalities, community spaces and environment. The Community Partnership Board has focussed on those issues that gained the most votes across all eight Community Partnership areas through the prioritisation process – social isolation and loneliness, transport and mental health and wellbeing. The Board is now also focussing on tackling inequalities including the current cost of living crisis.</p> <p>Periodically the Community Partnerships have reviewed their priorities considering new data and emerging issues like the Covid-19 pandemic (where the Community Partnerships played a key role in enabling the community response). Currently the partnerships are again demonstrating their agility by responding to issues emerging from the rising cost of living and are actively supporting the East Suffolk ‘Ease the Squeeze’ campaign and programme of projects.</p> <p>The two key mechanisms by which each Community Partnership have addressed their priorities are by commissioning projects and/or running targeted small grant schemes for community groups and voluntary organisations.</p> <p>In 2021-22, over 120 projects and activities had been funded, with £151,687.15 of CP funding committed to them. Substantial additional funding has been levered in to match these Community Partnership contributions. To illustrate, across all eight partnerships in FY2021-22 there was a total of £373,042.30 match funding which equates to £2.60 for each £1 of Community Partnership funding. The corresponding figures for the Community Partnership Board over the same period are, total Community Partnership Board spend of £163,830.39, with match-funding of £184,000.00 which equates to £1.77 for each £1 spent.</p> <p>A considerable number of the projects and activities Community Partnerships have commissioned or supported have been targeted broadly at the whole community and/or at younger people specifically. Slightly fewer, but still a considerable number, have targeted older people. Some projects and initiatives have been targeted at specific groups – for example, men over 40, those with long Covid symptoms, or families. A significant opportunity remains to target projects at more specific groups in the future.</p> <p>From monitoring information returned (and summarised in Appendix 2), we know that at least 6,000 people have been directly impacted by these Community Partnership projects. In addition, a substantial number of projects and initiatives have been aimed at facilities where participant numbers have not necessarily been</p>
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monitored (e.g., village hall improvements or provision of play equipment) so the actual number is much higher.

There are many examples where Community Partnership have had an impact without any or much budget spend. For example, The Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership has developed a successful local road safety forum with excellent engagement from the parish councils, county and district councils, police, and other stakeholders like Brake, the road safety charity. This collaboration has revolutionised the approach to road safety in the area.

Community Partnerships are continually striving to improve the way they measure the impact they have on their area. Currently all eight partnerships are working up even more focused, SMART objectives to support their priorities, which will make their impact more measurable.

Each year the Community Partnerships come together to hold a successful annual forum to share good practice and lessons learned. This year's event on 25 March 2022 attracted 211 delegates who participated in a range of discussions (12 x 60-minute workshop / seminar sessions on offer and each delegate attended two). 30 organisations hosted a stall in the 'marketplace' and a further three organisations had their project vehicles on display outside. From delegate feedback 100% respondents found the event useful, 100% respondents found the networking useful, 100% respondents shared information and knowledge on challenges and opportunities in East Suffolk, and 92% respondents will change the way they work because of attending.

The funding and resources allocated by Council to both the operation of Community Partnerships and on project delivery is scheduled to end on 31 March 2023 at the end of the initial 3.5 year funding period.

### 3 How to address current situation

3.1 The proposed approach is for the Council to continue to fund the eight Community Partnerships, Community Partnership Board and Enabling Communities Budgets at a similar level for the next four years, initially (in 2023/24 and 2024/25) through New Homes Bonus funding.

3.2 It is proposed to continue eight Community Partnerships to cover East Suffolk, based on their existing geographical groupings of communities (using the ESC ward boundaries as the building blocks). Each Councillor for an area will be a member of their Community Partnership, which means that there will be between 4 and 14 ESC Councillors per Community Partnership. See table below, which also shows the electoral population in each Community Partnership area (latest figures 2020):

<b>Community Partnerships</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Wards</b>	<b>Cllrs</b>	<b>Population</b>
Lowestoft & Northern parishes	5, 10, 12, 16, 17, 21	14	66,72
Beccles, Bungay & Halesworth & Villages	2, 3, 11	7	32,08

	Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold & Villages	6, 15, 25, 29	5	22,742
	Framlingham, Wickham Market & Villages	9, 13, 27	4	17,572
	Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham & Villages	1, 24	4	16,990
	Woodbridge, Melton & Deben Peninsular	7, 19, 22, 28	5	23,514
	Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley	4, 14, 18, 23	8	36,391
	Felixstowe Peninsular	8, 20, 26	8	34,349
3.3	Community Partnerships will continue to be supported to evolve differently in each of the eight localities, within a framework already agreed by Council and partners. The framework is defined in the Terms of Reference that are reviewed and endorsed annually by each Community Partnership and the Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism. They will not all be the same because the areas that they cover are not the same in terms of geography, population or needs.			
3.4	The Chair of each Community Partnership automatically joins the Community Partnership Board. This provides an opportunity for the eight Chairs to work alongside strategic partners such as the Police, County Council, Integrated Care Boards, VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations), business sector and other key stakeholders like the Suffolk Community Foundation and Greenprint Forum. This approach enables the development and delivery of collaborative solutions to issues that are common to more than one Community Partnership.			
3.5	It is also proposed that there will continue to be an annual Community Partnership Forum where representatives from the Community Partnership Board and all eight Community Partnerships can come together with community stakeholders, business representatives and other strategic partners to jointly problem-solve, promote their achievements and share examples of good practice. This will further evolve the existing Forum which meets annually at Trinity Park and regularly attracts around 200 delegates.			
3.6	It is proposed to continue to operate the ECB's as currently, subject to the annual review of the ECB guidance notes and application form. The ECB process has been subject to several audits during its lifetime, each of which has resulted in tweaks to the process to ensure that it is as robust but simple as possible for Councillors and community groups to complete and submit an application.			

## 4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	<p>A commitment was made by Council to develop and deliver Community Partnerships, in response to concerns about a potential democratic deficit caused by the Council having fewer Councillors, covering larger geographical areas, with larger populations than before it was created. A significant amount of time was spent investigating different models at a national level and scoping out the proposed form and function of the Community Partnerships.</p> <p>The model originally proposed has proved to be an exciting, fresh opportunity to engage with our communities and their representatives in an innovative and unique way. It has involved the Community Partnerships in addressing local issues based on data, evidence and insight and in developing solutions, using devolved funding, in exactly the way the Government intended under the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p>The model has been externally challenged by the LGA Peer Review Team in October 2021. The Teams general observations were that there is lots of evidence that Community Partnerships are ‘adding value’ and there has been a lot of support to give them a “great start”. They recognised how we have brought people together and used a strong evidence base to identify local priorities (for example around mental health and social isolation). They recognised that the Council have backed up their priority by making a significant investment and they noted great examples of how we are also using the assets across the district. They flagged up the enthusiastic, energetic and committed staff and Members and also the positive feedback from partners describing Community Partnerships as “dynamic” and “innovative”.</p> <p>The proposals contained in this report to continue to operate, resource and fund the Community Partnerships are based on the evidence of impact in the first three and a half years, albeit during the Covid restrictions, feedback from the Peer Challenge and the opportunities that the Community Partnerships provide for co-ordinated activity to address both local challenges and those facing the whole of the district including the cost of living crisis.</p>
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## Appendices

Appendices:	
A	<a href="#">Map showing Community Partnership Areas</a>
B	Community Partnership Project Summary

Background reference papers:	
<a href="#">Community Partnership Board Terms of Reference</a>	