Ballymena Enabling Scheme & Community Clusters Programme

An Innovative Partnership Approach with the Community & Council in Ballymena

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Presentation Overview

- Phase 1 Enabling Capital Grants Scheme

- Community Clusters Support Programme

- Moving Towards Self Sustainability for the Community Sector Through Phase 2 Enabling Capital Grants Scheme

- Cluster & Community Planning

- Lessons Learned

Phase 1 Enabling Capital Grants Scheme 1998 - 2010

Purpose: To enable communities to take ownership of regeneration and development through capital funding to develop local facilities and services

Driving Force: Match funding opportunities through IFI, DETI, Big Lottery, Sport NI, DSD, Peace, Rural Development

Criteria:

- Community led and owned
- Clear need and demand
- Sustainable
- Minimum 1 : 1 leverage for Council funding
- Council should be last funder
- Evidence of community contribution

Phase 1 Enabling Capital Grants Scheme 1998 – 2010 (continued)

Successes:

- 13 community capital projects developed
- Over £13m invested in the Borough with 80% secured from external funding (Council £2.4m, Other £10.6m)
- Over 300 direct jobs created
- Improved community cohesion and morale
- On-going mentoring and programme support available from Council. £40,000 per project revenue support for first three years in operation

Community Clusters Support Programme

Aim: To protect the £13m capital investment and enable the community sector prepare for change envisaged through:

- RPA

- Reduction in Funding Opportunities

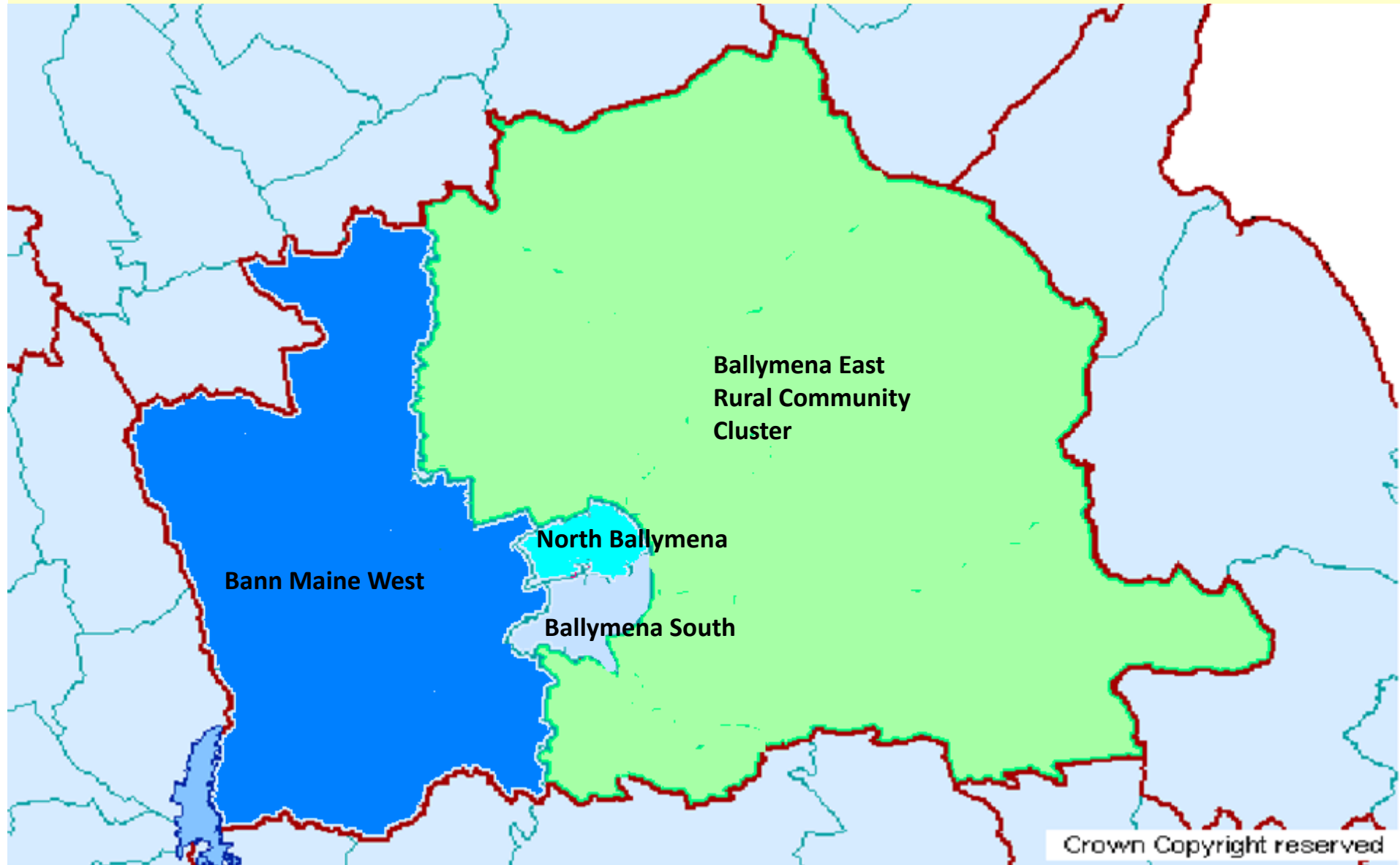- Service Delivery Opportunities through Community Planning

Objectives

- Development of a network of 4 geographical clusters

- Improve opportunities for groups to collaborate and learn from each other

- To create a cohesive and sustainable third sector

- Leave groups in Ballymena in a strong position to embrace the competing challenges posed through RPA

Cluster Establishment Process 2009 - 2013

Facilitated local meetings with all community development organisations within a geographical area

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Agreement by the community on 'Lead Partner'

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Identification of area-wide needs and agreement on targeted interventions

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Establishment of Partnership Agreement

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Funding secured from Council, BCT & DSD

Cluster Areas

Ballymena East
Rural Community
Cluster

North Ballymena

Bann Maine West

Ballymena South

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Bann Maine West

- Formed May 2010
- 8 core member groups
- Additional resources secured £56,950
- RDP monies secured
- 1,500 volunteer hours last year
- Council contribution so far - £66,000

Ballymena East Rural Community Cluster

- Formed May 2010
- 7 core member groups
- Additional resources secured £36,900
- RDP monies secured
- 1,500 volunteer hours last year
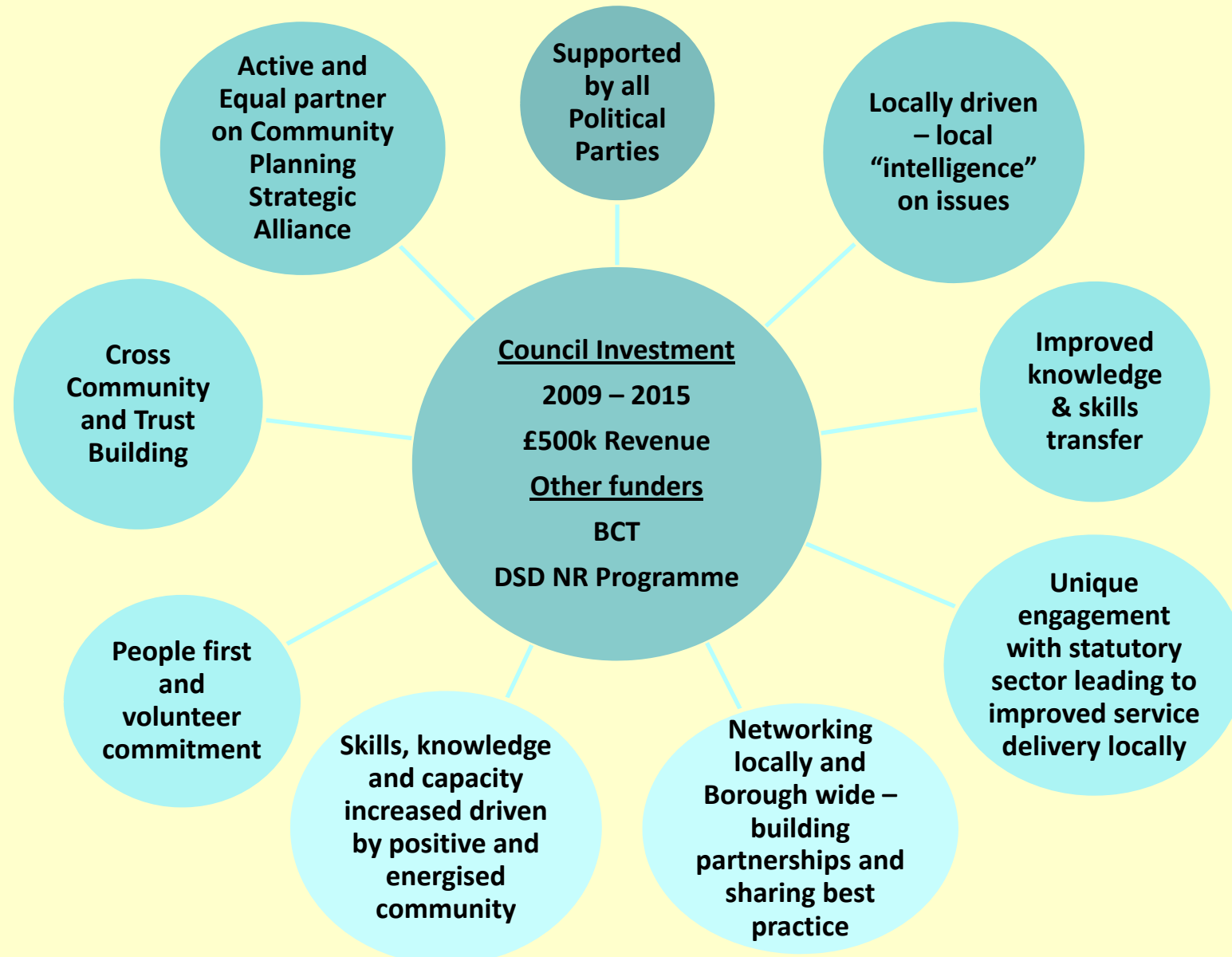- Council contribution so far - £60,000

North Ballymena

- Formed Jan 2013
- 4 core member groups so far
- Additional resources secured £10,000
- 850 volunteer hours last year
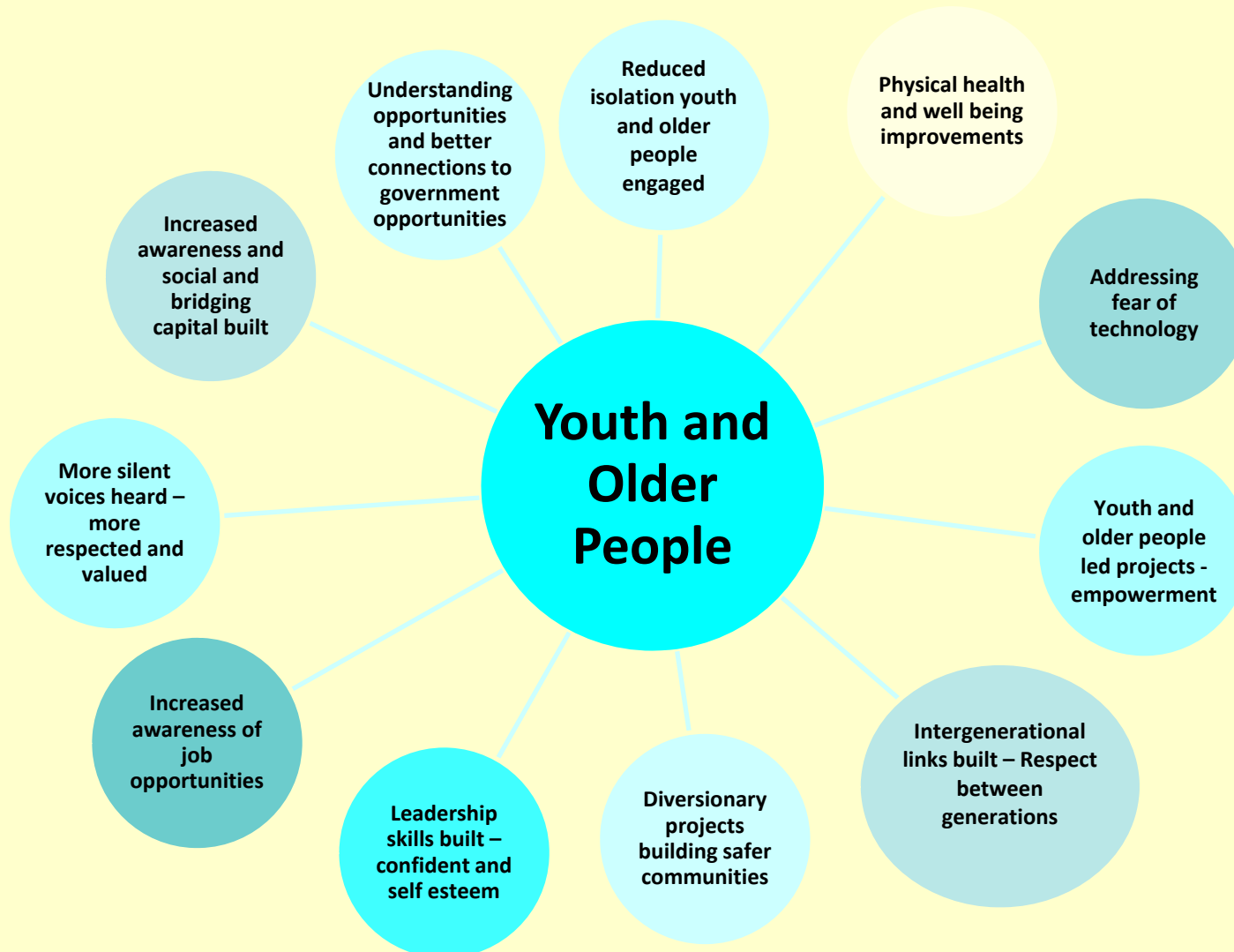- Council contribution so far - £15,200

Ballymena South

- Formed Jan 2011
- 7 core member groups
- Additional resources secured £66,089
- 5,473 volunteer hours last year
- NR monies secured
- Council contribution so far - £59,604

Unique Features of the Model

Active and Equal partner on Community Planning Strategic Alliance

Supported by all Political Parties

Locally driven – local "intelligence" on issues

Cross Community and Trust Building

Council Investment

2009 – 2015

£500k Revenue

Other funders

BCT

DSD NR Programme

Improved knowledge & skills transfer

People first and volunteer commitment

Skills, knowledge and capacity increased driven by positive and energised community

Networking locally and Borough wide – building partnerships and sharing best practice

Unique engagement with statutory sector leading to improved service delivery locally

Youth & Older People Core Outcomes/Emerging Impact

Youth and Older People

- Understanding opportunities and better connections to government opportunities
- Reduced isolation youth and older people engaged
- Physical health and well being improvements
- Increased awareness and social and bridging capital built
- Addressing fear of technology
- More silent voices heard – more respected and valued
- Youth and older people led projects - empowerment
- Increased awareness of job opportunities
- Leadership skills built – confident and self esteem
- Diversionary projects building safer communities
- Intergenerational links built – Respect between generations

Good Relations, Peace Building & Community Safety Outcomes/ Emerging Impact

Good Relations

- Developing and implementing joint projects locally
- Engagement on good relations issues increased
- Consolidating relationships in local areas – beyond initial gatekeepers
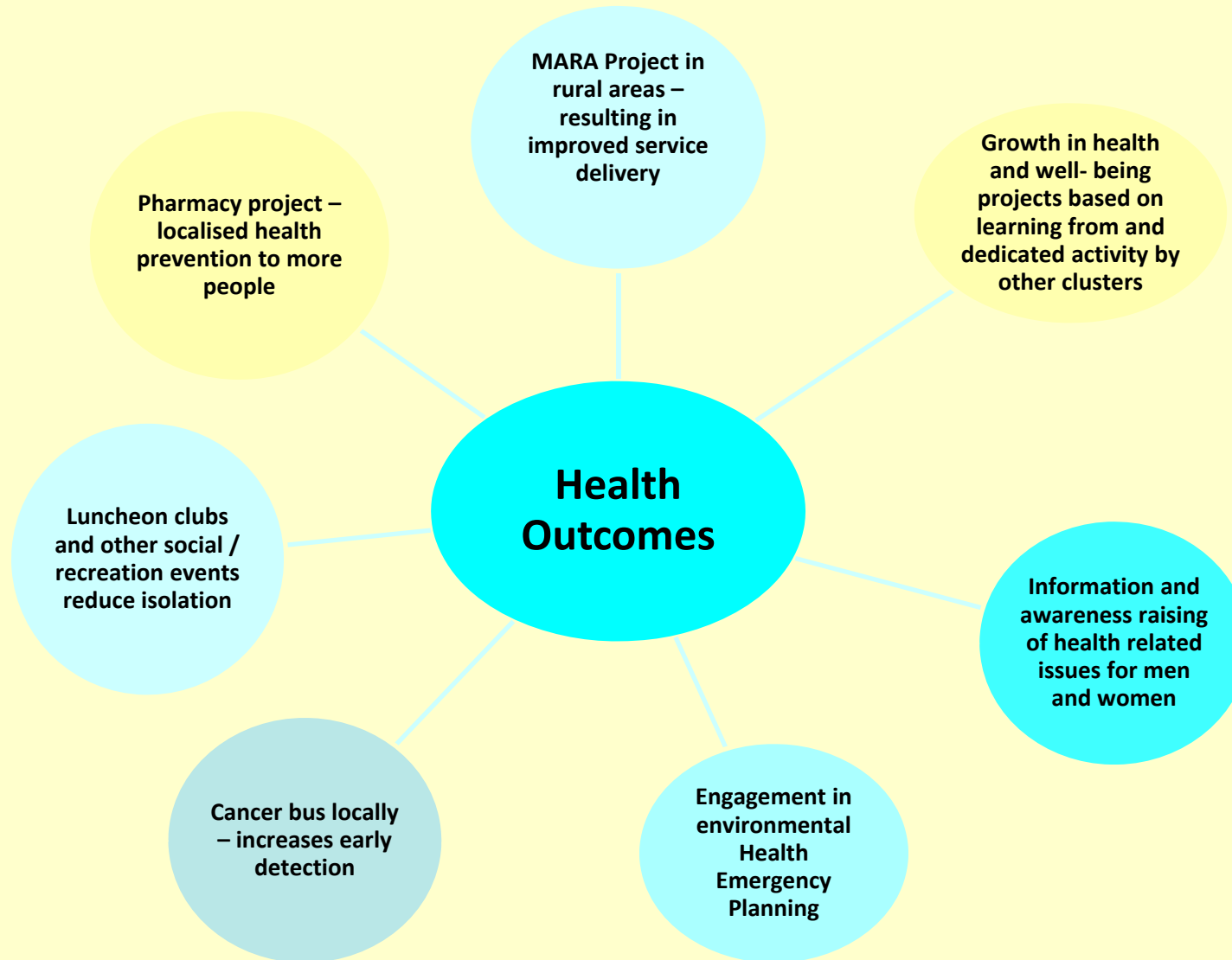
Peace Building

- Building relationships and friendships at local level
- Peace in the Park
- Building bridges and links with neighbouring groups
- Leadership and shared society programme – representatives from each cluster engaged

Community Safety

- Home security for older people reduces fear of crime and addresses isolation
- Contribution to a reduction in anti social behaviour
- Enabling engagement with local people on policing issues

Health & Well-being Outcomes/ Emerging Impact

MARA Project in rural areas – resulting in improved service delivery

Growth in health and well- being projects based on learning from and dedicated activity by other clusters

Pharmacy project – localised health prevention to more people

Health Outcomes

Luncheon clubs and other social / recreation events reduce isolation

Information and awareness raising of health related issues for men and women

Cancer bus locally – increases early detection

Engagement in environmental Health Emergency Planning

Economic, Environmental & Social Outcomes/Impacts

Economic Activity

- At least 4 Full time equivalent jobs created to date
- Village renewal projects creates new economic growth opportunities locally
- Volunteer development opportunities which builds social capital and ability for communities to do more for themselves locally

Social Enterprise Growth

- Social enterprise led clusters x 4
- Bringing new social enterprises in each area
- Sustaining existing social enterprises
- Strengthening existing social enterprises and building community assets
- Building on best practice locally and beyond

Moving … Towards Self-Sustainability

January 2011
- Initial Idea from Fermanagh Trusts Wind Energy Research

Feb – June 2012
- Consideration by all Clusters

July 2012
- Council Launch Phase 2 £3.7m Enabling Capital Funding Programme with £1.4m ring fenced for Clusters

Dec 2012
- Clusters Secure Technical Assistance to Commission Feasibility Study & Economic Appraisal

June 2013
- Feasibility Study & Economic Appraisal Complete
- Application Made to Council and £1.4m Secured to Implement Project

Project Details

- To install 4 (250KW) wind turbines on 4 different site locations with planning permission as a joint community project between all Community Clusters in Ballymena

- To redistribute profits from Year 5 of the project to sustain, add to existing community services and provide new services within the community sector in Ballymena

Clusters & Community Planning

Community Planning Strategic Alliance (Multi-Agency & Community Clusters)

Community Planning Implementation Group

Thematic Partnerships

| Economic | Health and Well- Being | Community Safety | Built and Natural Environment |

Four Local Community Clusters

| Bann Maine West | Ballymena East Rural Community Cluster | Ballymena South | North Ballymena |

Local Communities

<u>Lessons Learned</u>

- Significant investment by Council to make change happen (Council £7m to date)

- Significant Council staff resource required to support the programme

- Building trust and relationships with the community sector is NOT STRAIGHTFORWARD

- Building a genuine partnership requires dedicated commitment by Council and community

- PEOPLE POWER INCREDIBLE when given the opportunity

- 15 years on and we are beginning to get there!!

CONTACT DETAILS

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