

The Highland CPP
Chief Officers Group 26.3.15

Agenda Item	5.
Report No	COG 07/15

Local Community Planning: Values and Principles

Report by Head of Policy and Reform, Highland Council

Summary

This report aims to prompt discussion on the values and principles to support the development of local community planning arrangements.

1. Background

1.1 At the CPP Board meeting on 4th March 2015 arrangements for developing local community planning were agreed. The Board agreed that staff, non-executive Board and elected members were to be enabled locally to be creative in proposing local community planning arrangements including local experiments, noting that the pace of change may vary across the region.

1.2 The Board also agreed that local proposals needed to be mindful of:

1. The evolution of District Partnerships, with agendas broadening and potentially duplicating reporting with Area Committees.
2. Ensuring duplication and inefficiency are avoided locally and for current arrangements to be streamlined.
3. The governance required to review the purpose of District Partnerships and Area Committees.
4. The particular and legal duties of elected and Board members in partner organisations (including consideration of they form of governance that might be required e.g. decision-making, scrutiny, problem solving and informing and items to be taken in public and in private).
5. The best geographies to use and that currently local forums are not always coterminous e.g. District Partnerships, Area Committees, LEADER partnerships and targeted work in particular communities e.g. areas of multiple deprivation and fragile rural areas
6. How best to involve community groups and encourage more participation.
7. Skills needed for agenda management and participation in meetings.
8. The process of change is important - conversations with those involved in local partnership forums to identify proposals, managing change locally and sharing learning from it.
9. A transition phase of holding District Partnerships, Area Committees, other Partnerships and Ward Forums on the same day in some localities may be worth exploring.
10. Where new arrangements may be put in place locally, the former arrangements need to stop being resourced by partners.

1.3 The Board also agreed that the COG would articulate the values and principles to support the development of local proposals for community planning.

2. Drivers for developing local community planning

2.1 Community planning is about where decisions about public services are made and by whom. The Community Empowerment Bill provides definitions of community planning and empowerment that are helpful.

- Community planning means improving outcomes through public service provision.
- Community empowerment is ‘...a process where people work together to make change happen in their communities by having more power and influence over what matters to them.’

The form of local community planning needs to be designed around these functions of community planning.

2.2 The COG is reminded that the drivers for developing local community planning are:

1. Christie Commission and its focus on the need to reducing inequalities, shifting to prevention and seeing individuals and communities as assets in improving their lives with services and outcomes co-produced with them.
2. Strengthening Local Democracy Commission with its critique of current arrangements that are seen to disempower people viewing them narrowly as consumers of public services, with those services centralised and/or designed top down and with current arrangements not addressing inequalities adequately and organisational arrangements and culture perpetuating exclusion. See Appendix 1 for the Commission’s recommendations affecting partners and CPPs.
3. The latest national audit report of community planning which identifies good practice where the area for community planning was at the local neighbourhood geography, with partners sharing data, creating neighbourhood profiles, identifying potential priorities and discussing this information with local people to agree service priorities with them and where local community plans are produced. See appendix 2 for key audit findings around communities.
4. The new statutory instrument requiring a strategy for community learning and development, targeting those communities requiring the most support to get it.
5. New Community Empowerment legislation bringing new rights for individuals and groups to: participate in community planning; challenge services to improve outcomes; take on the running and ownership of public assets; and to be more aware of Common Good Funds.
6. The CPP priority to engage in dialogue with communities in order to empower them to participate in service planning and delivery.

3. Partnership values and purpose

3.1 The CPP has agreed values and purpose for the CPP Board and COG. These are listed in Appendix 3.

4. Recommendation

COG members are asked to discuss the information in the report in small groups or pairs, to share views with the group and agree the values and principles to support the development of local community planning. The output can be shared with staff and board and elected members participating in local forums as they develop local proposals.

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Strengthening Local Democracy Commission

Recommendations affecting partners and CPPs.

- 4: Local democratic accountability for community health services and public health as part of the development of an integrated approach to prevention locally
- 5: That local governments, having engaged their communities should have the right to veto and require change in local police and fire plans
- 11: A binding duty on local governments and locally delivered public services to support and empower individuals and communities to participate in local decision-making
- 12: A specific duty to ensure that all groups likely to face barriers to participating are supported and resourced to do so
- 15: Every CPP works with its communities to design and implement a clear empowerment scheme
- 16: All CPPs develop an approach to community scrutiny to complement existing arrangements
- 17: A significant and systematic reinvestment in Community Learning and Development in each area of Scotland
- 19: That after these measures have been established a stock-take is undertaken to determine their impact and identify what further steps are required

**Audit Scotland report: Community Planning - Turning Ambition into Action
November 2014**

Key findings relating to how CPPs are planning for communities

In reviewing SOAs and CPPs in the 8 local areas audited, the following short comings were identified:

- many SOAs did not provide a true plan for the areas and communities they serve;
- many SOAs do not focus on specific improvements that community planning is trying to achieve;
- few SOAs are clear about how community planning will improve outcomes for specific communities and reduce the gap in outcomes between the most and least deprived groups;
- CPPs need to make better use of data to improve their understanding of differing needs of their communities and identify improvement actions, and especially at more local and neighbourhood levels;
- While CPPs continue to improve how they consult with local people, they are not yet routinely working with communities to influence CPP priorities;
- Where partners work closely with communities they tend to do this as an organisation rather than with partners;
- There can be a lack of understanding about the Third Sector Interface role.

Good practice was found too where the area for community planning was at the local neighbourhood geography, with partners sharing data, creating neighbourhood profiles, identifying potential priorities and discussing this information with local people to agree service priorities with them. Some produce local community plans.

Audit Scotland also highlights issues to consider / watch out for as:

- Elected members considering how they carry out their democratic community leadership role where there is increased community participation;
- Being clear for the CPP about how community participation, including in local services, affects the CPP role.

Remits for the CPP Board and Chief Officers Group

The Community Planning Board

To provide strategic political leadership and expertise and to drive public service reform, including the delivery of the Single Outcome Agreement and continuous improvement of partnership working, so as to achieve better and fairer outcomes for the Highland population.

The Chief Officer Group

The purpose of the Chief Officer Group would be to drive public service reform, including the delivery of the SOA and continuous improvement of partnership working to achieve better and fairer outcomes by:

1. Ensuring and challenging the partnership's delivery and performance against the SOA's outcomes targets - through the thematic groups individually and together across the SOA (and any supporting plans if relevant);
2. Ensuring and challenging whether the partnership's work across all groups is reducing inequalities at the pace required;
3. Ensuring and challenging whether the partnership's work across all the groups is making the decisive shift to prevention required;
4. Ensuring and challenging whether the partnership can demonstrate best practice in community engagement through the thematic groups and across the SOA;
5. Supporting the thematic groups by removing any barriers to reform that arise from current partnership arrangements, resources and behaviours. This would help support the values adopted previously by the Partnership that

'We are here to serve the Highland people and we will do this with honesty, openness and commitment. We will challenge each other constructively when necessary to ensure we deliver beyond expectations for the Highlands.'

6. Promoting the on-going development of the SOA as a means of achieving public service reform.
7. Supporting constructive challenge of the partnership through honest reflection, structured self-evaluation, peer review, audits of community planning and any consequential improvement activity.

The group would be comprised of the Chief Officers of the partnership (represented by the local senior officers for national bodies). The lead officer from the thematic groups would attend Chief Officer Group meetings for scrutiny and challenge and to make any requests for partnership support. The Chief Officer Group would attend the Partnership Board and would meet more frequently than quarterly Board meetings.