

Community Planning Board

Resourcing Community Planning/Partnerships Workshop 22-9-21

Feedback for Board Discussion 4-11-21

Background

A workshop was held with the CPP Board on 22 September to consider how best to resource community planning – locally and strategically. This topic has been revisited over a number of years but each time discussions have failed to reach a conclusion. As a result, we have a mixed approach to supporting community partnerships across the area which has inevitably impacted and contributed to the success or otherwise of their operation. At present, how a partnership is resourced is left to the discretion of the partner agency leading that partnership. It is not the sole factor in success, but feedback would suggest a significant contributor.

Feedback to the Board from Community Partnership partners

The following key areas were suggested as needing to change:

- Resourcing – to support leadership and co-ordination
- Leadership – need for understanding of roles
- Priorities and Action - Need for focused priorities, aligning priorities
- Commitment – from all local partners and embedding throughout an organisation
- Evidence based decision making – need to data and monitoring
- Understanding of need and inequalities from all involved
- Involving and enabling communities – making it meaningful, co-production/solution focused, learning from covid
- Being the 'day job'
- *Need to make it work on the ground – delivering against actions*

CPP Board Workshop Output

The following summarises key messages from the Board discussion:

- There was an acknowledgement that certain things are required in order to make community planning work more effectively – some dependent on resource and others not. These included:
 - Improved and meaningful engagement with the community

- Active involvement of communities in the design and delivery of priorities
 - A shared and focused set of priorities – both locally and strategically
 - That this approach to partnership working needs to be embedded into the roles of local staff – it needs to become the ‘day job’.
 - The need for improved data and intelligence to inform and direct priorities.
 - The issue is not the structures in place but enabling them to deliver
- A number of areas were highlighted where change was required:
 - Simplification
 - Of plans, priorities and outcomes
 - Strategically, need to focus on core outcomes rather than multiple groups and plans that ultimately target same individuals and vulnerabilities – one plan rather than multiple strategies. Collective effort = freeing up people resource.
 - Prioritisation
 - Data and intelligence to inform a core set of priorities
 - Making plans and priorities relevant to local communities
 - Developing an outcomes framework for local partnerships to support alignment and delivery of key strategic priorities locally
 - Communication and Engagement
 - Improved communication between partners and communities
 - Actively involving communities in prioritisation and delivery
 - Resourcing
 - Resourcing directed to support key priorities – targeting where there is need
 - An acknowledgement that the current model for supporting local partnerships is currently not working leading to varied outcomes for communities
 - Leadership
 - To ensure that staff are empowered locally to prioritise this work
- Focusing specifically on resourcing it was highlighted:
 - There was a need to better utilise and target existing staff resource through better alignment and collaboration against key strategic priorities e.g. multiple plans and strategies targeting mental health, drug and alcohol, community justice, adult protect etc. where the outcomes and often the client group are the same.
 - There is a need for resource in order to better co-ordinate and facilitate local community partnership activity to make it effective
 - Development officer time – in place in Caithness and Sutherland and externally funded on a fixed term basis, has been a significant difference and drive to partnership action.

- Need for specific partnership data analyst support to ensure effective and evidence-based prioritisation
- Whilst there was acknowledgement resourcing partnership activity was required, there was no conclusion on how improved resourcing would be achieved. Two clear options emerged:
 - Financially resourcing a central partnership support team – central funding, seconded officers, hybrid approach agency dependent
 - Reverting to the existing model of individual agency responsibility (quite robust discussions about the consistent ineffectiveness of this approach)

The workshop concluded with a commitment for the Council's Head of Community Support and Engagement to pull together the key points and to liaise with partnership colleagues to suggest next steps with a view to future reporting to the CPP Board in 2021.