AGENDA

Community Planning Improvement Board
Advisory Board Meeting, 30th May, 2pm – 4pm
Audit Scotland, 102 Westport, Edinburgh

Agenda
1. **Welcome and Introduction**
2. **Minute & Matters Arising**
3. **CPIB Board Member Engagement Activity**
4. **Policy Development Horizon Scanning**
5. **Local Governance Review**
6. **Community Planning Review**
7. **CPIB Work Programme**
8. **AOB**
9. **Future Items & Date of Next Meeting**
10. **Close**

Community Planning Improvement Board
Advisory Board Meeting, 28th Feb, 2pm – 4pm
Minute

Attendees	Steve Grimmond (chair), SOLACE; Fraser McKinlay, Audit Scotland; Sarah Gadsden, Improvement Service; ACC Malcolm Graham, Police Scotland; Ella Simpson, EVOC; Phil Couser, NHS NSS; Gerry McLaughlin, Health Scotland; David Milne, Scottish Government; Mark McAteer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; Jonathon Slow (for Kenny Richmond); Scottish Enterprise; James Russell, SDS; Amanda Coulthard, CP Managers Network; Alana Atkinson, Health Scotland;
Apologies	David Martin, SOLACE; Allister Short, HSC Chief Officers Network; Audrey MacDougall, Scottish Government; Roger Halliday, Scottish Government; Nicholas Watson, What Works Scotland;

Item	Description	Action	Date
1.	**Welcome and Introduction** The chair welcomed members to the 16th meeting of the Board.		
2.	**Minute & Matters Arising** ![icon] Agenda Item 2 - CPIB Minute 28th No The Board approved the minute of the last meeting as a true and accurate record. All matters picked up under Agenda except: 				
					Chair/GM	**Ongoing**

		2.	Board Members to provide 4 or 5 exemplars of the issues highlighted to build understanding and narrative for inclusion on the CP Support Portal	Ongoing as part of work programme (Agenda Item 3)		
		3.	Use the revised Work Programme and Engagement strategy to highlight the CPIB leadership role in relation to wider system change	Complete and covered under Agenda items 3 and 4		
	7. What Works Scotland	1.	Use the work programme to reflect the role the CPIB could play in using this evidence base to support improvements in CP and in particular in identifying some of the things that need to happen	Complete and covered under Agenda item 3		
		2.	Cross check WWS findings with support available on CPP support portal, and inform work programme	Complete		

3. **CPIB Work Programme**

Agenda Item 3 - CPIB Draft work pro

Community Planning - Review -

The board considered an outline work programme designed to reflect the shifting purpose of CPIB.

6 work-strands were prioritised to build on the refreshed CPIB agenda, with board member leads identified to provide oversight and support the development of the work programme.
- Strengthened leadership and influence (ACC Malcolm Graham, Police Scotland)
- Community participation (Ella Simpson, EVOC)
- Effective decision making and good governance (David Martin, SOLACE)
- Innovative approaches to joint planning, service design and resourcing (James Russell, SDS)
- Availability and use of high-quality local data and insights to support decision making (Phil Couser, NSS and Gerry McLaughlin, HS)
- Supporting innovation, improvement and sharing best practice, (Sarah Gadsden, IS)

Given the volume of activity already in place, the board highlighted the importance of identifying a small number of big priorities for CP partners which would add value within the work programme. CPIB members agreed to test this with their own organisations, partnerships and networks to identify priorities.

In addition, the following points were highlighted to inform the next phase of work programme development:
- Given the board refocus, there is a need for the CPIB to build its own agenda and ensure on an ongoing basis what we are doing fits with what CP stakeholders tell us about what is happening in Community Planning and what is needed.
- The role of Community Planning partners as informed clients for their improvement agenda was emphasised. The 2 distinct roles of CPIB board members were highlighted in relation to this - those who sit on CP partnerships and are able to act as intelligent commissioners, and others who represent national improvement/regulatory bodies.
- The Community Planning Review and Reform of Public Health will provide important context for the CPIB work programme and ongoing review of the work programme should be informed by developments.

- The board agreed the role of the board should focus on the 3 following areas: Leadership & strategic brokerage; Improvement support; and Evidencing good practice
- The board has an important leadership role in relation to clarification, promoting good practice, and providing challenge (particularly to national policy makers) around the barriers facing Community Planning.
- A strategic brokerage role could highlight the value of key resources, understand how people are using them, promote good practice and identify what might be more useful. Resources include networks/people/systems, with a key role for the CPIB to help people make connections.
- There may be value in capturing and spreading learning from existing local commissions e.g. Fairness and Poverty Commissions, which have successfully promoted and created the conditions for effective partnership working.
- To identify tests of change, CP partners/CPPs should be invited to identify tests of change that they would welcome support with. The CPIB could play a role in co-ordinating this support.
- The work programme should focus on supporting local Community Planning, with activities identified to promote the influence of the CPIB and measuring its success should sit outside this work programme.

Agreed Actions:

1. Board members to test outline work programme with key people within their own organisations engaged in Community Planning to assess if these are the areas where the CPIB could add most value.	**All CPIB Members**	**May**
2. IS to work with identified workstream leads to develop and populate work programme with key activities/timescales/resources for consideration at May CPIB Board meeting	**CPIB Workstream Leads/ IS**	**May**

4.

CPIB Engagement Strategy

Agenda Item 4 -
CPIB Engagement St

An engagement strategy to strengthen the engagement loop between the CPIB and CPP stakeholders was approved by the Board. The strategy addresses 2 areas in particular: engagement with senior level CP stakeholders and the development of a more co-ordinated and strategic approach by the board.

The aims of the strategy are:
- To ensure the successes, challenges and needs of CP partners and partnerships are central to informing improvement support, and in influencing local and national policy.
- To support better co-ordination of engagement activity to enable the CPIB to collectively agree focus, avoid duplication, and to use the evidence gathered to build a coherent picture of gaps, successes and barriers to inform influence and improvement activity
- To improve relationships between the CPIB and Community Planning stakeholders and strengthen the legitimacy of the CPIB as a conduit for the experiences/needs of CP partners
- To raise awareness of, and increase engagement with, the work and outputs of the CPIB across all key CP stakeholders

The board endorsed the more focused role for CPIB members, particularly those who represent CP partners, in championing this engagement activity. It was agreed to include a standing agenda item at CPIB meetings on 'Learning from Engagement' to promote better

	co-ordination of engagement activity. It was also noted that the review of CPIB provided a timely opportunity for engagement with senior level Scottish Government officials, with the board agreeing it would be helpful to progress this area. **Agreed Actions** 1. Include 'Learning from Engagement' as standing agenda Item at CPIB meetings 2. Include forward look at major discussions at CPIB meetings to allow members to feed in 3. Write to CPP Chairs introducing the CPIB purpose and work programme 4. Pursue engagement with senior level Scottish Government officials	**Chair** **Chair** **Chair** **D Milne**	**Ongoing** **Ongoing** **June** **June**
5.	**Community Participation Action Learning – Key Recommendations** Agenda Item 5 - Community Participa The board considered the emerging themes from the 2018 Community Empowerment action learning process and agreed the CPIB has a role to play in progressing the recommendations in the context of the revised CPIB work programme. The importance of not duplicating whatever national bodies e.g. SCDC were delivering was emphasised. Instead we should look to build on what is there and link in with relevant partners. There was recognition of the good work being done by SCDC and the opportunities for board members to learn from them and the potential value of representation on the CPIB board. Building on the recommendations, the following areas were identified as potentially useful themes to explore: - Evidencing good work/outcome improvement from Community Planning <u>as a way of working</u> o The role of qualitative evidence/evaluation/personal stories and skilling people up to capture these via different methods o How to incorporate learning from WWS/other research e.g. Dartington **Agreed Actions** 1. Consider how to reflect recommendations from the action learning process within the revised work programme	**CPIB Workstream Leads**	**May**
6.	**Dates of Next Meeting** Thursday 30th May, 2pm-4pm, Audit Scotland, Edinburgh Tuesday 27th August, 2pm-4pm, Scottish Enterprise, Glasgow Tuesday 26th November, 2pm-4pm, Scottish Enterprise, Glasgow		

Local Governance Review

Report Summarising the Main Themes emerging from the Strand 2 Consultation

May 2019

Contents

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to summarise the strand 2 responses to the Local Governance Review. 20 Local Authorities submitted a response, 6 Community Planning Partnerships and 16 other bodies responded including Regional Transport Partnerships, 2 NHS bodies and the Enterprise agencies (see Appendix One for the list of respondents). Two individual responses have also been considered. Overall, a total of 44 submissions were made to the Strand 2 Consultation and the key points contained within those responses are summarised within this report.

As might be anticipated, there are a wide range of views expressed across the responses. The phrasing of the formal consultation questions encouraged a diverse approach to the issues covered by respondents. It is also the case that many respondents chose not to directly address the consultation questions; instead opting to simply write about their experiences and the issues of greatest relevance / concern to them.

This report summarises the main issues reflected in the consultation responses. These issues do not necessarily reflect the views of the Improvement Service.

There are a number of key themes which have emerged across the responses, including:

- "One Size Does Not Fit All"- there needs to be recognition that no two communities are the same and that approaches should be flexible to accommodate the local context. Whilst perceptions of 'postcode lotteries' may be challenging, asymmetrical government is often appropriate and desirable in order to reflect variable localised circumstances and priorities.
- The current landscape is complex. A number of responses indicated that there is no wish to complicate this any further with new bodies or additional legislative requirements.
- A few respondents suggested that the Local Governance Review presents opportunities to amend existing legislation to facilitate better local governance and partnership working.
- There should be a continued focus on engagement and capacity building with local communities and ensuring engagement is better understood. The point was made that proper funding from Scottish Government needs to be available to support this.
- Several respondents indicated that their communities do not necessarily want control / responsibility, but generally do wish to have greater influence on decision making.
- There was wide agreement from respondents that structural change, changes to governance or empowerment of communities cannot be made without additional funding from Scottish Government. Additional funding needs to be provided and/or greater fiscal control with regard to raising revenue given.
- Many respondents, particularly Local Authority respondents, highlight that progress is constrained by short term budgets. This has an impact on achieving significant change and partnership working, in general. It is difficult to involve communities in any long-term projects. Further complexity also arises as there is not always alignment of budgeting across partnership organisations.
- The majority of Councils commented that too much of Local Authority budgets are ring-fenced, particularly in regard to education and social care, which constrains innovation and flexibility. Fiscal autonomy is key for local decision making to be meaningful.
- Linked to the previous point, a number of Local Authorities indicated that there is considered to be too much centralised decision making and there is an opportunity to redress the balance of the Scottish – Local Government relationship.
- In order to develop local governance and subsidiarity respondents highlighted that there are opportunities to build on existing Community Planning Partnership arrangements or develop Single or Integrated Public Authority models.
- Shared data and evidence/open data is key to promoting understanding in communities, across public sector partners and in order to effectively target priority issues.
- There is an appetite for the adoption of the European Charter of Local Self Government from Local Authorities.

- There is an appetite from Local Authorities to replace the Power to Advance Wellbeing with a stronger / clearer Power of General Competence, which would include the responsibility for local taxation.
- A few local authority responses highlighted that the role of Community Councils should be reviewed with potential for more devolution of power / budgets to them.
- Consideration needs to be given to the right level of place for delivery of services – Local, Regional and National.

In addition to the above key themes, there are also a number of interesting / useful suggestions, which are summarised in chapter 4.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present a summary of the views expressed in the submissions to Strand 2 consultation of the Local Governance Review.

This report summarises the main issues reflected in the consultation responses. These issues do not necessarily reflect the views of the Improvement Service

Scottish Government and COSLA jointly launched the review in December 2017. A conversation with citizens on the future of community level decision making called Democracy Matters got underway in June 2018 (Strand 1). In parallel, public sector leaders were invited to submit their proposals for alternative governance arrangements at local, regional or national level which can improve outcomes and drive inclusive growth (Strand 2).

The Scottish Government 'Programme for Government 2018-19' confirmed "We have launched the Local Governance Review, jointly with COSLA, and the Democracy Matters conversation with communities across Scotland will continue throughout the remainder of 2018. The findings from the Review will be used to put in place new governance arrangements, and where legislation is needed we will deliver these through a Local Democracy Bill."

The review's remit is open, offering communities, Local Government, the wider public sector and others, an opportunity to place key issues relating to governance arrangements onto the reform agenda. It was anticipated that all public services would wish to support the process, based on an acceptance of increased variation in decision-making arrangements across the country. i.e. an explicit recognition that what is right for one place, will not necessarily be right for another.

The first strand of the review involved engagement with communities via 'Democracy Matters'. Across Scotland, people came together in their communities of place, interest and identity to discuss a short set of open questions which had been co-designed by a group comprising local and national government, equalities groups, business and academia. Community conversations were complemented by a series of regional events held in November 2018 which provided people with a sense of the emerging findings and an opportunity to take a deeper look at the key issues. A report detailing the Strand 1 engagement process and overall findings is also available.

For the second strand, involving local councils and all public bodies including Health, an initial scoping exercise was carried out by Professor James Mitchell, Chair in Public Policy, University of Edinburgh.

Subsequently a letter (attached at Appendix Two) was sent out to public bodies to invite them to be involved, as Scotland's public sector leaders, in a dialogue about how changes to how Scotland is governed might make the lives of Scotland's people better. This invited public bodies to bring forward proposals to feed into the review.

 A series of COSLA workshops in November and December were an opportunity for officers to discuss draft proposals.

The strand 2 deadline for responses was 14 December 2018, however responses to the Strand 2 invitation submitted beyond the formal deadline of 14 December, until 31 January 2019, were considered and are reflected within this report.

44 strand 2 responses were received, including 20 from Councils, 6 from Community Planning Partnerships and 16 from other public bodies. There were also 2 individual responses taken into consideration.

3. Key Themes

The following paragraphs provide more detail on each of the key themes.

3.1   One size does not fit all/Asymmetrical and Permissive Government

There is consensus across the majority of the responses that there is no desire for a restructure of Local Government.

Many responses recognise that there needs to be a spectrum of models of local governance, and that one size cannot fit all local areas. The spectrum runs from single/integrated public authority models to local community empowerment. Community empowerment requires to be tailored to each area, with models changing depending on local circumstances e.g. rural, urban, island, level of deprivation/affluence, communities of interest versus communities of place/geography, local capacity etc. Some areas have existing developments in regard to different models of delivery and ask that these be allowed to be built upon.

There is a request that any legislative changes need to be permissive to prevent prescriptive reforms becoming an obstacle to change based on local needs and context. One respondent captured this by asking for 'legislation which would offer options to allow for the development of governance structures which recognise a diversity of views and that communities develop in different ways at different stages, taking account of their own capacity as well as their needs and aspirations'.

Above all, a number of respondents, particularly from local government, stressed the need for flexibility to address local priorities. The powers and resources available need to reflect the responsibilities and workload of each sphere of local governance, whether it be local elected members or Community Councils. Permissive legislation would provide the flexibility for unique models and solutions to be developed for each place, that best reflects local needs. This would require resource to support local communities, but would ensure that all partners can be open to proposals specific to communities.

Another suggestion is that the Scottish Government currently controls too much decision making, which has adversely affected local areas. Some power should be devolved, and respect given to the democratic mandate of Local Government to make democratic decisions for the best interest of their communities. The review should involve a discussion on decision making taking place at different levels. It was also suggested that powers should be shared on the principle of subsidiarity, and that Scottish Government's role should be one of support and setting minimum guidance, rather than prescribing how services should be delivered.

Communities want to make decisions about and influence the services they receive from a range of public sector bodies. There were a number of comments that there should be more democratic accountability across public sector organisations, not just Local Authorities, and that existing arrangements for e.g. health, are not democratically accountable enough. This was also seen to be true of non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs).

In order to develop alternative models of governance and shared resource allocation the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 section 17 (Establishment of Corporate Bodies) could offer a mechanism for change. The Transport (Scotland) Bill could also offer opportunities to explore a single public authority model for discrete service delivery elements.

3.2   Complex Legislative Environment

The current legislative landscape in Scotland is generally seen to be overly complex. There is generally no wish to complicate this any further with new bodies or additional legislative requirements, although some respondents indicated that they would like to pursue different models of governance, which may require additional legislation.

There are also opportunities through the Local Governance Review to amend existing legislation to facilitate better local governance and partnership working. For example, increased use of the community empowerment legislation, coupled with a few discrete legislative changes, may be enough to provide the enablers to achieve the key themes identified by the respondents to the review.

Several responses make reference to the current complexity in the legislative, policy and strategic landscape in which Local Authorities and other public bodies operate. These responses also recommend streamlining and rationalisation of the "cluttered landscape of national bodies." In addition, it was suggested that within CPPs, governance arrangements and accountability structures are unclear, particularly given the mixture of local and national organisations involved.

It is felt broadly, particularly by Local Authorities, that this complexity has a significant negative impact. Confusion and, in some cases, a perceived incompatibility between local, regional, and national priorities hampers local partners' ability to meet local needs and act autonomously to meet their communities' requirements. Some legislation can also act as a barrier to partnership and cross-boundary working.

Furthermore, several responses highlight how this complexity increases the barriers to engagement within community groups. Direct experience of working with these groups showed that the complicated landscape and cumbersome processes through which participation takes place reduced willingness to engage and get involved. This is especially true for those community groups that are already underrepresented.

Within this context, there is little appetite for any new legislation or national and regional bodies that might further add to this complexity. Instead, existing legislation could be simplified or amended to further empower Local Government. Furthermore, the point was made, largely by Local Authorities, that where new obligations and responsibilities arise, these should be accompanied with additional funding.

Several responses suggested that any legislative changes should strengthen the role of Local Government on the basis of subsidiarity and that Scottish Government's role should be to impose minimum standards rather than set restrictions for Local Government, a move which would help to clarify the balance between local and national priorities.

Some specific suggestions for changes to legislation or current processes, highlighted by the Society of Local Authority Lawyers and Administrators in Scotland (SOLAR) and a few Local Authorities included:
- Repeal of section 124 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 which provides that half the members of an Education Committee shall be councillors, and also provides for religious representation. It is suggested that the decision on who sits on a Committee should be taken locally. Some Local Authorities may wish to maintain religious representation and others will include representatives from other groups such as young people and unions. Therefore variation should be allowed.
- Repeal of the restrictions in the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970 – this prevents trading to generate income to fund services.
- Community Planning Partnerships- section 17 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 – remove requirement for consent of ministers for formation of a CPP as a body corporate.
- Remove the right to appeal a planning decision where the Planning Authority's decision accords with the Local Development Plan.
- Repeal of sections 15 to 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which relates to the duty to allocate seats on committees to political groups. This presents challenges in a committee involving external representation, something which is increasingly essential for effective partnership working.
- Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 Changes to Governance – A number of specific changes are required to enable partnership working   and working across boundaries:

- o Deletion of the provision in section 57(3) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 which restricts the number of non-councillor Members on a Committee (but not a sub-committee) to one-third.
  - o To support Locality Planning, Schedule 6 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 should be amended to prioritise local geographical considerations and community cohesion over electoral parity.
  - o Amendment of section 56 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, which currently only allows delegation of functions to committees, joint committees or officers. The aim should be to give power to allow Councils to delegate functions to other CPP partners or communities, where desirable.
  - o Amendment of the requirement in section 62A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to obtain the consent of Scottish Ministers to the incorporation of Joint Committees into Joint Boards. While a useful tool, this has been rarely used due to the bureaucracy and timescales in obtaining Ministerial consent. As a matter of principle, this should be a decision for Councils, not Ministers.
- Best Value - Best Value could usefully be expanded into other public bodies and could provide an answer to some of the accountability issues stemming from community participation.
- Removal of all ring-fencing and conditionality – If it is considered by the Scottish Government to be inappropriate for the UK Government to use such measures to control how the Scottish Government prioritises spend, then it is equally inappropriate for the Scottish Government to impose this on democratically elected Local Authorities.
- While it is Scottish Government policy to promote inclusive growth, a legal duty on all public sector bodies to promote inclusive growth could ensure that this is consistently applied, including by Government and its agencies. As part of this, it would be helpful to amend the duty to promote sustainable growth which appears in sections 4 and 5 of the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, to refer to inclusive growth.

In addition, there is a range of specific legislative change suggested by at least one Council, its local CPP and SOLAR, which could be introduced to support the development of local governance, including:

- A duty on all Community Planning Partners and Community Councils to support Locality Planning, which, for Community Planning Partners, must include their provision of resources, including financial support;

- A legal duty on a wider range of public sector bodies to support and resource community participation (not just those listed in schedule 1 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015);

- A duty on Local Authorities, in consultation with CPP partners and local communities, to divide their areas into Localities, not just focussed on locality planning for specific groups (e.g. inequality, islands, or IJB Locality Planning) to allow a focus on priorities for all Localities;

- A duty on Councils to form a Locality Partnership for each Locality with representation from Community Planning Partners, Community Councils and other representative community organisations;

- A duty on Community Planning Partners to deliver services with regard to Localities;

- A duty on such Locality Partnerships, in consultation with communities and partners, to identify key strategic priorities for such Localities and actions and support required to deliver such priorities;

- A duty on all CPP partners to identify annual funds for Participatory Budgeting and to identify services which can be the subject of a participatory approach;

- A legal duty on all public sector bodies to promote the principle of subsidiarity, that wherever possible, power should be delegated to the appropriate lowest level;

- This duty would replace the duty to prepare a Decentralisation Scheme in terms of section 23 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 with Locality Planning; and

- Review of the 'Following the Public Pound' guidance in the light of community participation to provide clarity on accountability issues. Best Value would be a useful starting point for any such review.

3.3   Community engagement, capacity building and empowerment

The majority of responses were supportive of greater involvement of communities in decision making, but recognised that fully funded (by Scottish Government) community capacity building is required to ensure equitable and fair involvement, which does not further increase inequalities. As a result of austerity, many community learning and development services have been reduced, as funding for this service is not ring-fenced and therefore suffers when budget decisions are taken on the 15% - 25% that is within the power of Local Authorities to decide on (there is no suggestion that CLD funding be ring-fenced). This means that more deprived communities are not receiving the level of support required to build their capacity and ability to be involved in decision making, e.g. participatory budgeting. Having additional funding and the flexibility to spend it on local priority issues would facilitate the support of communities. There is a need to create more opportunities for deprived or excluded citizens to participate, developing channels of communication and engagement which a wide range of citizens find accessible. It must be recognised that not all communities are equal and that without intervention, the ability of communities to fully embrace community empowerment will continue to diverge

One Community Planning Partnership suggested that the introduction of Scottish Government funding of Community Planning Partnerships could also support capacity building and support for communities, as there would be more resource and capacity within the CPP.

It was pointed out in one submission that capacity building within communities is also required to allow them to truly lead and develop socio-economic growth opportunities. There is also a need for communities to be well informed in order to be able to be involved in decision making and able to make informed decisions that benefit the wider community, not necessarily just a community of interest.

A common statement, particularly from Local Authorities, was that for communities to be empowered, Local Government needs to be empowered in order to pass responsibility and decision making on to communities.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 still requires some time to bed in and could be further used to improve community involvement in decision making. It was also suggested that this Act, alongside some amendments to other existing legislation (as set out above), may be enough to facilitate an increase in community empowerment and subsidiarity, without the introduction of additional legislation.

Responses also highlighted the need to recognise the areas of local delivery that communities are more likely to be interested in, those which are more visible to local communities. Any new structure of local governance would need to reflect the local level of community identity and interest. Additionally, in regard to community control, some responses indicated that many communities are more interested in collaboration with, and influence of, local public services rather than having overall control of services. For example, a public body would retain core functions but consider partnership working between community/3rd sector groups and all spheres of governance, where there are agreed and specific objectives e.g. a local project.

It is suggested by some respondents that to better attract communities to be involved in decision making, there requires to be investment in the design of an aligned and clearer framework so that public bodies can demonstrate consistently how they have arrived at their decisions; and also to support the roll-out of relatively new approaches to public decision making e.g. Participatory Budgeting. One local authority highlighted that there needs to be a recognition that capacity within organisations to effectively engage in Participatory Budgeting might not be there, and Scottish Government needs to support the development of this capacity.

3.4   Funding

There is wide agreement from respondents that recent levels of funding have become unsustainable, especially from Local Authorities. There is concern from Local Authorities and partnership organisations that it is becoming increasingly difficult to deliver core services in line with legislative duties and, as a result, it is almost impossible to deliver additional projects and to focus on preventative approaches. There is growing concern that the focus becomes solely on how resources are distributed rather than the broader debate about how high quality public services are sustainably resourced. There is additional concern that the erosion of public service budgets has resulted in increasing inequalities. It is suggested that with greater certainty of funding and/or greater financial flexibility, it would be possible to realign efforts on costing out high quality public services and focus on how this can be sustainably resourced with the powers available. There are various suggestions from respondents as to how this could be achieved. Most notably, there is extensive support for greater fiscal autonomy, as is described in the next part of this report. It is also proposed that it would be helpful to have a commitment from Scottish Government that any new legislative duties imposed on Local Authorities or new asymmetric models of governance implemented will have a new funding framework to support potential governance arrangements. Additional suggestions include;

- Greater capital powers allowing Local Authorities to borrow without Ministerial consent to support capital expenditure under a Power of General Competence (see paragraph 3.9). This is to allow Local Authorities to borrow for others, including ALEOs, providing Best Value and State Aid requirements can be satisfied.
- National organisations that work locally, e.g. police and fire could have budgets delegated to localities and regions.
- The Scottish Government could provide funding of 'additionality' (for projects needed to address gaps additional to core services delivery). This would help develop partnership working amongst organisations that do not normally work together on projects that could have 'added value' at a local level
- Specific dedicated financial and people resource to support CPP activity, in order to fully achieve improved community empowerment.

3.5   Fiscal Autonomy

A high number of respondents said that too much of local authority budgets are ring-fenced, which does not allow for innovation or flexibility. Fiscal autonomy is key for local decision making / local democracy to be meaningful.

The three main sub-themes around fiscal autonomy centre around a need for less ring-fencing of budgets, less short-term funding settlements and the ability to raise local taxes.

A number of submissions highlighted that between 75% and 85% of Local Government budgets are ring-fenced, meaning that local decision making on allocation of spend is limited to between 25% and 15% of funding. Granting councils more power to decide on their financing (50% at a minimum to be decided locally) will make them more accountable and better able to respond to local priorities / preferences. Being able to engage with communities over a wider range of service delivery options and outcomes will encourage communities to be better involved and take a greater interest. Shared outcomes should be seen as the mechanism for delivering local and national aspirations, not ring-fenced funding.

One response set out the issues particularly succinctly:

> "Local Authorities' ability to act in the best interests of their communities is constrained by the way they are resourced. The imposition of reductions in core government grant support, together with the removal of discretion on local taxation, dilutes the democratic accountability and effectiveness of Local Government. With the right enabling powers, leadership and ownership, councils could make even more of a difference in issues that concern their area."

The continued trend of one-year budgets makes collaboration and committing to undertaking medium-long term projects difficult. It creates uncertainty. Several responses indicated the need for at least three-year funding settlements to enable engagement with communities and partners in regard to decision making, strategic planning and service delivery.

Alignment of public sector budgets is also an issue for many respondents, making shared strategic planning difficult. Alignment of budgeting across Community Planning Partners would assist with this. Regional and national organisations, it is suggested by several respondents, should have elements of local budgets within their overall funding, which can be informed by local communities, thereby furthering accountability. Furthermore, partner and internal budget boundaries are reasons why the prevention agenda, critical to the delivery of improved outcomes for communities, is proving difficult to deliver. Harmonisation of accounting and financial rules and regulations across the public services based around support for the delivery of local outcomes would help to break these barriers down, facilitating better local partnership working.

There is a call across a high number of responses for greater local tax raising powers to be introduced, possibly aligned with the introduction of a power of general competence (see paragraph 3.9), to bring Scottish Local Authorities into line with their English counterparts. A consultative and comprehensive review of local authority funding is required.

Suggested potential local taxes and levies included:

- Setting and retention of local business rates
- Property taxes
- Parking levies
- Tourism levy
- Proportion of income tax

A number of Local Authorities would like to be able to set their own levels of Council Tax, including the power to set the values for each band. This power should be unrestricted without caps or sanctions, as there has been in recent years.

Other comments included reference to the way transport is commissioned and funded. The transport partnerships highlighted that funding for transport through charities is not helpful and creates a competitive environment that is not useful. They suggest a more coherent approach to commissioning, consultation and co-delivery with local communities.

3.6 Build on existing arrangements or develop Single or Integrated Public Authority models

There was some appetite from a number of respondents for a single or integrated public authority model, while others do not see this as a relevant approach for their local area. Some respondents hold reservations in assuming that only structural changes can make improvements and instead the focus should be on strengthening current arrangements. For many, this includes strengthening CPP arrangements. One respondent argued that a structured partnership approach, comparable to a CPP, would be useful for how their own organisation works with partners. It is argued that a statutory requirement for partnership working would strengthen the collective leadership role and strengthen capacity. Another respondent conversely argued that partnership cannot be forced but should be allowed to grow. This can be supported through strong leadership and ensuring that partnerships are appropriate to the size and scale of the partners. Further suggestions as to how CPP arrangements can be strengthened include;

- Greater emphasis on encouraging the link between community-led developments and institutional partners
- Allowing CPP partners to delegate functions to other CPP partners or communities where desirable and agreed. This would include amendment of section 56 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act

1973, which currently only allows delegation of council functions to committees, joint committees or officers

- Alignment of plans, operations and resources to delivery of local priorities
- Increased use by all partners of area-based staffing, assets and resources to manage operational support and create a devolved and integrated approach to community provision and local community planning
- All partners formally adopting local governance into their management and governance arrangements.
- Placing empowerment and community planning within the key priorities and structures of nationally accountable organisations, therefore ensuring community planning becomes a core deliverable and priority of all organisations.
- Given the changes in local accountability for community planning and empowerment, a review is needed of national and regional demands as it is challenging to service both with current capacity.

Where Community Planning Partnerships work well, they are increasingly effective in agreeing shared priorities, coordinating resource, adopting preventative approaches and supporting communities. The caveats to this are:

- The effectiveness of a CPP can depend on the strength of personal relationships;
- Even in the most effective CPPs, it can be nigh on impossible to secure any financial resource from partners;
- Securing meaningful involvement of national agencies
- The extent to which other CPP partners, such as Health Boards, can be locally responsive are constrained by national targets, centralised procurement, etc.

While Community Planning provides many examples of project and service delivery integration, governance structures are still maintained at an organisational level and have been further complicated by nationally led structural change including Health and Social Care Partnerships, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, and regional collaborative approaches in housing and education. A simplification of this governance, with improved accountability to locally elected councillors, would be welcomed.

An additional comment focussed around incentivising collaboration. Fiscal empowerment, further devolved powers or shared budgets have the potential to be a key incentive for collective and collaborative working, potentially making CPPs more effective.

There are varying views in regard to a single or integrated public authority model for the islands, with some organisations keen to develop this model and others that do not think the public sector organisations are ready for this yet. Each Islands Council are at different stages of development of possible models.

3.7   Open Government and sharing data

The importance of data and intelligence for evidence-based policy decision-making is recognised by many respondents. However, it is emphasised that, for this to be of best use, there must be a commitment to the principle of open data, ensuring that data is shared amongst partners and that the Scottish Government supports this by making as much as possible of its own data open and available to partners. This would help partners to identify those in most need, thereby targeting resources effectively. The sharing of data is a necessary component of partnership working in that it informs shared priorities and allows partners to avoid the duplication of work and waste of resources. Although there appears to be collective enthusiasm for the principle of sharing data, a number of respondents raised their concerns around the practical barriers to achieving this. Data protection laws, are sometimes seen as an obstacle to sharing data, though it is often stated that cultural barriers and incorrect interpretation of legal duties are a bigger challenge.

Further to the emphasis on open data, there was also a general importance placed on the role of 'open government'. It was pointed out that there can sometimes be a lack of (or perception of a lack of) transparency in governance around the structures and processes in place, leading to a lack of accountability. Members of the public often do not know who is responsible for what. They perceive elected members and Local Authorities to have more power over the local issues that impact them than

there is in reality and often raise issues with the wrong organisation. Several responses highlighted the need for structures to be easy to understand and use, not only to give the public the confidence that their voices can be heard, but also to ensure that their views are taken on board.

3.8   European Charter of Local Self Government

A number of Local Government respondents support the adoption of the European Charter of Local Self Government.

One response highlighted:

> "The Scottish Government has the competence at present to enact primary legislation which would honour the terms of the European Charter of Self Government. Article 2 of the Charter places a clear legal obligation on the Scottish Government to enact primary legislation and embed the Charter in domestic law."

It is argued that the adoption of the charter would facilitate greater local governance and promote rights enjoyed by most other countries in the Council of Europe.

Another submission set out that 'incorporating the Charter of Local Self Government into law in Scotland will strengthen Scotland's overall system of democracy and create the foundations for an enduring and progressive partnership between national government, Local Government and communities. It is key to building on local and Scottish Government's joint commitment to improve outcomes and renew democratic participation across Scotland. In summary, the advantages are:

- doing so would strengthen local and Scottish Government's ability to work jointly to improve outcomes in communities across Scotland.

- it would strengthen Scotland's democracy by ensuring that communities enjoy the same local democratic rights that are already commonplace across Europe and beyond.

- it would deliver the unfinished business of the Scottish Parliament by ensuring that, for the first time, this partnership between national and Local Government is built into Scotland's system of democratic governance, and reflected in its day to day culture and practice.

- it would ensure that Scotland fully complies with international treaty obligations and addresses outstanding issues that have previously been identified. It would also provide a springboard for the UK Government to similarly comply with its obligations. Failure to bring this into effect sends out the opposite message, that the Government never had any intention to comply with the Charter.'

It is suggested that the incorporation of the Charter is an opportunity to improve outcomes, empower citizens, and reduce inequalities for the whole of Scotland

The SOLAR response contains an appendix with more detail in regard to the incorporation of the Charter.

3.9   Power of General Competence

Currently, Local Authorities have the Power to Advance Well-being, and one theme emerging from multiple local authority responses was the inadequacy of this power and the suggestion that this should be replaced by a Power of General Competence within the Local Democracy Bill. That is, the power for Local Authorities to do "anything that individuals generally may do."

This suggestion stems from the perceived weaknesses inherent in the Power to Advance Well-being, which enables Local Authorities to do anything that they consider likely to improve the well-being of their area and/or the people in it. As multiple responses make clear, this power is "so hedged with restrictions that it verges on being unusable," and does not meet the purpose for which it was originally intended. In

particular, the Power does not allow raising of any monies through taxation or charges. Given the existing financial climate, there may be an expectation that Local Government ought to have the powers to raise income.

Where respondents have called for the introduction of the Power of General Competence to replace the Power of Well-being, this has generally been accompanied by the suggestion that tax and revenue raising power must be included, as well as the power to borrow to support capital expenditure. This would recognise that local contexts are unique, that costs vary, and allow Local Government to act in a manner that is felt appropriate to meet the needs of their local area, and help achieve outcomes for their communities.

It is suggested that the Power of General Competence, if it were accompanied by these powers, would ensure that Local Authorities were more fully empowered to act in ways that were most appropriate to improve outcomes for their communities, reduce inequalities and promote inclusive growth.

It was noted that the Power of General Competence already exists for Local Authorities in England, albeit with several restrictions imposed. It was widely felt that certain of these restrictions, particularly around revenue raising, would not be appropriate in the Scottish context and should be removed. It was recognised, however, that certain restrictions would have to be retained, for example the existing duty relating to Best Value was generally felt to work well.

The introduction of the Power of General Competence is also linked to the suggestion that the European Charter of Local Self Government be adopted, as set out above. Responses highlighted that, due to its restrictions, the Power to Advance Well-being does not fully meet the provisions within Article 4, Paragraph 2 of the Charter. This sets out the requirement of local bodies to act according to their own initiative in areas outside those specifically delegated to them. Therefore, introduction of a Power of General Competence would go hand in hand with adoption of the Charter.

The amendments that were passed at Stage Three of the Islands (Scotland) Act provide opportunities for Island Councils to submit requests to Ministers for additional powers and the devolution of functions. It is felt it is important that these provisions are fully considered, and opportunities maximised.

A 'reserved matters' power, allied to a Power of General Competence, would be hugely beneficial in terms of enabling Local Authorities to support their communities, address inequality and promote inclusive growth within communities.

The submission from SOLAR has an appendix dedicated to the Power of General Competence, which includes further detail.

3.10   Role of Community Councils

Several responses highlighted the need to consider the role of Community Councils, clarifying their legal responsibilities and possibly increasing these. This process would assist with identifying what decision making powers could realistically be delegated to them.

There is a call to align the review of Community Councils with the Local Governance Review.

One respondent went as far as to suggest that Community Councils have delegated powers, funds and staff. There were two suggestions to consolidate the roles of Community Councils into Community Planning Partnerships, either as members or as subgroups. Community Councils could have a distinct and specific role in the delivery of Local Outcomes Improvement Plans, with a suggestion that they could have a duty to support the delivery of Locality Plans.

Another view expressed by more than one response was that Community Councils at present are not generally representative of their communities and so new solutions to this need to be explored. One suggestion was that fiscal powers are key to enabling Community Councils to maximise their contribution,

and more effective legislation may drive the set-up of more Community Councils and strengthen their contribution. This could potentially encourage more people to get involved in Community Councils.

As with the section on community engagement and capacity building, any increased role for Community Councils, and any capacity building they may require, respondents call for this to be fully funded by Scottish Government.

Across many responses, there was generally a view that Community Councils could play a role in participative democracy at a local level. However, there would need to be a reduction in the bureaucracy involved in engagement to streamline processes and better enable engagement. A strength of Community Councils is that they are democratically accountable.

However, perceived disadvantages and issues with Community Councils at present include:

- Many areas, particularly in more deprived communities, do not have a Community Council

- The membership of Community Councils is not representative of Scottish society, and is often perceived as comprising middle-class, elderly people;

- Few Community Councils elections are contested due to a lack of candidates, with those standing appointed with no competition;

- While the main purpose of Community Councils is to express the views of their communities, it is rarely evident how communities are consulted, or involved in co-production;

- Community Councils are hugely variable in terms of their impact. Some are excellent, others focus on challenge and scrutiny and are reluctant to work in partnership with Councils and CPPs;

- Community Councils possess few powers and, possibly as a consequence, few take a strategic approach to dealing with the priorities of their area.

It is suggested that Community Councils can form part of the solution to decision making/subsidiarity without huge changes to their role. While no significant change is recommended to the current remit of Community Councils, it would still be helpful to clarify their legal status.

3.11   Place and National, Regional and Local levels of organisation

Multiple respondents agree that there needs to be a balance of Local, Regional and National working. Different functions will work better at different levels, and consideration needs to be given to what these functions, or parts of functions, are. Accountability at a local level of national and regional bodies is also required.

It is recognised that communities need to influence local decision making around communities of place, or communities of interest, but that there are benefits of a wider regional approach in some areas of service planning and/or delivery. Examples of regional approaches include Education Collaboratives, Regional Economic Partnerships and Transportation, with one suggestion to perhaps look at regional or national approaches to Educational Psychology, Trading Standards and Environmental Health. However, there is a requirement that any regional approaches are driven from the 'bottom up' and consideration requires to be given to what arrangements would need to be in place locally.

One respondent suggested the powers and responsibilities for economic development, transport and skills development currently held by the Scottish Government and its agencies could be devolved down to regional bodies. These regional bodies should continue to be driven by their member councils, with agendas set and decisions taken at a local level, and not directed by the Scottish Government.

Other comments included:
- Regional approaches will not necessarily mean the need for a new regional organisation, as partnerships approaches could work better.

- Rationalisation of the cluttered landscape of national public bodies would improve efficiency and effectiveness, particularly as there is seen to be a lack of local accountability for spending by national public organisations in local areas.

- City Region working will develop over the coming years and brings the opportunity to devolve more national powers to the regional level. The model allows councils to focus on meeting the needs of local communities, whilst each area uses its own specific strengths to play their own distinctive role in the city region. There is a need to safeguard against regional approaches becoming a mechanism to 'suck power up from local areas' rather than a mechanism to devolve power.

- Regional Economic Partnerships have the potential to prioritise local needs and drive prosperity and equality. It was suggested that it will be useful for the review to consider how these can be further enabled. It is important to consider how CPPs can continue to address local circumstances in the context of City and Growth Deals, and regional economic partnerships, and how these could create wider and deeper levels of collaboration with national bodies such as Scottish Enterprise.

- Public health could be more aligned to localities and communities, through health and social care integration and/or Community Planning.

4. Additional comments and suggestions

Other interesting or important comments, suggestions and concerns expressed in consultation responses included:

- **Leadership Capacity** - Leadership capacity in Local Government is very important, at both elected member and officer level. Large, complex, strategic services both demand and need the best leadership available. The crucial importance of leadership capacity at both councillor and officer level has become even more pressing given the increasing complexity of the work of a council. The role of councillors is changing from one where the council is the dominant service provider, to one where the council is a commissioner of services as well as a provider.

- **Representation -** At present the make-up of councils is not fully representative of the communities they serve.

- **National work delivered locally** – Greater recognition is required by national organisations about the implications for local delivery of national strategy commitments; and that community empowerment means that delivery can be by both public services and local communities/ communities of interest. There are opportunities for national public bodies to relocate jobs to help stimulate economic growth in different parts of the country.

- **Christie Commission -** The principles of the Christie Commission and the Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy should be central to any changes made to public bodies and specifically Local Government. It is suggested that the Christie Commission's principles for public service reform be followed in the design of any future arrangements for local governance.

- **Internal systems** - internal systems and processes within partners can often limit the ability to respond to local priorities. These can include rules around capital expenditures and receipts, recruitment and secondment, and opaque decision-making structures. A review of these internal bureaucratic barriers should be undertaken to ensure that public service community planning partners are working to deliver best value outcomes for communities.

- **Community Wealth building -** it is essential that, as part of a duty to promote inclusive growth, all public bodies engaged in procurement or local investment are supported to take community wealth factors into consideration when investing or procuring

- **Technology and engagement** - Increased opportunities to use technology and engagement tools to improve equality of opportunity in influencing decision making are needed. A commitment should be made to make the best use of our people, their skills and current and developing technological resources to improve engagement with local communities/communities of interest.

- **Cities** – the cities ask for a greater role in policy development at a national level. Just as island and rural communities are recognised in funding and investment decisions for the special role they provide and additional pressures they face, it is the view of the cities that similar recognition should be given to Scotland's cities.

- **Inclusive growth** - Proposals under the Review must be consistent with National Performance Framework ambition for inclusive growth and the Community Empowerment Act.

- **Economic Policy –** There is a call for greater autonomy in local economic policy, with the potential for local development and skills being devolved to a local level. There is a need for local levers to drive local economic growth via devolution of legislative powers. Current delivery vehicles and national structures are complex and overly bureaucratic and there is a need to review these to streamline them and ensure transparency.

- **Inputs versus Outcomes** - There should be a presumption against national input targets for any body delivering local services. These run contrary to the Christie principle of focussing on outcomes not inputs

- **Democratic Accountability**- Consideration needs to be given of the link between local authority councillors and their communities. Currently Scotland has the fewest locally elected representatives per head of population anywhere in Europe. If we are serious about having empowered communities, do we need more councillors? The current basic salaries for councillors are not good and tend to result in a high proportion of retired councillors or councillors who are juggling their duties with another job. How well is the multi-member ward system understood or is another proportional representational system worth looking at?

- **Participative democracy versus representative democracy** - participative democracy should not erode the ability of a council to make strategic decisions. The correct balance has to be found between the two.

- **Future Proofing** - the review of local governance provides an opportunity to look forward and future proof the current aims and objectives. Communities are currently changing and to support and enable them to more forward, there must be recognition of the different supports that will be required in the future, with an anticipation of the resources required.

Across the responses, there are issues for particular sectors e.g. transport, health, the cities, community justice, but the detail of these have not been captured in this report, which seeks to focus on the key themes arising across the submissions.

Conclusion

This report has sought to summarise the main themes emerging from analysis of the 44 submissions made to the Strand 2 consultation within the Local Governance Review.

Appendix One

List of Respondents

Aberdeen City Council
Aberdeenshire Council
Angus Community Planning Partnership
Argyll and Bute Council
Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership
Calmac Ferries
City of Edinburgh Council
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
Community Justice Scotland
Douglas Sinclair
Dr Serafin Pazos-Vidal
Dumfries and Galloway Community Planning Partnership
East Ayrshire Council
East Dunbartonshire Council
East Lothian Council
East Renfrewshire Council
Fife Council
Glasgow City Council
Highland Community Planning Partnership
Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Inverclyde Council
NESTRAN
NHS 24
NHS Shetland
North Ayrshire Council
North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership
North Lanarkshire Council
Orkney Islands Council
Perth and Kinross Council
Police Scotland
Reform Scotland
Registers of Scotland
Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership
Scotland's Cities
Scottish Borders Council
Scottish Enterprise
Scottish Natural Heritage
Scottish Water
SOLAR
South Lanarkshire Council
Stirling Council
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
West Lothian Council
What Works Scotland

The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

COSLA

Public Sector Leaders
By email

22 June 2018

Dear Public Sector Leader

LOCAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW – ENGAGEMENT PHASE

Programme for Government 2017-18 set out the intention to "decentralise power to a more local level in Scotland and launch a comprehensive review of local governance ahead of a Local Democracy Bill later in this Parliament". In December 2017, the Scottish Government and COSLA jointly launched the Local Governance Review.

We believe that it is important to review how powers, responsibilities and resources are shared across national and local spheres of government and with communities in the context of significant change to the governance of Scotland over the last two decades, and in recognition that outcomes for citizens and communities are best when decisions are taken at the right level of place.

This review reflects local and national government's shared commitment to subsidiarity and local democracy, and builds on joint agreement between COSLA and the Scottish Government to focus on and strengthen local and community decision-making and democratic governance in ways that improve outcomes in local communities, grow Scotland's economy for everyone's benefit, support communities to focus on their priorities, and help new ideas to flourish.

The Review of Local Governance will explore what might be achieved, and highlight opportunities for positive change.   In doing so it brings a wide range of Scotland's public services into scope, takes cognisance of reforms where work is already progressing, and will include powers and functions held at national level. It is therefore very important that we hear from you.

Many of you will know that the review is being undertaken in two key strands. First, a highly inclusive conversation with communities is getting underway, and will listen to views about how decision making can work best for towns, villages and neighbourhoods around the country. This reflects our shared commitment to community empowerment, and builds on the work already done to give people a direct say over the decisions that matter most to them. If you would like to support this process, for example by hosting events, please get in touch. As part of that conversation, we expect people will be interested in how decisions about a range of public services can be made in the communities that they serve.

Second – the main purpose of this letter – we wish to involve you, as Scotland's public sector leaders, in a dialogue about how changes to how Scotland is governed can make the lives of Scotland's people better. Accordingly, we are now inviting you to bring forward proposals to feed into the review.

Just like the first strand, the second strand of the Local Governance Review offers a broad scope, and we anticipate that all public services will wish to offer proposals for improved governance arrangements at their level of place. This is based on an acceptance of increased variation in decision-making arrangements across the country: what is right for one place will not necessarily be right for another. For example, these could be at the level of a city or local authority, community planning partnership or regional economic grouping, or focus on how existing national arrangements can support a more local way of working.

We know that there are already many examples of working creatively across traditional boundaries to deliver responsive services for people. We want to hear how these approaches can be strengthened and scaled up, whether there are new powers or other changes that are needed to make more progress and the

benefits these would produce, and about opportunities to hardwire better local governance arrangements into the places you serve. We are also keen to hear about how this landscape could be made to work better overall.

What is important is that proposals reflect our shared aspirations in light of the new National Performance Framework to tackle inequalities and drive inclusive growth, are consistent with Christie Commission principles, and strengthen local decision making.

We also want to have an interactive process with you to consider and develop ideas. Whilst we are setting a deadline for written proposals and evidence of 14 December 2018, we want to hear from you as early in the process as possible in order to understand your proposals, help them take shape and identify where other evidence or assurances might be required to deliver change, and consider how they might link with other ideas.

To get that process underway, we are seeking an initial indication of the kind of issues you would like to discuss by the beginning of September, and we will follow up this letter at that point. There is no fixed format for this, however we do want to receive your initial input no later than early Autumn in order to leave enough time to work with you on proposals. We also want to avoid setting an arbitrary date that would put you under undue pressure to take things forward. But we can't stress enough that we would welcome you getting in touch as early as possible in the process of you forming your ideas. We would of course be happy to meet with you and your networks as part of this process too.

Where there is interest in developing an idea, it will also be important to involve all partners with a potential contribution to make. For example, this approach is already opening up new possibilities for the Islands, following the commitment in Programme for Government 2017-18 to support those Island authorities who want to establish a single authority model of delivering local services.

These two strands of the Local Governance Review will run in parallel for a period of around 6 months, and inform a programme of changes to governance arrangements in different places where these can increase the pace and scale of public service reform, focus on shared outcomes, and strengthen local decision making. In the event of legislative change being required a Local Democracy Bill is provisionally scheduled for introduction later this parliament. However, should you have ideas that will make a real difference, but will take longer to develop and deliver, we do of course still want to hear from you.

Joint oversight for the Local Governance Review overall is provided by the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Public Service Reform Delivery and COSLA's Political Leadership Team. These arrangements provide the primary forum for determining how proposals will be progressed, with Ministers reflecting this in the scope and content of legislation.
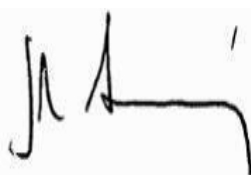
The Local Governance Review is part of a long term commitment by national and local government to place based reform and a more local approach to decision making in Scotland. The newly refreshed National Performance Framework provides a shared set of outcomes that this way of working can help to deliver. It is therefore vital that we hear from all parts of Scotland's public services in line with the timescale above. We look forward to your participation, and to discussing your proposals in the coming months.

To begin this process, you can make contact with the team at: democracymatters@gov.scot or 0131 244 0709.

ANGELA CONSTANCE, MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Communities,
Social Security and Equalities

JOHN SWINNEY, MSP
Deputy First Minister and
Cabinet Secretary for
Education and Skills

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Local
Governance
Review

Democracy Matters

Community-level decision-making: an analysis of responses to Democracy Matters

COSLA

Scottish Government
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gov.scot

Authors

The analysis of Democracy Matters and the writing of this report was undertaken by Nick Bland and Jane Cullingworth.

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Contents

Executive Summary

The Local Governance Review was jointly launched in December 2017 by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) to consider how powers, responsibilities and resources are shared across national and local spheres of government, and with communities. There are two strands to the Review:

(1) community level decision-making; and (2) public service governance.

Strand one focuses on communities and has been called 'Democracy Matters' (abbreviated as DM). This report is an analysis of responses to the DM engagement.

The Democracy Matters engagement

DM was designed to take a bottom-up approach to engaging people and communities. Scottish Government and COSLA worked in partnership with a group drawn from the community sector, equalities groups, the public and private sector to design the engagement process collaboratively. The group developed a short set of open questions designed to guide DM discussions, and a range of materials – designed to be as inclusive as possible – to support people to have discussions in their community.

Your Community. Your Ideas. Your Future.

There were five DM questions:

1. Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in decision-making processes that affect your local community or community of interest?

2. Would you like your local community or community of interest to have more control over some decisions? If yes, what sorts of issues would those decisions cover?

3. When thinking about decision-making, 'local' could mean a large town, a village, or a neighbourhood. What does 'local' mean to you and your community?

4. Are there existing forms of decision-making which could play a part in exercising new local powers? Are there new forms of local decision-making that could work well? What kinds of changes might be needed for this to work in practice?

5. Do you have any other comments, ideas or questions? Is there more you want to know?

People were able to get involved in a range of ways:

- Community conversations: many communities organised a local event to discuss the DM questions.
- Individual responses: people were able to submit their individual views by email or post. There was no required format for responses.

- Organisational responses: organisations submitted a range of views on community-level decision-making.
- DM postcard: it asked two of the DM questions and provided space to write a response and return by freepost.
- An online forum: people were able to contribute to an online dialogue about DM.

To mark the completion of this first phase of engagement, 13 regional events were organised across Scotland in November and December 2018.

The analysis of responses to Democracy Matters

DM was designed to give communities flexibility and choice about how to run events and how to submit responses. As a result, the submissions do not follow a consistent format; they reflect a significant and varied body of material. A qualitative approach had to be used for analysing this material. The qualitative analysis presented in this report describes the spread and broad pattern of responses. It is not possible, or valid, to quantify the views and experiences described in submissions. The analysis presented reflects the perspectives of the individuals, communities and organisations that took part in DM; the analysis cannot be generalised to Scotland's population as a whole.

Who got involved in Democracy Matters

There were 334 submissions which comprised:

- 127 submissions from community conversations. From the information provided, it is estimated that 2,967 people took part.

- 61 submissions from individuals: 23 by email, 117 by postcard, 21 online.

- 46 submissions from organisations. Some organisations used events to gather broader views to inform their submission. It is estimated this involved 885 people.

In addition, 226 people attended the regional events. Overall, it is estimated that 4,240 people took part in DM.

DM was designed to be as inclusive as possible so that communities of place and communities of interest or identity were equally able to take part. It is evident from the submissions received that a very diverse cross-section of communities in Scotland chose to take part, described below.

Two fifths of the community conversations involved communities of place. The other three fifths involved communities of interest or identity; and three quarters of these reflected the experiences of communities of interest or identity in a specific locality. A number of submissions highlighted the importance of recognising the existence, and different needs, of 'communities within communities', particularly for groups reflecting protected characteristics.

Submissions came from a broad variety of communities of place. Events were held right across Scotland, in 29 of 32 local authority areas and representing the experiences of people living in cities, towns, neighbourhoods and villages.

Many different communities of interest or identity held community conversations and made submissions, from across four broad categories:

- Identity: people who identified as a community around shared language, ethnicity, nationality, and citizenship status, and groups with shared experience around gender identity and sexuality.

- Experience: groups with shared experiences of poverty, homelessness, living on benefits, recovering from addiction, living with physical and mental health conditions, disabled people.

- Lifestage: groups with shared experience as young people, college and university students, parents, carers, and those who were retired.

- Interests: groups with a shared interest in the environment and sustainability, culture and the arts, growing your own food.

Most of the discussions held by communities of interest or identity reflected the experience of marginalised groups; some involved people experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage or discrimination, often described as intersectionality.

The submissions describe a very broad range of experiences and views; different communities are starting from very different places in terms of their experiences of participating in local decision-making, and in their aspirations for greater involvement. The following describes the range of experiences.

People's experiences of local decision-making

People described positive and negative experiences of their involvement in local decision-making. In a minority of cases, people had no experience of involvement in local decision-making. Responses describe the activity and energy of people getting involved in their communities across Scotland. However, the negative experiences of trying to be involved in decisions locally were more strongly and more frequently described.

The positive experiences ranged from taking part in, and helping to organise, activities and events in communities, to involvement with more formal community fora or organisations. The strength of community involvement and the positive impact of that involvement came through strongly in submissions. In broad terms, the submissions described three kinds of positive involvement:

- Political action and protesting
- Making their voices heard and influencing
- Being directly involved and taking decisions

The negative experiences from communities of place, and of interest or identity, covered a broad range:

- Poor communication
- Tokenistic engagement
- Lack of representation
- Inability to effect change/inaction
- Unwelcoming structures

There were a number of recurring themes about the kinds of barriers that prevent people from getting involved. These are summarised as:

- **Information:** Lack of information about how to be involved, what opportunities there are to participate in decisions; where and how decisions and taken. Information not reaching marginalised communities about services available to support inclusion.

- **Complexity:** The system is complicated – difficult to understand who is responsible for what, how things work and how to influence.

- **Accessibility:** Transportation is non-existent or poor – and expensive – in areas. Most formal decision-making fora meet during working hours; the time available to participate can be a factor. Physical accessibility a key issue for many disabled people.

- **Lack of support for engagement:** inadequate support for people to overcome range of practical barriers to involvement, and the range of barriers to inclusion experienced by marginalised and disadvantaged communities.

- **Style of participation:** The language and behaviours of public authorities and the ways in which forums and meetings are organised restrict or discourage participation.

More community control over local decision-making

The clear evidence from the submissions is that people do want to have more control of decisions on issues that matter to them. This is particularly the case for control of decisions that are seen to directly affect communities, which should apply more locally. The vast majority of submissions expressed views that demonstrate a desire for a change to the status quo.

It was clear that what people understood by the term 'control' varied. Control was understood in terms of different kinds of participation in decision-making. For some, this was about being able to give their views as part of decisions being made, and for their input to lead to practical action that improved their community. Other submissions were clear it was about communities having the power and the resources to make decisions themselves. These views can be described broadly in terms of:

- **Influence** – having a voice in, and an impact on, decision-making.

- **Transparency and accountability** – public authorities being transparent about their decisions and communities being able to hold them to account for those decisions.

- **Authority** – having the authority and resources to take decisions.

There were some responses that described concerns; people who felt that control should not be devolved. For some, this was because of a worry about the responsibility involved; or a concern about, or a lack of confidence in, the capacity of communities to hold that responsibility. Some submissions expressed concern about how to respond to local demands, and being held accountable.

Across the responses as a whole, communities expressed an appetite and ambition for greater involvement in, or control of, decisions on nearly every policy issue for which public authorities have responsibility. In general, it could be seen that the issues identified largely reflected the lived experience and concerns of the specific community of place and/or community of interest or identity.

For some communities, their responses related to very specific issues and concerns that affected the quality of their daily lives for example, issues of disadvantage and discrimination, negative aspects of their local physical and social environment, the quality of their public housing, their access to and use of specific public services. For other communities, their responses spoke more about decisions that would benefit the wider community, meet community wishes and needs, support the social and physical regeneration of their local area.

Overall, communities identified a range of changes to how they are involved in decisions that affect their community:

- To be treated better by public authorities – through a change in culture and behaviour about involving communities in decisions.

- To be better connected – both within communities (pooling knowledge and resources); and with decision-makers.

- To be able to participate in decisions about their community; and, for some communities, that meant to have more local control over decisions, with the resources necessary for those decisions.

- For decisions that affect their community to be based on knowledge and experience, and for those decisions to lead to action that improves their lives.

How do people describe their 'local' community

Many submissions described local in terms of a specific place, or geography, e.g. 'my town', 'my village', 'the neighbourhood'. A distinction was often drawn between what were seen as the artificial boundaries around which different public services were organised, and what was described as 'natural communities' that made sense to people locally. Some described local in terms of size, or distance; others identified that communities can exist online.

Others identified that what was regarded as local for decision-making related to the specific issue. They identified that decisions might appropriately be taken at different geographic 'levels' (e.g. national/council area/community).

Many submissions associated the idea of 'local' more with social connections, and a shared sense of identity and belonging. Communities of interest/identity were likely to describe 'local' in similar terms, around shared experience and identity.

A few submissions suggested a specific definition of 'local' when thinking about community-level decision-making. For example, defined by an upper and lower limit on population size.

Changes needed to enable decision-making at the community level

Across the broad sweep of responses, many existing forms of decision-making were identified that, with changes, might play a role in bringing communities closer to, or involved in local decision-making. Most often mentioned were community councils, but also community development trusts, community-based housing associations and forums/partnerships that brought together other local community organisations. There was a common view that any new arrangements should reflect local circumstances; that 'one size does not fit all'.

There were a range of views and experiences of community councils described in responses. Many views on community councils were supportive of, and ambitious for, their potential to take on more local powers, with changes. Others, fewer in number, held strongly negative views of community councils and did not think they should take on local decision-making.

They were regarded as unrepresentative, ineffective and reactive, self-interested and 'cliquey'.

Other examples of existing decision-making variously identified included: advisory groups, locality planning groups, community planning partnerships, school boards and parent councils, the Scottish rural and youth parliaments, participatory budgeting arrangements, local third sector organisations, other local community forums.

Responses also described a range of changes required to make community-level decision-making a reality covering the following themes:

- Supporting people to participate
- Building participation into the system
- Changing the culture and behaviours of public authorities towards community participation

People described a range of positive values they want to see expressed in the ways in which communities are enabled to participate by public authorities. These values describe:

- How public authorities should treat communities
- How communities and public authorities should work together
- New ways of working in partnership that deliver practical actions to improve outcomes for communities

Some community organisations, with experience of the current system of decision-making, described possible new structures for community decision-making. For some this was described as requiring a new tier of democracy; but others were explicitly opposed to such a development. Many identified that any power to take decisions required resources in order to deliver those decisions.

A few organisations provided worked up proposals of new forms of local decision-making at the community level and described how they could be constituted, their accountability, and how they could fit into the existing system of decision-making.

From the submissions, a range of measures can be identified that communities feel would help enable better community involvement in, or control over, decisions.

- Knowledge and education about people's rights and responsibilities as citizens, information about how (and which) public authorities take decisions that affect their communities, and information about how they can get involved in decisions.

- Practical training and organisational development for community groups and organisations to enable them to take on more responsibility.

- Greater influence over decisions made by public authorities and the means to hold those authorities better to account for those decisions.

- Community participation in/membership of existing decision-making institutions/ structures (e.g. area communities, local community planning groups).

- New structures of community governance: either changing the functions and/authority of existing community organisations such as community councils, or development trusts, or community-run housing associations; or designing completely new structures at the community level.

Section 1: Introduction

The Local Governance Review was jointly launched in December 2017 by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) to consider how powers, responsibilities and resources are shared across national and local spheres of government, and with communities.

There are two strands to the Review:

(1) community level decision-making; and (2) public service governance.

Strand one focuses on communities and has been called 'Democracy Matters' (abbreviated subsequently in this report as DM). This report describes the analysis of responses to the DM engagement process, described below.

Strand two focuses on all public sector bodies, which were invited to offer proposals for improved governance arrangements at their level of place, based on an acceptance of increased variation in decision-making arrangements across Scotland. A report providing an analysis of the responses received to strand 2 has also been produced.

The Democracy Matters engagement

DM was deliberately designed to take a bottom-up approach to engaging people and communities. Scottish Government and COSLA worked in partnership with a group drawn from the community sector, equalities groups, the public and private sector to design the engagement process collaboratively. This group was called the 'Enabling Group' (Annex A for list of group members).

The Enabling Group developed a short set of five open questions designed to guide DM discussions:

1. Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in decision-making processes that affect your local community or community of interest?

2. Would you like your local community or community of interest to have more control over some decisions? If yes, what sorts of issues would those decisions cover?

3. When thinking about decision-making, 'local' could mean a large town, a village, or a neighbourhood. What does 'local' mean to you and your community?

4. Are there existing forms of decision-making which could play a part in exercising new local powers? Are there new forms of local decision-making that could work well? What kinds of changes might be needed for this to work in practice?

5. Do you have any other comments, ideas or questions? Is there more you want to know?

A range of materials were produced by the Enabling Group to support people to host and organise discussions in their community in whatever way suited them best. They were designed to be as inclusive as possible. The materials included:

- A short animated film explaining the aims of DM

- A guide to the DM questions, which was also produced in an Easy Read version

- Information about how decisions about public services are taken in Scotland

- Guides to organising a DM event and to facilitating a good discussion. These guides made broad suggestions about things to consider in planning and running events; but did not set out a fixed format.

All of this material was made available on dedicated Local Governance Review webpages.

People were able to get involved in DM in a range of ways:

- Community conversations: Conversations were held in communities of geography or interest. In most cases, communities organised an event where people came together to have a conversation about the five DM questions. Communities chose to structure conversations in a variety of ways and used a range of supporting material. A report of the conversation was then submitted – in a variety of forms.

- Individual responses: people were able to submit their individual views by email or post. There was no required format for responses. Individuals gave their views in a variety of ways, some answered the DM questions directly and others responded more generally to the issues.

- Organisational responses: organisations submitted a range of views on community-level decision-making. There was no required format for responses. Some of the submissions from organisations responded to the DM questions directly and others responded more generally to the issues.

- DM postcard: a leaflet was developed to promote DM. It provided some information about the Local Governance Review and asked two of the questions. There was space to write a response to these questions and it could then be folded up into a pre-addressed 'postcard' format and returned by freepost. These were distributed at a range of events including the Scottish Government's travelling Cabinet meetings, and by a range of organisations locally including councils, Community Planning Partnerships, Third Sector Interfaces, health, community and third sector organisations.

- An online forum: people were able to post ideas and responses to the DM questions, and respond to other contributions, in an online dialogue.

To help support the community conversations, the Scottish Government made available a £30,000 fund for small grants to community organisations to cover expenses such as hiring a venue, providing refreshments and childcare costs. The fund was distributed by the Voluntary Action Fund which made grants for 89 community events, totalling £27,985.

In addition, the Scottish Government awarded larger grants totalling just under £20,000 to help ensure that DM was as inclusive as possible. These grants went to the following organisations who organised local events with specific marginalised groups:

- Church of Scotland (17 events)
- BEMIS (5 events)
- Deaf Scotland (2 events)

DM was launched on 28 May 2018 and submissions could be made until the end of November. Submissions received after the deadline were also included.

To mark the completion of this first phase of engagement, a series of 13 regional events were organised by the Enabling Group. The events were held across Scotland in November and December 2018, in the early afternoon and early evening, in community venues in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow, Inverness, Irvine and Oban.

Each event lasted two and a half hours and included a presentation which gave feedback on the emerging themes from provisional analysis of the initial responses received on DM. Table discussions were held, supported by a facilitator, focused on some of the aspects of community-level decision-making: specifically around local control, equalities and inclusion, and outcomes. Notes of the discussions were taken by facilitators and everyone attending was also encouraged to add their own written comments using post-it notes. This written material was included in the analysis undertaken for this report.

The analysis of responses to Democracy Matters

For each submission to DM, respondents were asked to complete a Respondent Information Form. The information from the form was systematically recorded in a spreadsheet. This included information about the method of engagement used, who the submission was from and the estimated numbers of people involved. This information was used to analyse who got involved in DM, and is described in the next section.

DM engagement was designed to give a high degree of flexibility and choice about how communities ran events and about how the discussions were then reflected in the written submissions. As a result, submissions did not follow a consistent structure or format. Taken as a whole, the submissions to DM reflect a significant and varied body of material. This means that a qualitative approach has to be used for analysing this material.

To support the qualitative analysis, the text of the submissions was uploaded into a qualitative analysis software package called NVivo. Using NVivo enabled the responses to be coded into thematic categories for analysis. A coding framework was developed from an initial analysis of responses and the responses then coded systematically using that framework. As a qualitative analysis, it seeks to describe the spread and broad pattern of responses. It is not possible, or valid, to quantify the views and experiences in submissions.

The analysis that is presented in the following sections reflects the views and experiences of individuals, communities and organisations that took part in DM, as they were reflected in the written submissions. In any public engagement exercise like

DM, it is important to remember that the analysis cannot be generalised to Scotland's population as a whole.

The structure of this report

The report is structured in the following sections which cover the DM process and each of the five questions:

1. Who got involved in Democracy Matters?
2. What are people's experiences of local decision-making?
3. Do people want more control over decisions that affect their community?
4. How do people describe their community: what does it mean to be 'local'?
5. What forms of decision-making could be used at the community level?
6. Other issues raised.

Section 2: Who got involved in Democracy Matters?

This section provides more detail about who got involved in DM and how they participated.

There were 334 submissions on DM. They were made up of the following:

- There were 127 submissions from community conversations that reflected the results from 158 local events. From the information provided in submissions, it is estimated that 2,967 people took part.

- There were 161 submissions from individuals: 23 people responded by email, 117 sent in a postcard, 21 participated online.

- There were 46 submissions from organisations. A number of the organisations held discussion events/ conferences of varying size to gather broader views that informed their submission. From the information provided, it is estimated that this involved 885 people.

In addition, the 13 regional events held in November and December were attended by 226 people in total.

The table below summarises the numbers of people who got involved in DM: estimated to be 4,240 in total.

How people were involved	Submissions	Estimated no. of people engaged
Community conversation	127 submissions covering 158 local events	2,967
Individual response	23 submissions	23
Postcards	117 submissions	117
Online	21 people contributed to online discussions, making 133 comments in total	21
Organisational response	46 submissions	885[1]
Regional events	13 events	226
Total		4,240

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1 Some of the responses from organisations reflected considerable levels of engagement with their membership, for example at conferences, other organisational events, or by convening a specific Democracy Matters discussion.

DM was designed to be as inclusive as possible so that communities of place and communities of interest or identity would equally be able to take part. It is evident from the submissions received that a very diverse cross-section of communities in Scotland chose to take part, described below.

Three fifths of the 158 community conversations involved communities of interest and identity. The other two fifths of these conversations involved communities of place. Three quarters of the community conversations with communities of interest and identity reflected their experiences in a specific locality. A number of submissions highlighted the importance of recognising the existence, and different needs, of 'communities within communities', particularly for groups reflecting protected characteristics.

Submissions came from a very broad variety of communities of place. Events were held right across Scotland, in 29 of 32 local authority areas and representing the experiences of people living in cities, towns, neighbourhoods and villages.

Many different communities of interest or identity held community conversations and made submissions to DM. These communities can be described across four broad categories:

- Identity: this included people who identified as a community around a shared language, ethnicity, nationality, and citizenship (e.g. EU citizens, refugees and asylum seekers, Syrian New Scots), around gender identity and sexuality.

- Lifestage: this included groups with shared experience as young people, college and university students, parents, carers, and those who were retired.

- Experience: this included groups coming together through shared experiences of poverty, homelessness, living on benefits, living with disability, recovering from addiction, living with physical and mental health conditions.

- Interests: this included groups with a shared interest in the environment and sustainability, culture and the arts, growing your own food.

A broad range of community groups and organisations, and some councils, supported or hosted community conversations, including local community groups and networks, community councils, community development trusts, housing associations, community interest companies, local faith organisations. This included organising conversations with some more marginal communities, who might not have otherwise participated in DM.

For example, a local Baptist church organised a number of conversations for different language groups, including Arabic, Urdu and French speakers. BEMIS worked with local community groups to organise a series of discussions around the country that involved people from thirty different ethnic groups, nationalities and faith groups. BEMIS is a national member-led umbrella organisation that supports the development of the ethnic minority third sector across Scotland. A local community interest company concerned with inclusion organised a number of community conversations including one with people who have caring responsibilities and another with members of the Polish community in Glasgow.

Most of the discussions held by communities of interest or identity reflected the experience of marginalised groups. Some groups involved people experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage or discrimination, described as intersectionality, for example, a group of Chinese women with autistic children.
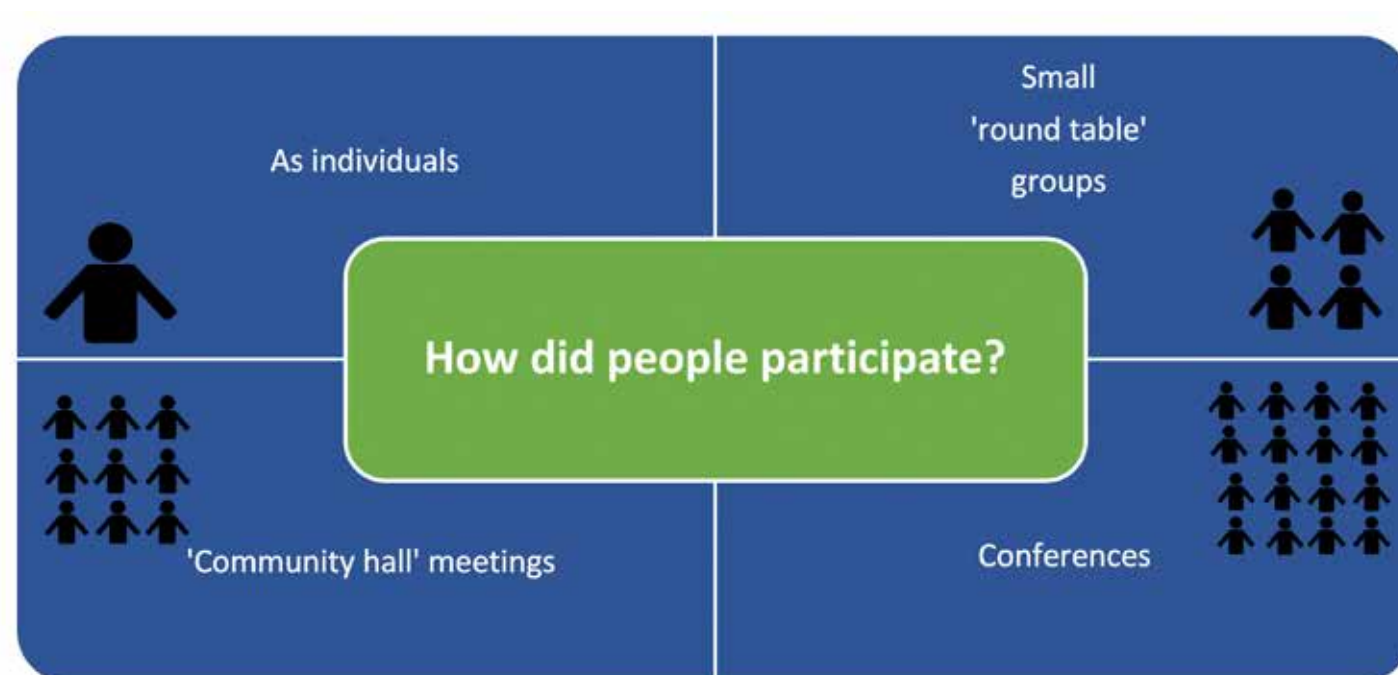
A broad range of organisations put in a submission including individual community councils and local networks of community councils, community development trusts, councils, local and national third sector organisations, national community organisations and associations, local and national equalities organisations and other national organisations including Common Weal and Electoral Reform Society and the Federation of Small Businesses.

The submissions describe a very broad range of experiences and views. It is clear that different communities are starting from very different places in terms of their experiences of participating in local decision-making, and in their aspirations for greater involvement. The following sections will describe the range of experiences.

The experience of taking part in DM conversations

DM events were held in community spaces across Scotland and in one case through Twitter. Some groups used different ways to engage people and support the discussions; for example, using photographs as a way for people to express their responses to questions. Here is a picture from one of these events:

Submissions to DM illustrated and described communities engaged in discussions about how to have a greater stake and involvement in decisions that affect them. They described a strong sense of energy and enthusiasm in those discussions. For some of the people involved, taking part in discussions about the issues of DM was described as being an

important and significant experience in itself. For some, it was an opportunity to join a debate about how to expand activity already happening in their community. For others, it was a new experience to consider their role as citizens and communities, and having that experience itself built their confidence and understanding. For some it encouraged them to think about how they could play a more active role and make a contribution.

People often told us that they enjoyed the experience of coming together in their communities to discuss how decisions about their future should be taken.

Section 3: What are people's experiences of local decision-making?

People described many different experiences of local decision-making, both positive and negative. In a minority of cases, people had no experience of involvement in decision-making. There were many positive experiences described. These were often accompanied by frustrations people had about the system and the difficulties in effecting change.

This section describes what people said in response to the DM question:

Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in decision-making processes that affect your local community or community of interest.

Positive experiences of being involved

People described being active in their communities in many different ways. This ranged from taking part in social activities with their community to involvement with more formal community fora or organisations (e.g. community councils, development trusts, residents associations, parents councils).

The strength of community involvement and the impact of that involvement came through very strongly in submissions. The social connection and sense of shared purpose and identity that was associated with community activity, and the well-being that came from that, was frequently mentioned. The following provide examples of how this was expressed:

"The youth forum provides a positive space to have your voice heard within the community. Being part of youth forum encourages you to be more confident and

it helps you feel valued within your local community." (local youth forum)

"This group has influence in the community to help support women and their families." (women's group)

The following gives a flavour of the many types of experiences people described through DM. In broad terms, they described three kinds of involvement:

- Political action and protesting
- Making their voices heard and influencing
- Being directly involved and taking decisions

Political action and protesting

Very many submissions described people's formal involvement in democracy in Scotland, describing voting in elections and also in the Scottish independence referendum.

Submissions described people getting involved in one-off demonstrations and protests; for example participating in a protest against racism.

The experience of more sustained involvement in issues was also described, such as campaigning for marginalised or disadvantaged groups; or protesting about a local issue of concern, examples included campaigning for asylum seekers' rights and opposing the closure of a local hospital.

Making voices heard and influencing

Submissions described how people sought to make their voices heard in local decision-making. People described being involved in local consultations; for example, having a say in how a local park was developed and managed.

Others described positive involvement in more formal exercises organised to hear the views of the community, for example a Poverty Commission and a local charrette:

"Our voices were heard and reflected in the East Lothian Poverty Commission"

The experience of taking part in participatory budgeting exercises was frequently mentioned as a positive example of being involved. This covered city-wide exercises like 'Dundee Decides', and those that were highly local, such as 'Bucks for Buckie'.

There was a strong sense that people welcomed and valued the opportunity to contribute their view on local issues. People particularly recalled that experience positively when they felt listened to and that their opinion had influenced decisions.

Being directly involved and taking decisions

Some people described their experience of being a formal representative in a variety of forums; for example, parent council of local school, as a community councillor, in a school youth forum:

"Being involved in school decisions made me feel empowered"

There were many descriptions of the positive impact people felt through getting involved in their community as a volunteer, participating in local activities, regularly with organised groups, taking part in fundraising. This covered a range of local community groups such as playgroups and youth clubs, local faith organisations, food banks.

A very practical example of local involvement, that reflects the connection within communities referred to above, is evident from a community conversation:

"Local events organised by volunteers were offered as an example of effective local planning and decision-making. Events included the Christmas lights and a carnival both of which brought people in the community together."

Some responses described the importance of local groups, largely of communities of interest and identity, acting as a source of networking and support for people with shared experiences, for example adult learners and a women's group:

"Great experiences of women coming together locally".

Negative experiences of being involved

Responses to DM described much activity and energy in communities across Scotland. However, the negative experiences of trying to be involved in decisions locally were more strongly and more frequently described.

Some people from specific communities of interest and identity described finding it difficult to get involved in decisions, or having no experience of involvement at all. For example, some asylum seekers, EU citizens, foreign language groups, and some people from different ethnic minority groups described experiences of being detached from the wider community and formal decision-making organisations and forums. They did not know about local groups or understand whether and how they could get involved.

There were also descriptions of the difficulties of getting involved. For disabled people this tended to focus on issues around transport and physical access, and cultures and behaviours that made their involvement difficult: e.g. a lack of empathy and understanding about the specific needs of disabled people, not being listened to; to more direct explicit discrimination. People from disabled groups frequently described their sense of loneliness and isolation within their community of place. Local groups of disabled people and disabled people's organisations provided an important source of support and connection.

The negative experiences of being involved in local decisions from communities of place and of interest covered a broad range:

- Tokenistic engagement
- Poor communication
- Unwelcoming structures
- Inability to effect change/inaction
- Lack of representation

Tokenistic engagement

Many submissions, and respondents in the regional events, described in strongly negative terms, opportunities to have involvement in decisions that were regarded as being little more than tokenistic. These experiences stemmed from occasions where decisions were taken in the face of community opinion that opposed them, or where it was perceived that decisions had already been made before consulting the community.

Submissions described people's very negative experiences of taking part in consultations: this involved not feeling listened to, that their opinions had been ignored and had had no impact on decisions. These experiences led to frustration, disenchantment and cynicism. Efforts to consult communities by public authorities were often perceived to be a 'tick-box exercise'; that they were not effectively planned and organised, and undertaken without real effort or commitment. It was seen more often than not as about satisfying a procedural requirement to consult rather than a genuine attempt to listen to communities.

Poor communication

Poor communication from public authorities about the decisions they took was mentioned frequently in responses. People wanted to know what had happened after a consultation but complained that they did not receive any feedback explaining what had been heard from communities and what had been done as a result.

These experiences contributed to a sense of being ignored and not being informed (often perceived as deliberately) of what decisions had been taken and why. For example, the experience of using recent community empowerment legislation to make participation requests but having those requests refused, with no reasons given.

The following extract describes an example of people with experience of involvement and a belief in their own capacity to make a contribution. It is from a community conversation hosted by a development trust:

"Everyone agreed they had been involved in decision-making locally to some degree, so there was already a level of built capacity within our communities. However, there was universal frustration that many decisions were taken remotely from the community, by people who often didn't know all the issues, and very often didn't communicate the outcomes of decisions either. So the system was far from right, as it stands."

It also highlights a strong sense that this failure in communication, and listening, by public authorities, meant decisions did not benefit from the knowledge and experience that existed in communities.

Unwelcoming structures

Public authorities, and councils in particular, were described as being difficult to navigate and intimidating. Despite recognised efforts to involve communities, structures were experienced as often unwelcoming. Along with the physical distance from communities, people talked in negative terms about the impact of bureaucracy and the complexity of public service system. As an example, a submission from a community conversation commented about designing such a system 'from scratch':

"it would not look this way and be populated with such a complex and impenetrable network of organisations."

As a further illustration, a submission from a community conversation commented about council partnerships and forums:

"[they] have not been useful, being stuck in structures where citizens were not openly encouraged to debate and were subject to rules for participating in the meeting that were so formal they were not effective."

In some of the regional events, people described attending formal meetings of local decision-making bodies (e.g. council or community planning) held in public but not being allowed to participate, or only as an exception. They were told this was because they were 'meetings held in public' not 'public meetings'. Such experiences of the application of formal rules of procedure were seen as symptomatic of structures and cultures that did not support, value or encourage community involvement.

Lack of representation

Many submissions, and participants at the regional events, identified the lack of opportunity for communities to have a place on the range of decision-making bodies and local forums. This was a particular concern for decisions about the issues that directly affected different communities, as this example illustrates:

"We have no disabled people's participation at a planning or strategic level shaping the delivery of health and social care"

Inability to effect change/inaction

Submissions described communities' particular frustration at the experience of raising concerns about local problems or particular needs, or making complaints, which appeared to be ignored by local bodies. Communities were looking for authorities not only to display that they were listening but to act.

For some people, these were very immediate issues to do with problems with their housing, or about the state of their local environment such as litter, graffiti and dog fouling. It was clear that these had an impact on the quality of life of communities. People understood that the impact of funding reductions contributed to these issues, but did not explain the lack of improvements they experienced, nor the failure to communicate with communities about them.

A common theme was the distance between the decision makers and the local community. This was expressed as frustration about decisions made by public bodies perceived as lacking the knowledge and understanding of local experience and concerns. For some communities, particularly in rural areas, this was also expressed in terms of the physical distance of communities from where decision-makers were located.

People spoke about decisions being made without an understanding of the local community, and of decisions having a bias in favour of a particular geographic area. In one example, council officers no longer had a budget to travel to local communities and therefore could not learn directly from citizens about local concerns.

Many submissions commented on the role of community councils, recognising their statutory position, but the lack of power they have to effect change. Views expressed about the potential of community councils and other community organisations to take on new powers over local decision-making are discussed in section five.

Barriers to participation

In responding to the question about local decision-making, there were a number of recurring themes about the kinds of barriers that prevent people from getting involved. These are summarised in the table below:

Category	Description
Information	Lack of information about how to be involved, what opportunities there are to participate; where and how decisions are taken. Information not reaching marginalised communities about services available to support inclusion.
Complexity	System complicated – difficult to understand who is responsible for what, how things work and how to influence.
Accessibility	Transportation is non-existent or poor – and expensive – in areas. Most formal decision-making fora meet during working hours; the time available to participate can be a factor. Physical accessibility a key issue for many disabled people.
Lack of support for engagement	Inadequate support for people to overcome a range of barriers to involvement: practical barriers such as caring and other family responsibilities; and the range of barriers to inclusion experienced by marginalised and disadvantaged communities.
Style of participation	The language and behaviours of public authorities and the ways in which forums and meetings are organised restrict or discourage participation.

Section 4: Do people want more control over decisions that affect their community?

This section describes what people said in response to the DM question:

Would you like your local community or community of interest to have more control over some decisions? If yes, what sorts of issues would those decisions cover?

The clear evidence from the submissions to DM is that people do want to have more control of decisions on issues that matter to them. This is particularly the case for decisions that are seen to directly affect communities, the control of which should be exercised more locally. The vast majority of submissions expressed views that demonstrate a strong desire for a change to the status quo.

There were some responses that described concerns; people who felt that control should not be devolved. For some, this concern was rooted in a worry that the responsibility involved in taking control of decisions was too much to ask of people, and a concern about, or a lack of confidence in, the capacity of communities to hold that responsibility. Some people were worried about how to respond to people's demands, and being held accountable for meeting them – as reflected in this quote from a community conversation: *"We don't want control of libraries – everyone would want them open all the time."* Others raised concerns about how national standards or equalities would be maintained if power was devolved.

It was clear, however, that what people understood by the term 'control' varied. Control was understood in terms of different kinds of participation in decision-making. For some this was about being able to give their views as part of decisions being made, and to have some influence. People wanted their input to lead to what they saw as better decisions that led to practical action that improved their community.

For some while expressing a wish for more control, it prompted them to ask what was meant by control:

"Are we talking about communities making the decisions or just 'being involved in' the decision-making? Where does ownership begin and end?"

At the other end, submissions were clear that it was about communities having the power and the resources to make decisions themselves. The different expressions of control in submissions can be described broadly in terms of:

- Influence – having a voice in, and an impact on, decision-making.

- Transparency and accountability – public authorities being transparent about their decisions and communities being able to hold them to account for those decisions.

- Authority – having the authority and resources to take decisions.

Influence

The idea of influence described in submission was circumstances that allowed people to make a meaningful contribution to decisions that affected their lives. They contrasted that with any process that they experienced as a 'tick-box exercise'. People want their voices to make a difference to the decisions that are taken. The following extracts from two submissions illustrates that view:

"We wish our voices to be heard." (asylum seeking group)

"We want to have a say in local issues and also have the ability to feed into bigger issues." (women's group)

What came through very strongly was that people want to have more influence about what happens in their communities. The current approach of consultations does not give people influence; one person noted *"Whilst people have taken part … many still are of the opinion that they are not listened to, and this is process rather than progress."*

Transparency and accountability

The theme of transparency and accountability was a very strong one throughout the submissions. People wanted public bodies and elected representatives to communicate honestly and directly. Formal and statutory arrangements for accountability did not seem to translate into

the way people experienced public services. There was a sense this should be done as a principle, to demonstrate accountability by public authorities to the communities they served.

But there were also practical reasons given for this accountability. There was understanding that decisions are difficult and that not everyone will be happy, but that communities wanted, and needed, to have information that helped them understand the reasons for any particular decision. These extracts illustrate this perspective:

"Listen to people, explain to locals why things can't be done."

"Those at the meeting did not want to have to make all these decisions themselves, but they wanted those in decision-making roles to be more accountable." (community conversation)

Authority

There were submissions from a range of different communities of place and of interest or identity that explicitly supported communities taking direct control of local decisions. This centred on having the authority to take those decisions and the associated resources, and budget, that would allow those decisions to be put into action. The costs of this change were also recognised: that investment in supporting this change, capacity-building and

infrastructure to support communities would also be necessary. At the regional events, some felt that communities with authority over certain decisions would be well placed to also exert influence over, and hold to account, existing decision-makers.

"Communities should have more control over decisions and/or services in their local area." (community conversation)

"We need both 'purse strings and the rubber stamp' locally in order to make decisions – i.e., control over budget and the authority to make the final decision." (community conversation)

"Local Democracy must come with a budget." (community conversation)

What outcomes would greater community involvement bring?

Some submissions were able to describe a range of outcomes that communities felt would come from greater involvement and the ability to exercise control over decisions. This was also explored specifically as a discussion topic at the regional events. Most participants had a clear sense of what they would like done differently and were able to express the associated benefits.

Outcomes described covered the benefits from being involved (process), and in the impact in communities. The 'process' benefits were often described in terms of

values that people wanted to see expressed and embodied in the way in which decisions were taken. They also spoke to the impact involvement would have on communities own 'sense of self'. The benefits described included:

- Increasing the self-confidence of communities and their sense of worth

- Building the resilience of communities; greater connection and less isolation between community members

- Tapping into innovation and creativity in communities to tackle local issues

- Making tailored decisions to meet different needs of communities

- Increased trust in democracy/decision-making. Less cynicism

- Greater transparency in decision-making, better understanding of decisions

- Decisions based on local knowledge and understanding

- More people will get involved. Getting more young people involved.

- New relationship between state and citizen; between communities and public services/government

The substantive impacts included:

- A more democratic and cohesive society

- Less bureaucracy and red tape

- More efficient and effective services

which better meet the needs of communities

- Health and well-being of communities

- A broad range of improvements to quality of life

- Getting things done – communities able to act more swiftly, more agile and flexible

- Local economic development

What issues do people want control over?

Across the responses as a whole, communities expressed an appetite and ambition for greater involvement in, or control of, decisions on nearly every policy issue for which public authorities have responsibility. In general, it could be seen that the issues identified largely reflected the lived experience and concerns of the specific community of place and/or community of interest or identity.

For some communities, their responses related to very specific issues and concerns that affected the quality of their daily lives in relation to for example, issues of disadvantage and discrimination, inclusion, negative aspects of their local physical and social environment, the quality of their public housing, their access to and use of specific public services.

For other communities, their responses were more about contributing to decisions that would benefit the wider community, meet community wishes and needs, support the social and physical regeneration of their local area. Some of the issues that were identified more frequently were as follows:

Examples of local issues
Community policing: including strategies, community safety
Education: including placements, how schools are run, engaging parents
Environmental maintenance: including dog fouling, litter, cleanliness, fly-tipping, waste collection and recycling
Health and social care provision
Leisure programmes and community services
Local activities and opportunities for children and young people
Physical environment and regeneration: including housing, derelict buildings, gap sites
Planning and development
Public transport: including availability, scheduling and timetabling, siting of bus stops, bus routes
Roads: including general maintenance and potholes, speed limits, traffic calming, cycling provision, gritting and snow clearance, parking availability and charges

The majority of responses indicate that communities want to see changes to how they are involved in decisions that affect their community. There is not support for the status quo. These changes cover, in summary:

- To be treated better by public authorities – a change in culture and behaviour about involving communities in decisions.

- To be better connected – within communities (pooling knowledge and resources); and with decision-makers.

- To be able to participate in decisions about their community; and, for some, that meant to have control over decisions (with the associated resources/budget).

- For decisions that affect their community to be based on knowledge and experience, which lead to action that improves their lives.

Section 5: How do people describe their community: what does it mean to be 'local'?

This section describes what people said in response to the DM question:

When thinking about decision-making, 'local' could mean a large town, a village, or a neighbourhood. What does 'local' mean to you and your community?

Many submissions described local in terms of a specific place, or geography. For example, it was simply identified as 'my town', 'my village'. In a large city, some submissions described local as being 'the neighbourhood'. A distinction was often drawn in this case between what were seen as the artificial boundaries around which different public services and councils were organised, and what was described as 'natural communities', that made sense to people locally.

Some described it in terms of size, or distance, for example: 'the area you can walk around'.

Others identified that what was regarded as local related to the specific issue. They identified that decisions might appropriately be taken at different 'levels' (e.g. national/local/community). The following illustrates this:

'I live in a village but community to me also includes the whole county. There are some decisions that affect these as a whole but some that are irrelevant to smaller towns and villages.' (postcard)

Many submissions also made an association between social connections, and a shared sense of identity and belonging. The following extracts from responses illustrate this:

"a place where there is community spirit"
"old and young working together helping each other"
Communities of interest/identity were likely to describe 'local' in these terms, as based around shared experience and identity.

Some submissions made the point that ideas about local need not necessarily refer to a physical place but may relate to communities online, an example of this was the LGBTI community.

The difficulty in answering this question is captured by this comment:

"Local is entirely subjective and for many a relative concept. Local is primarily about identity rather than necessarily defining the place where decision-making should happen."

The photograph below shows how understandings of what it means to be "local" were discussed and represented in one of the community conversations:

There were a few submissions that did try to develop a specific definition of 'local' that might operate when thinking about community-level decision-making. For example, a submission suggested that 'community level' could be defined by an upper and lower limit on population size, but did not identify the size.
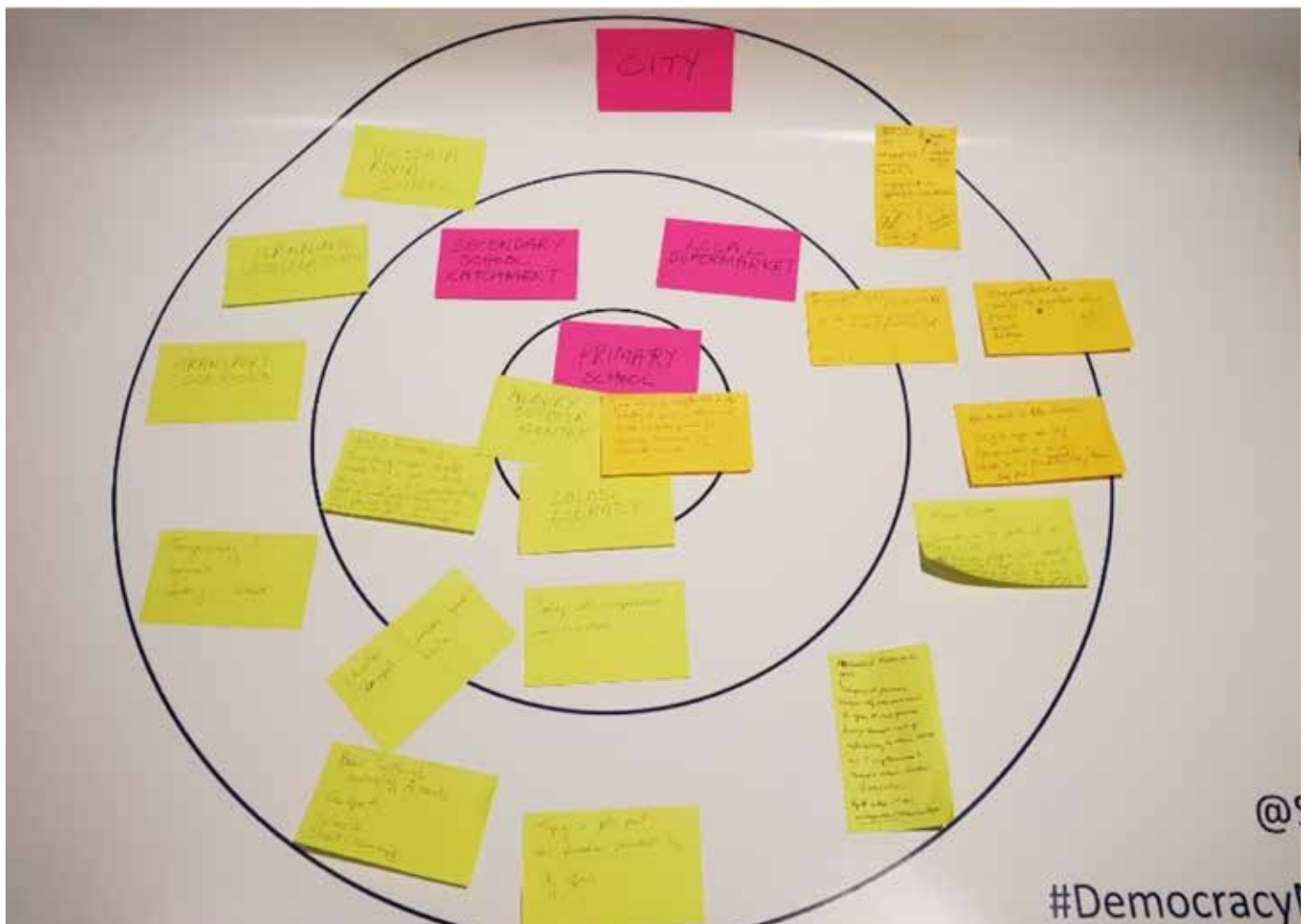
Section 6: What needs to change to support and enable decision-making at the community level?

This section describes what people said in response to the question:

Are there existing forms of decision-making which could play a part in exercising new local powers? Are there new forms of local decision-making that could work well? What kinds of changes might be needed for this to work in practice?

Overall, responses described a broad array of changes that different communities chose to highlight as central to improving their ability to be involved in or be responsible for decisions that affected them.

Communities that did have experience of engagement and involvement with public authorities and decision-making structures were able to draw on that experience and

describe a broad range of changes that could be made to existing forms of decision-making. A few submissions from specific organisations provided worked up proposals of new forms of local decision-making at the community level.

Communities of interest and identity that lacked knowledge and experience of involvement in their community and with decision-making bodies were not able to
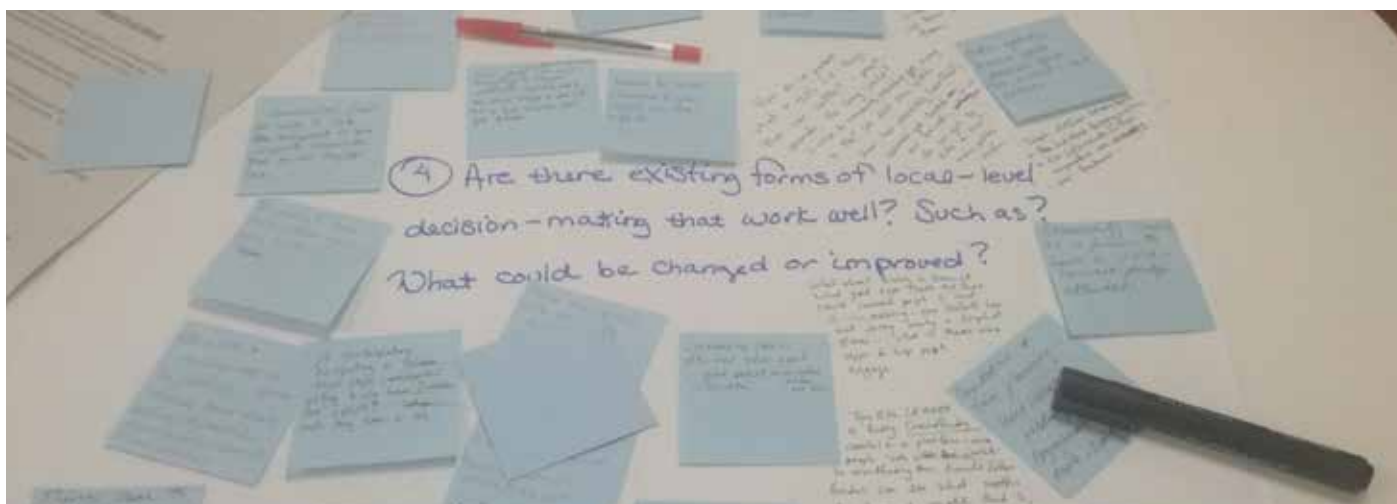
describe how changes might be made to forms of decision-making.

The variety of contributions are described in greater detail in the rest of this section.

Existing forms of decision-making

Across the broad sweep of responses, many existing forms of decision-making were identified that might play a role in bringing communities closer to, or involved in local decision-making. But that changes were required in order to make that a reality.

Most often mentioned were community councils, but also community development trusts, community-based housing associations and forums/partnerships that brought together other local community organisations. There was a common view that any new arrangements should reflect local circumstances; that 'one size does not fit all'.

There were a range of views and experiences of community councils described in responses. Many responses on community councils were supportive of, and ambitious for, their potential to take on more local powers, with changes. These highlighted their statutory basis and that they are the only community-level organisation requiring democratic election, but it was felt community councils had not been properly resourced, supported and empowered. A range of issues were identified to be resolved including that councils are not standardly representative of the diversity of their community, and in practice many community councillors are not formally elected. Some felt a new form or structure of community councils was needed. Commonly, those hopeful about community councils felt that more power and resources would: motivate more diverse and higher quality involvement; allow councils to be more proactive for the community; and that training and support would also help the effectiveness of councillors. As part of these reflections, comparisons were made with the role, status and set-up of English parish councils, which was felt to allow them a more effective role.

Others, fewer in number, held strongly negative views or experiences of community councils and did not think they should take on local decision-making. They were regarded as unrepresentative, ineffective and reactive, self-interested and 'cliquey'.

Other examples of existing decision-making identified included: advisory groups, locality planning groups, community planning partnerships, school boards and parent councils, the Scottish rural and youth parliaments, participatory budgeting arrangements, local third sector organisations, other local community forums.

Responses described a range of changes identified as necessary enablers for community-level decision-making. They covered the following themes:

- Supporting people to participate
- Building participation into the system
- Changing the culture and behaviours of public authorities towards community participation

Supporting people to participate

Many responses, particularly from those communities who described being very distant from decision-making, highlighted the importance of very basic knowledge and information to support participation. This covered knowledge of the rights and responsibilities as individual citizens, the system of democracy in Scotland, information about which public authorities were responsible for decisions on which issues,

information about the ways in which citizens and communities were able to be involved in and influence decisions that affect them.

Responses pointed to the importance variously of education at school and further or higher education to provide foundational knowledge about citizenship and democracy. Also identified was more practical and localised activity to provide information and raise awareness about how to get involved in decisions that affect different communities. This was also raised in relation to measures that would particularly encourage and support the greater involvement of young people.

More specific skills and capacity building activity was also highlighted. This tended to focus on more practical aspects for community groups and organisations, providing knowledge and information, and training, about how to operate as formal organisations (such as governance and accountability, financial, administrative skills), and take on more responsibility.

Some responses also highlighted the contribution of specific roles, positions that could play a significant part in supporting people to participate. This covered people in communities playing a leadership role as a 'champion' for the community, engagement and participation practitioners (working in public authorities or third and community sector); local people training to develop skills to help support and encourage other community members.

The use of technology was a strong theme as an additional method that could better support people to participate. The use of social media, smart phone applications, and online were described variously as means to enable: voting online; better communication and feedback from public authorities, such as live-streaming of meetings; involvement of people who are unable to attend in person, getting community views and opinions, such as through online surveys.

Building participation into the existing system

Some responses highlighted changes that could be made to existing ways citizens and communities could participate in decision-making. These could be further encouraged, used more widely, or strengthened. This included:

- Better consultation: genuine, effective, inclusive
- More use of charrettes
- Local development plans (or community plans)
- Locality planning
- Community action planning
- Participation requests
- Participatory Budgeting
- Place standard

Other suggestions focused on how communities could be better involved in existing forums, groups and decision-making structures such as:

- Access panels – giving local statutory consultee status for disability groups
- Advisory Groups to existing decision-making structures
- Area partnerships – giving equity for community representatives
- Community representation on councils
- Collaborative, partnership working between communities and local public authorities
- Creation of partnership groups to include council and local people
- Representation of local people in quasi-government bodies
- Short-life working groups
- Nurturing and supporting greater involvement from young people

Changing the culture and behaviours of public authorities towards community participation

Responses identified a range of changes to the cultures and behaviours of public authorities in the way in which they treated communities trying to get involved in decision-making. This focused particularly on a change in culture to one that trusted and respected the contribution of communities, achieved a sense of parity of esteem, and which took practical steps to apply inclusive approaches to support diversity.

Across the submissions, a range of positive values were described that people wanted to see expressed in the way in which communities are enabled to participate by public authorities. These values describe:

- How public authorities should treat communities

- How communities and public authorities should work together

- New ways of working in partnership that deliver practical actions to improve outcomes for communities

These values are set out in the table below.

Values to guide our democratic system and community participation		
How communities should be treated by public authorities:	How communities and public authorities should work together:	New ways of working to improve outcomes for communities:
• Trust • Respect • Parity of system • Openness • Valued • Empowered • Inclusion	• Collaboration • Cooperation • Communication • Listening • Deliberative • Equality • Negotiation • Solidarity	• Innovation • Creativity • Action-oriented • Risk-taking • Vision and ambition • Vibrant

New forms of decision-making

Some community organisations, with knowledge and experience of the current system of decision-making, described possible new structures or mechanisms for community decision-making. For some this was described as requiring a new tier of democracy; but others were explicitly opposed to such a development.

Many identified that any power to take decisions required resource and/or budget in order to deliver those decisions. Suggestions included: using mini-publics: citizens' assemblies or juries; a community charter; community deals (like city deals).

A few organisations provided worked up proposals of new forms of local decision-making at the community level and described how they could be constituted, their accountability, and how they could fit into the existing system of decision-making.

Across the submissions as a whole, a range of measures were variously identified that communities feel would help enable better community involvement in, or control over, decisions.

- Knowledge and education about people's rights and responsibilities as citizens, information about how (and which) public authorities take decisions that affect their communities, and information about how they can get involved in decisions.

- Practical training and organisational development for community groups and organisations to enable them to take on more responsibility.

- Greater influence over decisions made by public authorities and the means to hold those authorities better to account for those decisions.

- Community participation in/membership of existing decision-making institutions/structures (e.g. area communities, local community planning groups).

- New structures of community governance: either changing the functions and/or authority of existing community organisations such as community councils, or development trusts, or community-run housing associations; or designing completely new structures at the community level.

Section 7: Other issues raised

This section describes what people said in response to the final question:

Do you have any other comments, ideas or questions? Is there more you want to know?

There was no single strong general message from responses to this question. Many submissions focused on reiterating points made earlier, particularly in relation to the need for change.

Many expressed the importance of hearing back what was going to happen next in the DM process.

One submission ended with this 'bulletin board' summary:

ANNEX A

Membership of Enabling Group

Name	Organisation
Tressa Burke	Glasgow Disability Alliance
Malcolm Burr (Deputised by Rona Gold)	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives
Carroll Buxton	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Ian Cooke	Development Trusts Association Scotland
Vicky Freeman (Formerly Dr Elizabeth Ireland)	National Health Service in Scotland
Fiona Garven	Scottish Community Development Centre
Oonagh Gil	Scottish Government
Angus Hardie	Scottish Community Alliance
Martin Johnstone	Church of Scotland
Karyn McCluskey	Community Justice Scotland
Claire McPherson (Formerly Donna Mackinnon)	Scottish Government
Professor James Mitchell	Edinburgh University
Jane O'Donnell (Formerly Brenda Campbell)	COSLA
Tanveer Parnez (Deputised by Danny Boyle)	BEMIS
Kay Sillars (Formerly Dave Watson)	Unison
Willie Sullivan	Electoral Reform Society
Lorna Trainer and Janet Torley (shared membership)	Federation of Small Businesses
Suki Wan	Scottish Youth Parliament

Local Governance Review.

Community decision making:

What people told us.

Easy Read Summary.

Contents of this report.

About the Review.

The **Local Governance Review** started in December 2017. The Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) led the Review. COSLA supports local councils.

The Review looked at how powers, responsibilities and resources are shared across national and local government, and with communities.

There are two parts to the Review:

(1)   Part one is "**Democracy Matters**". This is about how decisions are made in the community.

(2)   Part two is about how decisions are made in public services and who makes these decisions.

About Democracy Matters.

Democracy Matters supported ordinary people to tell the Scottish Government about their experiences of getting involved in their community.

The Scottish Government worked with lots of different organisations to work out the best ways to get people involved.

About this report.

This report is about what people said to the Democracy Matters Review group.

The review group developed questions and materials to support people to have discussions in their community. These were designed to be as inclusive as possible.

They asked five sets of questions:

1. Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in making decisions in your local community or community of interest.

2. Would you like your local community or community of interest to have more control over some decisions?

   What sorts of issues would those decisions cover?

3. What does 'local' mean to you and your community?

4. What good ways are decisions made now?

   Are there new ways that could work well?

   What kinds of changes are needed?

5. Do you have any other comments, ideas or questions? Is there more you want to know?

Ways that people got involved.

Democracy Matters gave people many different ways to run events and send back their views.

People were able to get involved in different ways:

- **Community conversations**: Many communities organised a local event to discuss the Democracy Matters questions.

- **13 regional events** were organised across Scotland in November and December 2018.

- **Individual responses**: people sent their own views by email or post.

- **Organisation responses**: organisations sent their views about decisions made in their community.

- **Democracy Matters postcard**: The postcard asked two of the questions. There was space to write a reply and send it back free of charge.

- **An online forum:** people were able to take part in an online discussion.

What people told us about Democracy Matters.

This report explains what the people who took part in Democracy Matters said. It is only about their views and may not be what everyone in Scotland thinks about decision making.

Who got involved in Democracy Matters.

There were 334 responses in total:

- 127 responses were from community conversations. Around 2967 people took part in community conversations.

- 61 individual people sent their views. 23 sent their views by email. 117 sent back the postcard. 21 completed the online form.

- 46 organisations sent in their own reports.

- Some organisations used events to gather views. Around 885 people were involved in organisation activities.

- 226 people attended the 13 regional events.

- Around 4240 people took part in Democracy Matters.

Democracy Matters tried to be as inclusive as possible.

This means that communities of place and communities of interest or identity were equally able to take part.

Events took place right across Scotland. 29 out of the 32 local council areas in Scotland held events. People living in cities, towns and villages took part.

Many different communities of interest or identity held community conversations and sent in reports.

There were four types of community groups:

Identity: people who shared a particular language, ethnic group or nationality. Also there were groups with shared experience around gender identity and sexuality.

Life stage: groups with shared experience as young people, students, parents, carers, and those who were retired.

Experience: groups with shared experiences of poverty, homelessness, living on benefits, people recovering from addiction, disabled people and those with long term health conditions.

Interests: groups with a shared interest in the environment, culture and the arts.

Most of the discussions held by communities of interest or identity reflected their own experience of discrimination.
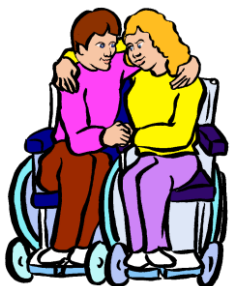
Some people experience many types of disadvantage or discrimination - sometimes called intersectionality.

Experiences of local decision making.

People had positive and negative experiences of involvement in local decision making.

There were many more negative experiences than positive ones. Some people had no experience of involvement.
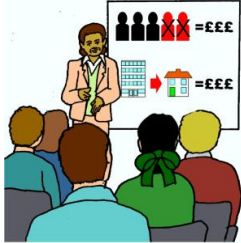
The positive experiences were things like taking part in activities and events in communities.

People said they had been involved in organising activities.

Some people had been involved in formal community organisations or committees.

There were three kinds of positive involvement:

- Political action and protesting.

- Making voices heard and influencing change.

- Being directly involved and taking decisions.

The negative experiences people talked about were things like:

- Bad communication.

- Tokenistic 'tick box' meetings. Decisions already taken so meeting has no effect.

- Lack of representation.

- Not feeling able to make change. Nothing happening after giving your views.

- Not feeling welcome or supported at meetings.

Barriers to getting involved.

People gave examples of different kinds of barriers to getting involved. This means many people who have support needs cannot take part. The most common barriers were:

Information – things like:

- Not knowing how to be involved or where to get involved.
- Not understanding where and how decisions and taken.
- No accessible information for people who find it difficult to take part, or who have support needs.

Complicated – It is difficult to understand who is responsible for what, how things work and how to put forward views.

Not accessible – things like:

- Transport barriers mean people cannot get there.
- Working people cannot go to daytime meetings.
- There is not enough time to take part properly.
- Venues not accessible to disabled people.

Lack of support to take part – There is often no proper support to take part.

Style of the meetings - The language and behaviours of others at meetings mean some people do not feel welcome, safe or supported to take part.

Community control of local decisions.

People do want to have more control of decisions on issues that matter to them. This is most important when decisions affect a local community.

People talked about different types of control:

- **Influence** – this means having a voice in decision making and those in control taking notice of what you say.

- **Transparency and accountability** – transparency is about being very open and clear about how decisions are made. Accountability is about people being able to ask decision makers why they made decisions. It is also about people making sure decisions are carried out properly.

- **Authority** – authority is about having the power to take decisions. It is also about having resources, like money and the right people, to carry out decisions properly

Some people thought communities should not have power to make decisions. They worried that:

- It may be too big a responsibility for local people.

- Communities may not have enough confidence or the right skills to make decisions.

- There may be too many local issues.

- Local people would be responsible for the decisions they made.
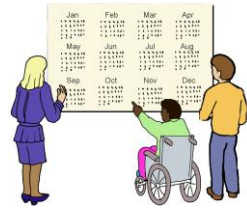
People in communities are interested in getting more involved in making many different types of decisions.

Some communities felt strongly about certain issues that affected them, for example:

- **Disadvantage** – not being able to have the same chances or services as other people.

- **Discrimination** – being treated badly or unfairly.

- **Negative parts** of their local area.

- **Quality** of local housing.

- **Access** to and use of public services, like schools, council services and health services.

Some communities spoke about decisions that would benefit the wider community and make the local area much nicer for everyone.

Changes to local decision making.

Most people felt there should be changes to how local decisions are made.

Communities had ideas for changes to ways people could get involved in decisions that affect their community:

- **To be treated better by public authorities** – by a change in culture and behaviour about involving communities in decisions.

- **To be better connected** – people in communities working together to share skills and knowledge. People in communities having better links with decision makers.

- **To be able to take part in decisions** about their community. Some communities want more local control over decisions and the right resources.

- **Decision makers should use the knowledge and experience of people in the community**. Decisions should lead to action that improves the lives of people in the community.

How people describe their 'local' community.

People described their community in different ways.

For example, 'my town', 'my village', 'the neighbourhood'.

Some people think of a community as a public service area, like a council area, or a health board area.

Other people talked about a community around a school or church, or around the local shops.

Some people thought about the size of an area, or distance between other communities.

Some people talked about online communities.

Some people said that sometimes it is more about the issue than the area. For example, issues affect whole cities, or whole regions or even the whole of Scotland. Sometimes decisions need to be taken at these different levels.

Many people said their local social connections, and a shared sense of identity and belonging were important to them. Communities of interest or identity described local around shared experience and identity.

A few people thought that community decision making might need to consider the numbers of people in a community.

Types of community decision making.

There are already ways for communities to make decisions in Scotland. For example:

- Community councils.
- Community development trusts.
- Community housing associations.
- Local community organisation partnerships.
- Local planning and advisory groups.
- Community planning partnerships.
- School boards and parent councils.
- Scottish rural and youth parliaments.
- Participatory budgeting arrangements.
- Local third sector organisations.
- Other local community forums.

Many people said changes to some of these were needed. This would help more people get involved in local decision making.

Different ways to take part would suit different communities.

Many people supported the idea of community councils having more local power as long as there were some changes.

There were some very negative views about community councils and many people felt they should not have local decision making powers.

Making local decision easier and fairer.

People described three main way to make local decision making easier and fairer. These were:

- Support people to take part.

- Build people into the system.

- Change the culture and behaviour of public authorities.

People described some positive values they want to see that would support people to take part. For example:

- How public authorities should treat communities.

- How communities and public authorities should work together.

- New ways of working in partnership that result in practical ways to improve the lives of people and communities.

Some community organisations who already have experience of local decision making, described ways to make community decision making better.

Some organisations felt new levels of powers should be created in communities. Others strongly disagreed with this idea. Many said that power to take decisions needs the right resources to deliver decisions.

Ideas to improve local decision making.

A few organisations sent in detailed ideas for better local decision making. Ideas included how it could be organised, how communities would feel listened to and how they could fit into the current system of decision making.

Communities suggested lot of ways that would help improve community involvement in, or control over, decisions. For example:

- **Learning about rights and responsibilities as citizens**. This needs people to have information about:
    - How public authorities take decisions.
    - Which public authorities take decisions.
    - How people can get involved in decisions.

- **Training** community groups to build their confidence and skills to take on more responsibility.

- **Greater power over decisions** made by public authorities. Better ways to make them explain their decisions and put them into action.

- **Community participation** – taking part in formal decision making, like area committees and local community planning groups.

- **New types of community control**. This could be about changing the purpose and powers of community organisations. It might be designing completely new decision making organisations.

More information.

If you want to find out more about Democracy Matters please look on the website.

@CommEmpower
www.gov.scot/democracymatters

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GDA **Glasgow Disability Alliance**
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A joint statement from The Scottish Government and The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) on the local governance review.

Democracy Matters to Scotland

Communities want more decision-making powers.

20 years ago this summer the Scottish Parliament opened its doors, as the people of Scotland asked for many of the decisions that most affect their lives to be taken closer to home. With the growth of our democracy came a fresh set of questions about whether a stronger culture of local decision-making could take root in community life.

Human rights are at the heart of the evolution of our democratic frameworks, at national and local level. We want a vibrant, equal democracy where people understand their rights, and actively participate in civic society. Working together we can create a society where everyone is valued, treated with dignity and respect, with access to opportunities and quality of life. To achieve this, we must begin by listening to people and communities.

Last year over 4,000 thousand people responded to an invitation from the Scottish Government and Local Government to consider these important questions together.

We heard from people with very different backgrounds, experiences and interests. Overwhelmingly, they told us that communities can really flourish if they have control and influence over decisions that affect them most. We also heard from local councils and other public sector organisations about the powers and resources they need to strengthen their role as community champions.

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of Scotland's new parliament, the Scottish Government and COSLA are announcing today that they will work together to further empower local communities and councils across Scotland. By working with a wide range of interests, we can create a system of accessible, community-led decision making that will become integrated into Scottish society.

Our approach will be forward looking and bold, embracing new types of decision-making. And crucially, our focus will be on improving people's lives by achieving the outcomes set out in the world leading National Performance Framework.

Communities and Local Government Secretary, Aileen Campbell, said:

"A wide range of people with very different backgrounds, experiences and interests overwhelmingly responded that they want to have more say about how local public services are run in their area.
"We want to see a step-change in democracy in Scotland where decisions on public services are made in communities - where they have the biggest impact.

"Options are open as to what services are devolved, however throughout the process people have told us there will be a lot of detail to work out if we are to get this right. As a result we will not rush to introduce legislation in this Parliament. We have an exciting opportunity to shape the future of democracy so local communities can really flourish."

The COSLA President, Cllr. Alison Evison, said:

"The initial stages of this review have made clear that local, democratic choice and control matters to people's lives.

"There is now a need across the country to achieve improved outcomes for our communities, particularly those communities suffering persistent inequality.

"With leadership from Local Government and Scottish Government, we will continue the conversation to get it right and give communities more say in decisions that impact on them"

Director for Electoral Reform Society Scotland, Willie Sullivan, said:

"The biggest threat to democracy is that it does not grow and adapt quickly enough to meet the expectations of citizens. It's clear that we have to remake democracy and governance for a time of rapid social and technological change and authoritarian threats. The only way to do this is from the local up and along with as many people as possible. The Scottish Government and COSLA seem to be embracing these ideas. Doing this well and getting it right will take time and attention. We welcome the progress made and will keep ensuring that democracy is at the centre of the hope for future transformation so that Scots can know the power and pride of running their own towns and villages"

Director of National Development for BEMIS Scotland, Mrs. Tanveer Parnez, said:

"Utilising a human rights-based approach, in addition to facilitating participative democracy, within the Local Governance Review and associated Democracy Matters conversations, present an attentive and much needed approach to advancing democratic participation, active citizenship and empowerment for diverse communities at several levels. We have seen the impact of this approach through the positive and dynamic participation from diverse local communities in the first consultation phase, and we are fully committed to enhancing and progressing the equal partaking and participation of diverse communities in the next round of engagement and any new decision-making arrangements."

PAPER FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPROVEMENT BOARD
May 30th 2019

REVIEWING PROGRESS ON COMMUNITY PLANNING

Purpose

1.   This paper invites views of CPIB on how we undertake work to review progress on community planning since the new statutory regime came into force.

2.   These views will inform advice for Ministers and COSLA leaders on how we undertake this work and connect it with the Local Governance Review.

Background

3.   The SNP Manifesto for the 2016 Holyrood Elections included a commitment to "review and reform the role of Community Planning Partnerships so they are better placed to drive reform". Since then (in December 2016) reforms to community planning in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 have come into force.

4.   Over the past 18 months, a sub-group consisting of partners on the previous OEPB (Outcomes, Evidence and Performance Board) have convened several times to consider how we might "review" the effect of these changes. The group includes representation from: Audit Scotland, Improvement Service, NHS Health Scotland, NHS-NSS, Scottish Government, and more recently COSLA.

Recent Developments

5.   Advice in this paper has been heavily informed by two recent developments:

- CPIB acknowledged at its February meeting that there appears to be a close inter-connection between themes we would want to explore as part of a "review" of community planning, and workstreams that CPIB is now developing.

- SG and COSLA have recently been scoping workstreams to pursue as next steps for the Local Governance Review (LGR). Learning from review work into community planning features as something that can contribute to one of these workstreams, on "Culture and Improvement".

Proposals: What We Mean By "Review"

6.   The following proposals from the sub-group update on advice given to the OEPB in May 2018.

7.   The sub-group proposes that the *purpose* of review activity should be two-fold:

- to provide an understanding of progress made in strengthening community planning in the time since Part 2 of the 2015 Act came into force

- to use that understanding to <u>support further strengthening in community planning</u> – for instance by highlighting strong and effective practice and taking steps to address where there are challenges to improvement.

8. In light of the recent developments summarised above, the sub-group now questions what *label* we should attach to this work, questioning how necessary and valuable is to describe it as a formal "review".

9. Ultimately Ministers will need to decide on how they want to show they have fulfilled this Manifesto commitment. They may want to be able to point to a formal review process specifically on community planning. In any case they will expect to have and be able to describe an understanding of recent progress on community planning by early 2021.

10. However, the sub-group suggests that CPIB could recommend to SG and COSLA that this work would be more valuable if taken forward under an "improvement" banner, rather than as a distinct and formal "review". Doing so would:

- reduce risk of confusion between this work and the inter-connected LGR, and questions about the need for separate reviews on community planning and local governance
- still allow Ministers to demonstrate there has been a "review" of community planning, as work will have been done to understand recent progress which in turn will feed into the LGR
- emphasise the importance of this work as a way to support further strengthening of community planning
- help manage expectations about the extent of progress that community planning should have achieved by early 2021 – especially if work to understand progress and support improvement were to continue after then
- encourage CPPs and partner organisations to engage positively and constructively in this work.

Proposals: What We Want to Understand and Value

11. The sub-group has developed a Framework for Community Planning (see <u>Annex A</u> – separate document (best copied as an A3 document)). This sets out our understanding of the qualities we would expect to see for improvement in community planning, linking ultimately to key Christie principles in column 5. CPIB members saw an earlier version of this at its February meeting.

12. We are not interested only in understanding nature and extent of progress made. As Annex A shows, we will also be interested in understanding factors that support an improvement agenda, including obstacles and enablers to progress and examples of good and potentially strong practice.

13. The sub-group is comfortable that the *scope* for this framework should be on "community planning". This should extend beyond what happens in formal CPP meetings and is agreed in LOIPs and locality plans. It should allow all discussions, decisions and actions relating to community and locality planning to be brought into scope.

14.   It should not extend formally to capture all types of partnership work occurring at local or regional levels (e.g. for health and social care integration, community justice and regional economic development). However, in practice the distinction between what is and is not within the scope of community planning will often be blurred. If local partners see their joint working on these to be part of their approach to community planning, then we should be relaxed about incorporating learning from them within our assessment. And, of course, learning about partnership working in community planning can both inform and be informed by learning in other contexts.

Framework and CPIB Workstreams

15.   The sub-group suggests that there is likely to be a very close inter-relationship between the elements of the Framework for Community Planning in Annex A and the CPIB's own proposed workstreams. Annex B highlights these connections.

16.   Furthermore, a focus of our review activity on understanding progress and supporting further improvement in community planning (*see para 7 above*) plays right into the territory of what we expect from CPIB's workstreams.

17.   The sub-group advises that CPIB should propose to Ministers and COSLA leaders that its workstreams drive review activity. Doing so would:

• avoid unnecessary duplication and possible confusion
• demonstrate to Ministers and COSLA leaders that community planning stakeholders are committed to getting the most out of community planning
• help cultivate an environment conducive for CPPs and partners to share their experiences and examples of what they are most proud of and excited by
• give community planning stakeholders confidence that their experiences and priorities are informing lessons and improvement priorities
• possibly set the "review" as something ongoing, rather than a short-term set-piece exercise.

18.   Assuming review needs coincide closely with CPIB's ambitions for its own workstreams, bringing the two together should require little or no additional commitment from CPIB members to what they would already expect to provide. The key issues CPIB would need to consider are:

• is CPIB prepared to use contents of the Framework for Community Planning in some form as building blocks for our own workstreams?
• is CPIB prepared to shape our workstreams where needed so they capture elements within the Framework?
• can the workstreams provide some initial messages about progress, powerful examples and challenges by early 2021, given the Manifesto commitment?
• what might CPIB say about intentions beyond early 2021? Can we talk about an intention to monitor progress, support improvement and capture what's working well for the foreseeable future, including to allow time for longer-term impacts to come to light?

Other Work

19.   The sub-group proposes a literature review of published material, which can provide robust evidence to inform other review activity. There is a range of current and forthcoming material we can draw on for this, including:

- sample of LOIP and locality plan annual reports
- Best Value Reports of local authorities by the Accounts Commission
- data in the Community Planning Outcome Profile
- CPPs' self-evaluation returns
- WWS case studies
- Evaluation of Parts 3 & 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- Evaluation of participatory budgeting

20.   Because a literature review would be essentially backwards-facing, it will only able to provide a limited picture of recent progress. We expect it can inform an understanding against many of the qualities set out in Columns 2 and 3 of the Framework for Community Planning. But we would not expect it to inform many of the qualities set out in Columns 4 and 5, which require more (sometimes much more) time to come to fruition.

21.   We envisage a literature review having a fixed lifespan, to inform an understanding of progress, challenges and opportunities by early 2021. SG is investigating possible resources for this work.

Conclusion and Recommendations

22.   CPIB is invited to consider the following suggested recommendations to Ministers and COSLA leaders:

- the purpose of review activity remains to understand progress made in strengthening community planning since Part 2 of the 2015 Act came into force, and to support further improvement [*para 7 refers*]
- this work should be taken forward under an "improvement" banner, rather than as a distinct and formal "review" [*paras 8-10 refer*]
- the scope of review activity should be built around a Framework for Community Planning (CPIB's comments on the draft Framework are welcome) [*paras 11-14 & Annex A refer*]
- CPIB should use its workstreams to drive review activity [*paras 15-18 & Annex B refer*].

23.   CPIB is also invited to comment on a proposed literature review and whether any further work to support review activity is needed [*paras 19-21 refer*].

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN CPIB WORKSTREAMS AND ELEMENTS OF REVIEW FRAMEWORK

CPIB Workstream	How Workstream Connects with Elements of Review Framework
Strengthened leadership and influence at local Community Planning Partnership level	Links directly with 2.1, 2.2, 3.1. Suggest it would be very helpful if workstream can address "leadership" in a way that links with 4.1. Workstream aligns more broadly with every element, to provide purpose and direction for leadership.
Community participation, particularly for the most vulnerable of communities	Links directly with 2.3, 2.4, 3.2, 4.5, 5.3. Workstream aligns more broadly with elements covering how CPP responds to community participation, principally 3.5, 3.6, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 5.2, 5.4.
Effective decision making and good governance	Links directly with 2.2, 2.6, 3.4, 4.2. Workstream aligns more broadly with every element, to provide focus for what is improving as a result of effective decision making and good governance.
Innovative approaches to joint planning, service design and resourcing	Links directly with 3.1, 3.5, 3.6, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6. Workstream aligns more broadly with elements covering the impact of these innovative approaches - especially 5.1, 5.2, 5.4.
Availability and use of high-quality local data and insights to support decision making	Links directly with 2.5, 3.3, 3.4. Workstream aligns more broadly with every element in columns 4 and 5, in terms of how CPPs can understand what progress it is making towards these elements.
Supporting innovation, improvement and good practice	Workstream potentially links directly with every element in the framework.

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING

Model of Community Planning (CP) in light of CEA Part 2 and associated guidance

How public sector bodies work together and with the local community (and others) to plan for, resource and provide services which improve local outcomes with a view to reducing inequalities.

The focus here is on disadvantaged communities with an emphasis on a small number of priorities rather than CP in its entirety.

The Act and Guidance describe a way of working rather than a prescription of what to do.

2.1 - Ambition for CP
Partners are committed to and ambitious about the impact they seek on locally identified outcomes, focussing on where most value can be added, prevention and reducing inequalities.

2.2 - Partnership Working including Collective Leadership
Statutory partners work together to plan and deliver outcomes, aligning priorities and resources through collective leadership.

2.3 - Capacity building
Partners build capacity & capability in local communities (esp. disadvantaged) to enable participation in CP.

2.4 - Community Participation & Citizen Expectations
Partners commit resources & work with local communities (& others) in all stages to deliver outcomes (to extent these community bodies desire).

2.5 - Evidence-based understanding
Partners use of wide range of data to inform priorities, plans, progress and sustainability.

2.6 - Continuous Improvement
Plans & progress are regularly reviewed & reported on to inform steps taken to improve as required.

3.1 – Collective leadership focused on the local and most disadvantaged and encourages innovative, tailored approaches to tackling inequalities of outcome

3.2 - Disadvantaged communities have a stronger influence on service policy, planning, design, delivery & review

3.3 - Information sharing is improved

3.4 - All involved have a better understanding of:
- Each other
- Priorities
- Challenges
- Ways forward
- Progress made
- Context
- Roles, responsibilities and contributions

3.5 – Early indications of a shift towards preventative approaches

3.6 - Shift of resources in partnership targeting those communities with the poorest outcomes

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4.1 Partner bodies' involvement in community planning assists them to achieve their own objectives

4.2 - A culture of trust exists enabling scrutiny and challenge of CP and those involved

4.3 - Public services are more targeted to those most in need & where most difference can be made

4.4 - CP is operating more effectively to address inequalities of outcome

4.5 - Vulnerable/disadvantaged communities perceive a positive change in services

4.6 – There is early evidence of a decrease in requirement for crisis intervention

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5.1 - Progress on locally identified priority outcomes

5.2 - Reduced inequality of outcome demonstrable at local level

5.3 - Targeted communities feel more involved and that services better reflect their needs

5.4 – Local public services remain sustainable, in face of changing demographic and other pressures

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Assumptions
- Participation is positive and effective
- More information equals better decisions
- Expectation of ways of working set out in CEA Part 2 and the Guidance are valid and will lead to better outcomes than previous ways of working

Interest in:
- Challenges/obstacles
- Enablers or conditions supporting success
- Examples of what's working well or has strong potential

Community Planning Improvement Board
Revised Work Programme to deliver against new purpose
May 30th, 2019

1. Purpose

1.1. To help deliver against the revised CPIB purpose, this paper provides an updated work programme setting out the direction of travel for the CPIB across the next 2 years and outlining key areas of work designed to support improvement in community planning.

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that the CPIB:

2.1.1. Agrees the activities, resources and timescales identified in the work programme

2.1.2. Considers interlinkages between the 6 work-strands and opportunities to co-ordinate engagement activity across these

2.1.3. Agrees proposals to monitor progress against the programme

2.1.4. Agrees communications activities to disseminate, test and develop the programme

3. Background

3.1. The purpose of the Community Planning Improvement Board (CPIB) is to support Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) to deliver their statutory duties effectively and to make better and more informed decisions that improve the lives of local communities across Scotland. We work with community planning partners to understand:

- the leadership, influence, services and approaches that are effective in improving outcomes and reducing inequalities for and with local communities

- the challenges for CPPs, and what support, innovation and/or change is needed to make community planning work more effectively for and with local communities.

3.2. Following a review of progress in August 2018 by the Community Planning Improvement Board, a revised purpose was developed and approved in November. An updated work programme has now been developed to deliver against this new purpose and is presented here for consideration by the board.

4. Development of the CPIB Work Programme

4.1. The updated work programme builds on the progress and achievements of the previous work programme and has been informed by feedback from CP stakeholders. To reflect the revised purpose, the Board agreed the work programme should be organised around the following key challenges.

- Strengthened leadership and influence at CP level
- Community participation, particularly for vulnerable and hard to reach groups, and communities of interest
- Effective decision making and good governance
- Innovative approaches to joint planning, service design and resourcing
- Availability and use of high-quality local data and insights to support decision making
- Supporting innovation, improvement and sharing best practice

4.2. CPIB members have been identified to lead and provide oversight for each strand. With the exception of the IS, the leads are senior level Community Planning partners, and are therefore able to provide a direct route into partner organisations and local partnerships, and have an important role as active commissioners of what is needed to support Community Planning. This will ensure that as the work programme evolves it continues to be influenced and informed by learning on the ground about what is working locally, the culture, systems and structures important in driving good community planning, and the barriers that exist.

4.3. Work strand leads have prioritised the activities, resources and timescales required to deliver progress against the new purpose. Activities across each of the work strands reflect three broad roles for the CPIB, each of which will be underpinned by ongoing engagement with CP partners and local partnerships. These broad roles are:

- Leadership and Strategic Brokerage
- Improvement Support
- Evidencing what is working well

4.4. It will be important to co-ordinate engagement activity to enable the CPIB to collectively agree focus, avoid duplication, and to use the evidence gathered to build a coherent picture of gaps, successes and barriers to inform influence and improvement activity. The inclusion of a standing item on Engagement Activity on the CPIB agenda will help ensure a co-ordinated approach.

5. Monitoring Progress

5.1. Progress against the plan will be monitored by the CPIB during quarterly board meetings. The lead for each workstream will be responsible for providing a quarterly written update on progress in line with the timescales outlined in the plan.

6. Communications

6.1. Following approval by the board, the work programme will be published on the CPIB website, along with updates provided for quarterly CPIB board meetings.

6.2. CPIB Board members are asked to share the work programme within their own sector and across relevant networks to promote wider awareness and to continue to test the focus to inform the ongoing development of the programme.

6.3. The chair will also write to each of the CPP chairs to share the CPIB purpose and work programme.

Strengthened leadership and influence at local Community Planning Partnership level (ACC Malcolm Graham, Police Scotland)

We will support partnerships to address leadership challenges and strengthen their approaches to collective leadership. We will bring together and share evidence of what is working well in Community Planning leadership and the barriers local partners/partnerships face in order to influence policy and practice, and target improvement support.

Activity	Lead Responsibility	Contribution	Support or resource needed	Timescale
1. Evidencing Good Practice in Collective Leadership a. We will gather examples from Police Scotland colleagues involved in Community Planning of where Community Planning is working well and delivering a positive impact, allowing a focus on good practice in collective leadership b. Examples gathered, along with resources that can be used by CPPs/CP partners to strengthen leadership, will be shared widely with CP stakeholders via the Community Planning Network and Community Planning in Scotland Website, and learning will be used to inform the Community Planning improvement programme (link to Work stream 6)	Police Scotland			Nov 19 Mar 20
2. Promoting Leadership within National Partner Agencies a. We will carry out an exercise with Police Scotland colleagues to examine the role of Police Scotland as a Community Planning partner. We will explore how direction and leadership in relation to Community Planning has been cascaded throughout the organisation and what difference this has made to agendas, discussions and resourcing. We will explore the experiences and expectations of Police Scotland colleagues involved in Community Planning in order to understand the factors driving and influencing positive results, what their role and responsibilities were in relation to this, and what would best support/enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.	Police Scotland			Aug 19
3. Wider System Leadership Leading beyond Community planning to the wider system, we will utilise the influence and networks of CPIB board members to inform and influence the future shape and route of Public Health, particularly the work being undertaken on exploring a whole system approach to public health	Police Scotland	SOLACE; IS; SFRS; NSS; HS; IJB;		Ongoing
4. Alignment between National Policy Agenda & Community Planning We will gather evidence from Community Planning managers in relation to engagement and influence on national policy to understand how well the national policy agenda landscape currently fits with and supports the Community Planning Agenda.	Community Planning Managers			Nov 19

Community participation, particularly for the most vulnerable of communities (Ella Simpson, EVOC)

We will bring together and share evidence of what is working well in community participation and the barriers local partnerships face in order to influence policy and practice, and target innovation and improvement support where they are most needed.

Activity	Lead Responsibility	Contribution	Support or resource needed	Timescale
1. We will seek examples of best practice in approaches to empowerment and participation, from up to 4 (10%) of CPPs. We will work with organisations with expertise in this area e.g. SCDC, Scottish Community Alliance, to gather evidence.	EVOC	TSIs; CP Boards	To be negotiated	Nov 2019
2. We will define "what good looks like" in relation to effective approaches to empowerment and participation, particularly for the most vulnerable communities	EVOC	CPIB; Scot Gov		Nov 2019
3. We will survey CPPs/TSIs to consider what support would be welcome and effective, and feed into and inform the CP Improvement Programme being developed under Work strand 6?	EVOC	CPIB; TSIs		Mar 2020
4. We will consider existing evaluation tools for community participation and make recommendations	EVOC	CPIB; TSIs		Mar 2020

Effective decision making and good governance (David Martin, SOLACE)

We will bring together and share evidence on the barriers and good practice in governance arrangements to influence policy and practice, and to target improvement support. We will demonstrate leadership in promoting the wider system change relating to the governing structures of public service delivery required to allow CPPs to drive the local design of service to improve outcomes for communities.

Activity	Lead Responsibility	Contribution	Support or resource needed	Timescale
1. What's working: Evidencing where Community Planning has made a difference a. We will carry out a survey with SOLACE members to gather examples of real change that would not have happened without Community Planning and will explore the governance and decision-making structures important in facilitating this. We will also explore the factors blocking change and the potential levers that could strengthen local Community Planning. b. Examples gathered will be shared widely with CP stakeholders via the Community Planning Network and Community Planning in Scotland Website, and learning will be used to inform the Community Planning improvement programme (link to Work stream 6)	SOLACE		IS	Aug 19 Nov 19
2. Multi-Agency Working and supporting National Agencies to play into the Community Planning environment a. We will undertake an evidence gathering exercise with Scottish Enterprise colleagues to explore the role they play in Community Planning and examine how existing accountability structures are being used to support them to meet their duties under the CE Act. We will identify the factors that drive and influence effective decision making/good governance within Community Planning partnerships and capture any examples of step change/major improvement which were achieved as a result of this. b. We will share examples/resources that can be used by CPPs to improve/develop effective decision making/good governance via the CP Network and CP in Scotland Website c. Using the evidence gathering template developed through this work, we will expand the approach to other national agencies, or with a sample of specific CPPs	SE	Police Scotland; SFRS	IS	Aug 19 Nov 19 Mar 20
3. Strengthening Accountability to Communities a. We will work with Community Planning stakeholders to identify and support a test of change designed to build community capacity in relation to their role in local scrutiny and holding the partnership to account.	SOLACE	CP Managers	IS	Nov (test of change identified)

Innovative approaches to joint planning, service design and resourcing (James Russell, SDS)

We will bring together evidence of what is working well in joint planning, service design and resourcing and identify the barriers to further progress in order to influence policy and practice, and target improvement support.

Activity	Lead Responsibility	Contribution	Support or resource needed	Timescale
Evidence Gathering a. Undertake an internal review of all SDS CPP representatives to understand areas of innovative planning or areas of emerging practice in this area. (baseline and potential areas for test of change) b. Engage with Community planning managers to understand areas of innovative planning or areas of emerging practice (baseline and potential areas for test of change) c. Desktop review of existing research/evidence around areas of effective practice in joint planning. (baseline) d. Seek agreement from CPP areas identified to engage further to explore what characteristics or areas of planning are classified as 'innovative' and the outcomes and impact that this has delivered (cost savings, efficiencies in resource utilisation, increased service provision, improved perceptions of planning approaches, improved outcomes)	JR JR JR and SDS CPP lead (if different)			Aug 19 Aug 19 Aug 19
2. Improvement Support Seek agreement, where areas have identified emerging changes to planning, to support/challenge and monitor the progress of this work. (Interdependency with evidence of effective practice timescales)	JR and SDS CPP lead			TBC (dependant on stage CPP is at)
3. Sharing Innovative Practice a. Develop case studies (paper/video/online) where innovative approaches have demonstrable impact, including emerging practice delivering short term outcomes b. Gather evidence on the challenges and the range of ways in which these have been overcome c. Develop a group of characteristics/enablers that create the right conditions for joint planning (Ideal world scenario) d. d. Gather evidence on effective approaches to planning (general planning not CPP) and identify the aspects that are relevant (How can the approach to corporate or organisational planning (jointly) be deployed with CPP's	JR JR JR JR		Design/marketing	Ongoing as areas identified but formally complete during the life cycle of the programme

Availability and use of high-quality local data and insights to support decision making (Phil Couser NSS/Gerry McLaughlin HS)

We will improve access to, and understanding of, data by exploring opportunities to increase the local data available in open formats and fill the gaps in the data currently available to measure outcomes and build an evidence base at local level. We will also support CPPs to make better use of data and to develop meaningful insights to support effective and informed decision making. We will support CPPs to improve their approach to the sharing of data, intelligence and insights intelligence at a local level, and work with stakeholders to address challenges to data sharing.

Activity	Lead Responsibility	Contribution	Support or resource needed	Timescale
Leadership & Brokerage • **Data Delivery Group -** influence the Data Delivery Group to improve the information governance environment and access to pan public sector data. • **Public Health Reform** - Influence the work of Public Health Reform to strengthen the data and analytical support available from both Public Health Scotland and the local public health system. This is not just in terms of direct support, but also in supporting capacity building amongst partners. • **Child Poverty National Partners group** - the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017) places a duty on local authorities and NHS Boards to jointly develop and publish an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR). A National Partners group has been established to help advise and support local partners; this comprises: Scottish Government, CPAG, Poverty Alliance, COSLA, NSS, NHS Health Scotland, IS and SPIRU. A data sub Group has been established and work is underway to explore a pilot of an approach to Needs Assessment. There is an opportunity for CPIB partners represented on the national group to shape the work to ensure that the data requirements of CPPs in this context are addressed. • **Local Brokerage** – as required members of the CPIB will be asked to support engagement in the tests of change outlined below.	Phil Couser/Roger Halliday Phil Couser/Gerry McLaughlin Phil Couser/Gerry McLaughlin/Sarah Gadsden CPIB members as required		None None None	Ongoing Ongoing to April 2020 Ongoing
Improvement Support Within the context of Public Health Reform LIST will continue to develop its data and analytical improvement support to partner organizations in CPPs; work in 2019/20 will focus on the following: • **Tayside** – the councils and Health & Social Care Partnerships for the three areas within the Tayside area, plus NHS Tayside – are seeking to improve how they use data and intelligence. Led by Chief Executives of the three councils, a more collaborative approach to data and intelligence is sought across local partners, jointly using resources and skills that are available and aiming to focus on common priorities (mental health, for example).	Phil Couser			

East Ayrshire Council - the Vibrant Communities services within East Ayrshire provides innovative services and support to local people, through a focus on community-based co-production and the provision of sustainable solutions for many of the most vulnerable individuals and families within those communities. LIST aims to provide support to the Play & Early Intervention Service, in terms of improving overall data collection, analysis and evaluation for many of their front-line services. Future support includes an overhaul of departmental recording practices (Joint Chronologies) that allows better information sharing between teams within the service. **Police Scotland** – work in underway to transform custodial medical care and medical forensic service provision to a nurse-led service. LIST support is required to improve the recording and analysis of custody medical care data on the National Crime System (NCS). Subsequent support required to help analyse the data and build a case to transform existing provision to a new model of care. LIST is also involved in the development of an ISD strategic programme approach to partnership working with Police Scotland colleagues. **East Renfrewshire Council** – East Renfrewshire Council and ISD/LIST are undertaking exploratory discussions on a number of areas of potential support/collaboration (sub local authority data, equalities groups, socio-economic analyses, neighbourhood planning). Whilst discussions are at an early stage, it is anticipated this work can build on previous collaboration between the two parties in 2016, which focussed on building community council level data on a range of health and socio-economic indicators.				
Evidencing what is working well **Child Poverty National Partners group** – the aforementioned work on Child Poverty is premised on taking learning from pilot work in Inverclyde and applying this to any further requests for support from Local Authority or NHS Board colleagues throughout Scotland. This will be shared with CPPs and used to influence future work plans. **Improvement Support** - learning from all the above listed Improvement Support will be shared via the Community Planning in Scotland website. **Organisational issues –** multi-agency collaboration can accentuate a number of common challenges. Work will be undertaken to share experience and solutions gained from tests of change to such common challenge, including for example: **Information Governance** – local organisational culture can lead to a historic wariness to share data this can lead to barriers in collaborative working. GDPR has added an additional level of complexity to some data sharing discussions. Experience has shown that these challenges are not insurmountable. **Communication** – experience has have proven that there is a need for collaborative work based around data and intelligence; however communication challenges have at times inhibited the authorising environment.	Phil Couser			

Supporting innovation, improvement and sharing best practice (Sarah Gadsden, IS)

We will bring together national insights, innovation and improvement support to ensure capacity and resources are targeted to where they are most needed. We will bring together and share evidence of innovation, improvement and best practice to influence policy, practice and reform of public services at local and national levels.

Activity	Lead Responsibility	Contribution	Support or resource needed	Timescale
1. **Sharing Best Practice** We will develop and support a network to promote the sharing of best practice and national policy developments. The network will provide a key forum to share evidence and test findings emerging from CPIB work-strands and will be open to all partners involved in Community Planning, with events delivered on a regional basis. We will work with CPIB partners to explore appropriate resourcing arrangements to support the network.	IS	CP Managers CPIB Members	Existing resource provided by Scottish Government (for existing CP network)	Aug 19 (4 regional events per year)
2. **Co-ordinated programme of Support** We will develop a wider programme of support in collaboration with Community Planning Managers to address issues identified around leadership and culture building on the findings of the 2018 LOIP stocktake	IS/HS	CP Managers CPIB Members		Dec 19
3. **Further development of the Community Planning in Scotland Website** We will review and develop the Community Planning in Scotland website to share details of all resources and support available to CPPs, and to share good and innovative practice.	IS/HS	CPIB Members Other national improvement agencies		Ongoing
4. **Evidencing Good Practice in relation to the Resourcing of Community Planning** We will gather evidence in relation to the contribution statutory partners are currently making to support the administration of community planning (£/people) and explore the role CPIB board members could play in strengthening co-resourcing in this area.	IS	CPIB Members		Nov 19