AGENDA

Community Planning Improvement Board
Advisory Board Meeting, 5th October, 10am-12noon
Via Teams

Agenda
1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Minute & Matters Arising
3. The role of Community Planning in responding to Covid-19 From the perspective of your sector, what have been your experiences of the role Community Planning is playing in responding to Covid-19 and in contributing to recovery efforts? Background papers from CP Managers Network and EVOC
4. The role of the CPIB and how it can add value Is there added value we can bring to this arena, and if so what should be the focus? It would be helpful to frame this in light of what is happening in relation to the Community Planning Review and the Local Governance Review. The board had previously welcomed the request from the Cabinet Secretary and COSLA President to play a supporting role in the Community Planning review, in particular in highlighting strong and effective practice and taking steps to address any challenges to improvement that are identified. However, the Review of Community Planning has been paused as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, and it is unlikely this will now take place within the lifetime of this parliament.
5. Implications for the current CPIB work plan The current workplan has been shared information. Understandably, this has not progressed over the past 6 months with priorities focussed elsewhere during this time. Depending on the outcome of the above discussion on the role of the board going forward, it would be helpful to consider how we reset the work plan to reflect current challenges.
6. AOB
7. Future Items & Date of Next Meeting
8. Close

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

Attendees	Steve Grimmond (chair), SOLACE; CS David Duncan for ACC Gary Ritchie, Police Scotland; Eddie Fraser for Allister Short, HSC Chief Officers Network; Fraser McKinlay, Audit Scotland; Sarah Gadsden, Improvement Service; Ella Simpson, EVOC; Phil Couser, NHS NSS; David Milne, Scottish Government; Elaine Morrison, Scottish Enterprise; Amanda Coulthard, CP Managers Network; Roger Halliday, Scottish Government; Emily Lynch, Improvement Service; Simon Cameron for Sally Loudon, COSLA; Audrey MacDougall, Scottish Government: Valerie Arbuckle, Police Scotland; Jen Kerr, CVS Falkirk Diane Stockton, NHS Health Scotland
Apologies	David Martin, SOLACE; James Russell, SDS; Angela Leitch, Public Health Scotland; Mark McAteer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service;
Attending for Agenda Items	Jennie Barugh, SG – Input to Agenda Item 6 on National Performance Framework

Agenda Item	Action	Date
1. Welcome and Introduction Members were welcomed to the meeting and provided introductions. It was noted that three new board members have joined the CPIB since the previous meeting: - Sally Loudon (Chief Executive, COSLA) - Angela Leitch (Chief Executive, Public Health Scotland) - Jen Kerr (Chief Executive, Falkirk CVS) The Chair welcomed the contribution, perspective and connections they will bring to the work of the CPIB		
2. Minute & Matters Arising Agenda Item 2 - CPIB Minute Aug 27 The minute was endorsed as an accurate record of the previous meeting. A progress update was provided on matters arising will be picked up under the Agenda as follows:		

Item	Actions	Progress
4. **Policy Development Horizon Scanning**	1. CPIB to include discussion on NPF and CPIB at the next board meeting to strengthen links 2. CPIB to give ongoing consideration to the SLF workstreams and review areas of common purpose and opportunities to join up approaches	Agenda Item 6 - NPF

5.Communications	1. Issue letter to CP Boards/Chief Officers to provide an introduction to the work of the CPIB and providing an offer for board members to visit local CPP	Complete. Letter has been issued, and circulated to CPIB members to share with networks.		
6. CPIB Work Programme	1. Consolidate an overview of key themes and take a focussed look at future board meetings on each overarching theme with a view re what CPIB could do (and SLF/and other vehicles/other partners)	Agenda Item 7 – Prioritisation of Community Planning		
7. Place Principle	1. CPIB Board will give ongoing consideration on how to reinforce the links between the Place Principle and community planning 2. Scottish Government consider how they can make links to CP when they are developing messaging around Place Principle	Agenda Item 7 – Prioritisation of CP. Complete. SG have followed up internally		
8. Public Health WSG	1. CPIB to continue to support the work of PHSWSG with continued dialogue in relation to how this work articulates with wider CPIB	Agenda Item 4ii – Public Health item under Policy Development Horizon Scanning,		
9. Future Agenda Items	1. Include a focus on new Scottish Enterprise/H&I Enterprise/SDS 3-year corporate plans 2. Role of CP partner.	Consider for future meeting Agenda Item 7 – Prioritisation of Community Planning		

3. CPIB Work Programme

Agenda Item 3 -
CPIB Work program

The Board recognised and noted the positive progress being made across the work strands as outlined in the Update Report and expressed gratitude for the ongoing support of CPIB members for their work on this.

Fuller discussion in relation to ongoing resourcing of the CPIB Work Programme and consolidating emerging learning will be covered under Agenda Items 5 and 7.

4. Policy Development Horizon Scanning

4.1. **Research Data Scotland.** Roger Halliday provided an overview of this new service for accessing public sector data in Scotland. It will offer safe, secure and cost-effective access to data for research, innovation and investment. RDS will enable data to be systematically used to deliver insight and understanding around wellbeing, sustainable and inclusive growth, reducing inequalities, and driving economic, environmental and social progress. CPIB welcomed this development and agreed to support a high-profile demonstration project, with Scottish Enterprise and PHS members offering to link into this work.

Agenda Item 4.1
Research Data Scotla

4.2. **Public Health Scotland.** Phil Couser provided an update on the creation of PHS and outlined the opportunity for a strategic reworking of plans for it to more directly support the work of CPIB and CPPs locally. A number of specific recommendations were shared to strengthen the supporting role PHS

could play. The board welcomed the approach and agreed the recommendations provided a positive direction of travel and should be embraced to help PHS play a more supportive role in Community Planning.

Agenda Item 4.2
PHS CPIB Opportuni

5. Community Planning Review: Response to request from Cabinet Secretary/ COSLA President

Agenda Item 5 - CP
Review - Response t

The Board considered the letter from the Cabinet Secretary/COSLA president introducing the purpose and scope of the Community Planning Review and making a request of the CPIB to use its work programme to provide support for the review. David Milne summarised SG plans around how the Review of Community Planning will be carried out, the plans to gather evidence, and how this links with CPIB work, including proposals for direct discussions with CPPs which connects directly with CPIB's own offer to visit CPPs

The Board welcomed the re-emphasis provided by the Cabinet Secretary and COSLA President on Community Planning and the expectation on all statutory partners to deliver. It was agreed the opportunity for the CPIB to support the CP Review agenda was a positive one and should be welcomed. There is clear alignment with CPIB ambition/work, and the review provides a useful platform to strengthen the purpose of CPIB and support engagement/traction with stakeholders. Links with the Local Governance Review were also highlighted, and the important role the CPIB can play in bringing these processes together was emphasised.

It was agreed in responding to the Cabinet Secretary/COSLA president, the high-level deliverables from the current CPIB work programme should be outlined, noting these will evolve. Emergent learning on the nature of issues/barriers, examples where community planning is working well, and a range of recommendations of where improvement is required, including in relation to national challenges, should be included. This should include the voice of local communities. The response should also set out how the CPIB will support further progress.

It was also agreed some further refinement of the work programme would be beneficial, and work strand leads were asked to consider if the deliverables were realistic and achievable, and whether they were able to commit the necessary resource required.

Agreed Actions

1. Respond to the Cabinet Secretary/COSLA President to confirm the CPIB is willing to use its work in the coming year to support review activity, outlining deliverables from the current work programme, and sharing the emergent learning from activity so far.	**Chair**	**April**
2. Review and refine the current work programme deliverables and consider resourcing requirements	**Work Strand Leads**	**June**

6. CPIB & the National Performance Framework

Agenda Item 6b - CPIB and the NPF-   Agenda Item 6a - SNPF_A4_Booklet.pdf   SLF Update CIPB February 2020 - for

Fraser McKinlay & Jennie Barugh (Director for Performance and Outcomes at Scottish Government) led a discussion on how the CPIB could strengthen its links with the National Performance Framework, drawing on the approach taken in the recent relaunch of the Scottish Leaders Forum.

The SLF has identified 5 Action Groups to provide strategic focus on key national challenges and system-wide improvements, pinned around the National Performance Framework. These are:
- Tackling Child Poverty

- Climate Emergency - Data & Evidence - Accountability & Incentives - Human Systems and Relational issues Fraser and Jenny are leading on the Accountability & Incentives Action Group which will consider if our accountability or incentive structures help or hinder us in terms of leadership behaviours and delivery of outcomes in the NPF. A number of workstreams are underway to capture case studies to share learning around what helps and what doesn't. Fraser and Jenny agreed to report back to the board in due course when there was progress to share to allow the board to consider implications for the work of the CPIB. **Agreed Action** 1. Provide future progress update to the board	**FM**	**Oct**

7. Prioritising Community Planning – How can CPIB support improvement?

Item 7 - Prioritising
Community Planning

The board previously agreed to draw out overarching learning from the Work Programme activity to allow more in-depth exploration to develop a collective understanding and collective commitment to action and to help the CPIB to start getting into the 'so what' territory and focus on meaningful action for CPIB.

The first of these themes is Prioritising Community Planning. The board considered the key learning from the gathered evidence in relation to the priority CP partners are giving Community Planning and the key tensions affecting progress. The chair noted thanks to CPIB members for their significant contributions to this evidence base.

Board members agreed the following improvement actions should be prioritised by the CPIB:
- 7.3 – **CPP progress reports against a few areas of national and strategic importance** and **7.4 – Promoting CPPs as the vehicle for local conversations on climate change and statutory carbon reduction plans as we head for COP26.** It was agreed to pursue with Scottish Government, asserting that Community Planning provides a collaborative mechanism to address these wicked issues and should be the vehicle to take things forward, but avoid adding bureaucracy.
- **7.5 – Using Learning from Best Value Assurance Audits to understand strengths and weaknesses of Community Planning**. Audit Scotland agreed to produce a report pulling together current learning from BVAR.
- **7.6 – Reviewing the role and contribution of NHS/IJB partners in Community Planning**. Agreed to pursue conversation NHS Chief Executive, position within the context of the Community Planning review.
- 7**.10 – Develop a consistent understanding of CP across all partners.** Induction materials currently exist for CP Board Members. IS agreed to review the content and actively promote to CP partners.
- **7 .11 – Targeting of improvement support for community planning partnerships**. IS/PHS agreed to pursue, and seek to involve other partners, e.g. HIS, Voluntary Health Scotland.

Agreed Actions:		
1. Pursue conversation with SG on potential to develop CPP Progress reports against a few areas of national and strategic importance and to promote CPPs as vehicle for local conversations on climate change and statutory carbon reduction plans	**Chair/ D Milne**	**June**
2. Produce report summarising learning from BV Assurance Audits to understand strengths and weaknesses of CP	**FM**	**June**
3. Review and promote current Induction materials for CP Board Members	**SG/EL**	**June**
4. Pursue conversation with NHS Chief Executive on the role/contribution of NHS/IJB partners in CP	**Chair**	**June**
5. Develop targeted improvement support for CP partnerships, and identify wider partner involvement	**IS/PHS**	**Oct**

8. Future Items & Date of Next Meeting 5th June, 2pm-4pm, Edinburgh, Audit Scotland Offices - Cancelled 5th October, **10-12 noon** – now Via Teams		
9. Close		

The role of Community Planning in responding to Covid-19 and contributing to recovery efforts - learning from the Community Planning Managers Network
CPIB– 5th October 2020

1. **Purpose**
    1.1. This background paper shares initial learning from Community Planning Managers on the role Community Planning is playing locally in relation to the Covid-19 response and recovery. It is hoped this will be helpful in supplementing insights from individual CPIB members and feed into and inform the board's discussion.

2. **Introduction**
    2.1. The Community Planning Managers Network is keen to collaborate and share examples of local approaches and what is working to help CPPs respond effectively to the fast-changing landscape. We have worked with the network to gather insights and examples of what is happening across Community Planning in Scotland to help to contribute to the development of a national narrative about the role and added value Community Planning provides in responding to the current pandemic and to provide useful insight for the CPIB as it considers how it can add value and support improvement.

    2.2. This paper summarises emerging learning from a recent network practice sharing event on 29th September which involved input from 29 partnerships. The session considered:
    - The role Community Planning is playing in responding to Covid-19 and in contributing to recovery efforts in local areas
    - Examples of success stories, lessons learned, and changes in the ways partnerships are working
    - A focus on the elements that we want to see sustained in the future

3. **The role Community Planning is playing in responding to Covid-19 and in contributing to recovery efforts in local areas**
    3.1. There is significant evidence around how CPPs have added value and mobilised across a range of partnerships and communities. This demonstrates the benefits of having a CPP infrastructure in place that was able to immediately respond to the pandemic because of the way it works with local communities and across a range of partners.

    3.2. Community Planning has played a critical role in supporting emergency response efforts. Existing relationships, infrastructure and ways of working have been fundamental within local emergency and resilience planning structures, supporting rapid and co-ordinated community led responses and joined up planning and delivery by key partners.

    3.3. This crisis response provides an illustration of Community planning 'in action' and reflects how partners and communities work together at a community level. While critical during this time, it is largely reactive and operational. It is important to also consider how the longer-term Community Planning ambitions are aligning with, and contributing to, recovery and renewal efforts. Although still at an early stage, there is evidence that partnerships are beginning to consider how to align and potentially refocus Local Outcomes Improvement Plans to contribute to longer term recovery planning. However, for many partnerships, this may take some time to evolve to ensure plans are shaped by communities, and to be clear on the added value that can be delivered by the CPP over and above individual partner recovery plans.

3.4. The key themes emerging so far are summarised below (full detail is included in Appendix 1).

3.5. Mobilising Communities

In many cases, communities responded much more quickly than the public sector and organised themselves to deliver food/prescriptions/check in on vulnerable people in a matter of days. Community Planning provided essential support via recruiting, co-ordinating and supporting volunteers and community groups, and through establishing online community hubs where support and guidance was made available, and signposting to further resources. While there were challenges in terms of the volume of volunteers and capacity to support community groups, there is a general consensus that the community led response has enabled a more rapid and targeted delivery of support to those most in need. This is an important point and provides potential learning for CPPs in relation to their role in supporting empowerment going forward.

3.6. Utilising the knowledge and expertise of the TSI

Many partnerships drew heavily on the knowledge, connections and expertise of TSIs to mobilise communities, co-ordinate volunteers and to provide support. Some reflected that there had been a strengthening of the relationship with the TSI as a result of the pandemic response.

3.7. Utilising and refocusing existing partnership infrastructure and relationships

Partnerships developed prior to the pandemic were key to allowing a smooth transition to emergency operations. For example, one CP Manager noted many of the members of a local Emergency Management Team were, in 'peace' time, members of the area's CPP. This meant that trust and familiarity had already been established, removing many of the potential barriers that can occur when teams are formed at short notice. Existing partnerships have also been utilised and refocussed across a range of social and economic recovery themes, drawing in new partners including business and the private sector. Thematic partnerships also worked well at the start of the pandemic, springing into action despite the fact that the local CP Board was effectively out of action at this point. CPPs have also been focussed on bringing together partner recovery plans and identifying areas where partners could join efforts. Many partnerships are also looking to alter the way they operate to become more flexible and adaptable, in recognition of the fluidity of the situation presented by the pandemic. This is particularly evident in relation to locality planning.

3.8. Co-ordination and connecting local and national responses

CPPs have played a key role in co-ordinating and connecting local and national responses. This was particularly important given the volume and frequency of new guidelines from the Scottish and UK Governments, the speed with which national guidelines were altered, and the need to ensure communities, community groups and partner organisations all had access to the latest guidance and support.

3.9. Refreshing/resetting existing LOIPs

While a couple of CPPs have made steps to refresh or refocus their existing LOIP to factor the recovery into their plans moving forward, the majority appear to be delaying for now and planning to take a temperature check with communities and partners in the new year to ensure alignment with other local recovery plans, and to ensure priorities within the LOIP are still valid. For some, the expectation is that the LOIP may not change significantly given the priorities identified originally in the LOIP are now considered more relevant than ever, such as poverty, mental health, outcomes for younger people and inequality, all of which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. In other cases, whilst the broad issues that the LOIP covers will likely remain the same, the pandemic has altered the way they could be addressed, or the targets/timescales needed, so this requires some work.

4. **Lessons Learned so far– what worked and what are the barriers?**

   4.1. Partnerships which were well embedded within their local communities were more easily able to respond and also had already earnt the buy-in and trust of the local community. Without these pre-existing relationships, the response would have been much slower and less effective, particularly at targeting support and information for the most vulnerable.

   4.2. Existing relationships and communication between partners has improved the ability to draw together cohesive responses. Partnerships have strengthened and expanded in response to the crisis, with existing partner relationships growing stronger and new partnerships formed in order to address existing gaps. There is a greater awareness and trust between partners and sectors – including business/private sector which could offer longer term gains in partnership working.

   4.3. While there has been significant progress in data sharing between partners during the pandemic, particularly in relation to data being shared to allow help to be directed to vulnerable households, for other areas, the lack of data sharing was noted as a hurdle. An example of this is between Public Health Scotland and Local Authorities and relates to sharing Test and Protect data in relation to households who are required to isolate.

   4.4. There are challenges in relation to Scottish Government requests for data, which were felt to be too frequent, uncoordinated (i.e. two different departments asking for similar or overlapping data) and often with far too little notice between the question being asked and the deadline for responses set.

   4.5. Community planning has provided a much-needed vehicle to co-ordinate local communications and support activity, which has been critical in identifying gaps and minimising duplication across partners and community providers.

   4.6. The emergency response phase has shown Community Planning in action; despite not always following formal procedures or utilising formal structures. While this reactive 'Community Planning in Action' has been essential, it is important not to lose sight of the longer-term ambitions of community planning in relation to improving outcomes, reducing inequalities, early intervention and prevention. While many partnerships are giving consideration to how they align and refocus LOIPs to play into longer term recovery efforts, it is perhaps too early at this stage to be able to identify relevant learning.

   4.7. Community Listening events provide a useful opportunity to ensure community voices are at the heart of refreshing the LOIP to focus on recovery priorities.

   4.8. Partners have been able to be less risk averse by placing more trust in front-line staff and communities to go ahead and get things done. The availability of small pots of Scottish Government money has helped to facilitate this, avoiding drawn out complicated approval processes. Retaining this level of empowerment and ensuring groups that have worked well are sustained going forward will be key. Nevertheless, there may be governance implications that will have to be considered in terms of reporting and scrutiny and the role they played during the response and recovery stage.

   4.9. A Locality-based delivery model for services, using multidisciplinary teams, makes delivering emergency services easier and more efficient than using one central model. Teams which were locally based operated as one team, regardless of jurisdictions prior to the pandemic and frequently already had relationships and existing infrastructures in place. Given enough support and resource, locality decision making can be done efficiently and effectively. Devolved decision making and resource at a locality level comes with political and cultural issues.

4.10. Locality-based, community led approaches worked well to deliver emergency services at the start of the pandemic and they will be crucial again in the recovery process. Grassroots activity has been essential, with communities responding much more quickly than the public sector. This is creating a platform for much greater emphasis on community led approaches in longer term Community planning.

4.11. There are challenges over how to manage the volume of volunteers coming forward, and how sustainable this will be. For example, many elderly volunteers have come forward however, there are concerns over whether they would be able to continue providing their help due to their own health and shielding.   Similarly the number, and enthusiasm of, community groups coming forward for support was often more than the CPPs had capacity to support.

4.12. Issues exist around data and connectivity, as communities don't have equal access to the internet which has been a real challenge.

4.13. The multitude of funding streams available require co-ordination to ensure the funding goes to the areas which need it the most

4.14. There is a desire for greater consultation by Scottish Government with CPPs on future policy and guidance in relation to the pandemic and a view that CPPs are well placed to contribute to national decision-making. For example, differences that emerged between sets of guidance on reopening of certain industries could have been avoided if local partners had been consulted.

4.15. In terms of national guidance and requirements, there are challenges around capacity and proportionality for some areas, e.g. Island Councils and how this could be worked to make things fit within their context.

6. **Where can the CPIB add value?**
    a. Suggestions on where the CPIB could add value focussed on raising the profile of Community Planning at a national level, collating good practice examples and promoting awareness of the role of community planning in responding to the pandemic.

Appendix 1 – Examples of the role Community Planning is playing in Covid response and recovery

Mobilising communities

1. **Angus** - A lot of work with frontline staff has taken place, and the CPP wants to keep this level of empowerment and allow people to go ahead and get things done. Small pots of SG money available meaning people didn't have to go through massive processes. Many have taken a digital by default stance however, in Angus this has caused concern as through listening events local community people have expressed that they do not wish for this to become a permanent way of doing things. Many prefer face to face support and want this to be put back in place.

2. **Dumfries and Galloway** - Positive experience of working with the 3rd sector in Dumfries and Galloway. Over 2,000 volunteers have come forward during the pandemic. The Council, NHS and Third Sector have been successfully working together to make the best use of resources. Currently, around 3,000 food parcels are going out on a weekly basis and during the peak of the pandemic there were about 7,000 food parcels being delivered.

3. **Dundee** – Community led response supported by CP was effective, with the CPP key in helping identify gaps and build capacity. Faith in Community Dundee and TSI created an emergency food network with 23 different agencies providing emergency food. Using existing partnership contacts to coordinate and minimise duplication, they provided a quick, coherent local response. An information website was created by one group, with everyone's contributions.

4. **East Lothian**: Well over 1000 volunteers supporting shielding and vulnerable people.

5. **Falkirk** – CP will play an important role in recovery, with focus on grassroots and community engagement.

6. **Fife -** Found that place-based, community led approaches worked well to deliver emergency services at the start of the pandemic and that they will be crucial again in the recovery process. Helping Hand scheme for volunteers established in Fife. During the course of the pandemic Helping Hand has been inundated with requests from organisations, staff, volunteers and local people looking to help in their community. Although this has been great, a challenge with this has been coordinating offers and requests for help and also ensuring that all volunteers have something to do. In addition, Ready Scotland has also been rolled out which has meant that Helping Hand has had to make some changes and adapt. Helping Hand has been a success and the partnership wants to build on the momentum and sense of community connection.

7. **North Ayrshire** – Managed to set up Community Support Hub really quickly – went live on 23rd March. Partners are working together with volunteers and staff redeployed from elsewhere. Aligned to locality model already in place so had a community support hub in each locality. Also developed "Community Books" for each locality which are available on the Community Planning website. Not just COVID focussed, it gives people information on all the links to information they may need in a crisis such as GP, Money Advice, etc. Developed an online community hub through Facebook. Overwhelming number of responses to volunteering. Application was online and pulled together centrally. Ready now that if we go into another lockdown, volunteer roles have been established. Issues around data and connectivity. Communities don't have equal access to the internet which has been a real challenge.

8. **Perth & Kinross** – Communities responded much more quickly than the public sector and organised themselves to deliver food/prescriptions/check in on vulnerable people in a matter of days. 1000 volunteers registered and 70+ community organisations working with them. PKC led on support for those identified as shielding or otherwise vulnerable to try to complement local activities. They are now in the process of redrafting a Volunteering Strategy to try and capitalise on this level of interest and involvement. Of the 1000 registered: 302 happy to volunteer long term, 126 happy to be involved in a wellbeing helpline, 160 happy to help with ongoing food distribution, and 136 (with PVG) happy to help with prescription delivery. Greater ability for council and partners to be more proactive and less risk averse by placing more trust in communities. In recovery phase, resource will require a greater ask of partners and communities. Striving towards Trusted CP scheme. With emergency response powers enacted during lockdown, a community support webpage was created with information regarding

funding, community groups, shielding, volunteering etc. A helpline and email was set up, staffed by people from community service.

9. **Renfrewshire** - Local interface engaged quickly with a volunteer data base set up. Extremely high number of volunteers have come forward and the hope is that the partnership engages with these people going forward. Many elderly volunteers have come forward however, concerns over whether they would be able to continue providing their help due to own health and shielding. In terms of empowerment, people have been able to just get on and do things, as they've been able to avoid the decision making channels they have been using so far. Want to ensure groups that have worked well are sustained going forward. Neighbourhood hubs have been set up and are responding to the needs of people. As this has been successful, partnership is now exploring ways that this can be rolled out and become business as usual.

10. **Scottish Borders** - The Resilient Communities Team supplied community volunteers with appropriate PPE for doing the jobs they were doing.

11. **Shetland** Islands – Fantastic community response. CPP role was really to support the communities to respond in the way that fitted their own locality. Large numbers of volunteers which was coordinated through Red Cross and Third Sector response. Issues around data and connectivity. Communities don't have equal access to the internet which has been a real challenge. Shetland Islands are **about** to begin a round of community conversations working with community organisations listening to their experiences and how they think these new ways of working can be sustained.

12. **South Ayrshire** - There was a huge response from community groups to the pandemic in South Ayrshire. Groups such as St Meddans, Symington Village, Troon Harbour Group, Newlife Prestwick, Ballantrae Support Group and Coylton Community Support, plus many other others, helped to deliver frontline services such as food parcels, medication and phone calls to vulnerable/isolated people.

13. **South Lanarkshire** – Extremely positive grassroots activity and CP working well with different groups (Community response network in place) and improved communication, e.g. central council COVID page created with partner information. Were inundated by requests from the community to volunteer. Volunteer work has been in partnership with community groups and this has helped to forge greater links between community groups and the council. This has led to significant change in how CP works, i.e. change in structure and how it operates by taking a bottom up approach. This reflects the importance of community engagement role in recovery, and a more community led process for CP going forward. Planning to create interim locality structure, taking bottom-up approach by working with COVID networks i.e. looking at food resilience. Identifying more sustainable ways to support high poverty areas in food crisis i.e. communities growing food.

14. **West Dunbartonshire** - The empowered Delivery & Improvement Groups have focused on supporting community organisations and citizens to build digital skills, use technology and increase engagement. The DIG has also been leading work on a volunteering strategy and a framework to support work on Dementia Friendly West Dunbartonshire.

Utilising and refocusing existing partnership infrastructure and relationships

1. **Aberdeen** – New partnerships have been formed**.** Oil companies have come forward and shown willingness to support and help. In October, an online event will take place with the business community in Aberdeen. A platform has been developed to give business a menu of options about how they might be able to support the partnership. This will help link businesses with longer term goals of the partnership e.g. apprenticeships, getting access to digital devices etc. and help create a new way of working.   Aberdeen also developed a group for the council and HSCP to work together (not a part of the formal structure). Group has been meeting weekly to discuss resources for communities. This has been very helpful in terms of integrating resources around locality areas. There will be a review of locality planning structures, potential to integrate HSCP with CPP Aberdeen Locality group.

2. **Angus** - In the early weeks of the outbreak, Angus Council set up an emergency response team, HAART (Humanitarian Assistance Angus Response Team) to coordinate efforts between the council's community team and VAA (Voluntary Action Angus) to deliver support to the community, particularly those who

were shielding, and/or vulnerable. This included food parcels, prescriptions etc. This approach was so successful that the CPP have now used it to inform how community planning and partnership working are taken forward in the future. The pandemic has been a catalyst for change, with structures which didn't work well before being removed and the board, executive and wider partnership are now all working together. The change in structures has been positive, with everyone working well together. Interested in exploring the combining of structures further. A Task and Finish group has been formed to explore this. Group using a demand management model; with wrapping around of services based on listening events and survey feedback. In addition, the mapping of customer pathways has begun. The purpose of this will be to ensure everything is aligned. Also looking at utilising community councils and other existing groups to get message across about accessing services.

3. **Dumfries and Galloway** - Focus going forward will be on bringing together partner recovery plans and identifying areas where partners could join efforts. CPP board held a meeting in September to outline and agree on a recovery plan. A recovery group has been formed and 3rd sector D&G will be leading the group. Aim to have a multi-agency approach to ensure there is no duplication – this has been the biggest challenge. Respond using a multi-agency approach and record and share learning. Have taken a different approach to most CPPs when writing locality plans. Locality plans are not based on geographic areas but on a thematic approach. For example food sharing. This has been beneficial during the pandemic as community food providers already had relationships and an existing infrastructure in place. All food provision has been by 3rd sector, not the NHS or local authority.

4. **Dundee** - Made use of existing partnerships in order to facilitate the emergency response. Indeed, many members of the Emergency Management Team were also existing members of the CPP in Dundee, allowing a smooth transition to emergency planning mode. Pre-existing relationships meant trust already existed between partners and so work could get started a lot quicker. Communication between partners has improved with the ability to draw together cohesive responses. CP was important in helping identify gaps and build capacity. Dundee learnt that partnerships which were well embedded within their local communities were more easily able to respond and also had already earnt the buy-in of the local community. Without these pre-existing relationships, the response would have been much slower/less effective. Due to restrictions brought in by Covid, plus the fact that many members of the CPP were also Emergency Management Team members, the CP Board have not been able to meet frequently and certainly weren't available at the start of the crisis. However, the thematic partnerships were able to get up and running almost immediately and were self-sufficient enough to do vital work without the direction of the board.

5. **East Lothian** – Overall great partnership work happening with the help of good relationships between council and partners at both strategic and operational level. This contributed to good partnership working at local level. Built good working relationships at strategic level in last few years with Police. Since the pandemic, held weekly council management meetings to get updates and discuss key issues such as new restrictions. These helped cement good cooperation both at strategic and operational level.

6. **Falkirk** – More aware of different groups and developed trust between groups. Some partner relationships have been significantly strengthened. working better together than previously and more aware of each other's strengths than before.

7. **Fife** - Challenging times have shown CPP in action; despite not always following formal procedures. There are nine thematic partnerships in Fife; they are all being encouraged to think about the way they work and what their priorities will be going forward.

8. **Glasgow** - As the emergency phase of the pandemic gave way to the recovery phase, Glasgow set up a Social Recovery Taskforce to ensure that issues such as poverty and inequality were tackled as part of the Covid recovery in Glasgow. The Taskforce brings together representatives from community planning partners, third sector and voluntary organisations, to look at how the city can rebuild and recover socially from coronavirus. They will also work in partnership with the Economic Recovery Taskforce.

9. **Midlothian** - Working with partners such as the DWP, Edinburgh College and the Third Sector to improve employability in their area, with a specific focus on school leavers and those with barriers to employment. This focuses on large public-sector employers offering apprenticeships, training schemes

and volunteering opportunities, whilst offering additional support to help others into employment in other organisations.

10. **North Ayrshire** – Specific thematic groups led on key work streams, for example around community support hubs. The Council's Community resources led on this, however, all partners did contribute and completely engaged in the response effort. Online Board meetings have worked well. Discussions have been more focussed, partners who wouldn't normally contribute as much face to face have been more involved, etc.

11. **Orkney Islands** - Initial response to the crisis has been primarily Council led. However, now that the focus is moving towards recovery, several resilience groups have been set up. CPP now working closer together with council groups, relationships strengthened over time however, there is still room for improvement in terms of better aligning the work of partners. Delivery groups are still working on their usual priorities however, prioritising work and having increased focus on what needs to be done immediately. The recovery phase has seen huge engagement from the business community. Businesses supported to set up their own steering group and report directly to the board.

12. **Perth & Kinross**: Move to locality-based delivery model for services using multidisciplinary teams i.e. the potential to shift to 5 localities and 5 hubs would make delivering food parcels easier and more efficient than using 1 central model. Locality decision making worked very well; Council funding to support investment and delivery of locality action plan used to support local groups responding to COVID related issues. Given enough support and resource, locality decision making can be done efficiently and effectively. Devolved decision making and resource at a locality level comes with political and cultural issues. The need to respond quickly due to COVID allowed for less risk averse behaviour of information sharing between partners than before. Partners have also been flexible and responsive in redeploying staff to support the emergency response. For example, within the council, when lockdown began, parking attendants were re-tasked to collect and deliver prescriptions, deliver food packages to the shielding & vulnerable, as well as deliver technology i.e. iPads (Connecting Scotland project). They have only recently gone back to their day jobs.

13. **Scottish Borders** - Looking at failings and where things haven't joined up but also looking at what has worked well will be key. During the pandemic, discovered people that were not receiving services prior to Covid-19 however, they are vulnerable groups and going forward this information needs to be captured as the CPP has a responsibility towards these people and ensuring that they are okay in the future. Challenge going forward is how to hold on to these people and ensure that they do not get lost along the way. Should this be local knowledge, stored in a database or picked up by community resilience teams? Even though the earlier response to the pandemic hasn't always gone through the CPPs, CPPs have a role in the resilience work. It is important to bring the right people to the table.

14. **Shetland Islands** – Specified partners were all heavily involved along with the TSI. The Resilience Partnership consists of the main CP partners so when Community Planning meetings were suspended the Resilience Partnership was still meeting most days. Management and Leadership Team (5 specified partners + public health) met regularly which was very focussed and provided leadership which has helped partnership working and resilience planning. Care for People Team had brought together people from across organisations in a way that had maybe been a gap before. Reflecting on whether there is a longer-term role as an executive group that can be linked to partnership planning. A project called "Anchor" which provides support to vulnerable households has been vital in providing support to those who were vulnerable or shielding in this crisis.

15. **South Lanarkshire** - Information sharing has been effective due to existing relationships, however, there have been some constraints caused by GDPR where organisations would have wanted to share more information.

16. **West Dunbartonshire** - There are five Delivery & Improvement Groups (DIGs) that operate within West Dunbartonshire; the flourishing DIG, the independent DIG, the nurtured DIG, the empowered DIG and the safe DIG. In normal times, the DIGs report back to Community Planning West Dunbartonshire, however as a result of the pandemic there have been no meetings of the CPWD for several months, but

that hasn't stopped the DIGs from assisting both the emergency response and recovery. The various DIGs have worked with local partners to improve employability, support frail and vulnerable people, provide additional support to those experiencing abuse, and community justice.

17. **West Lothian** - Similarly to other areas, the immediate response to the pandemic has been council led. West Lothian CPP has not yet met formally but a plan is in place to meet at the end of September 2020. Having said this, some partners have had ongoing discussions since the start of Covid-19 about regeneration, anti-poverty, partnerships with the 3rd sector, mental health etc. Conversations have organically grown over time. The formal CPP meeting scheduled for the end of September will focus on determining what the role of CPP will be going forward. Acceptance that the CPP will most like have to implement changes in terms of how it operates in the future.

Utilising the knowledge and expertise of the TSI
1. **Angus** - Demand for local TSI was so high that the council were looking into extra support for call handlers.
2. **Falkirk** – Very good relationship established with local TSI. Pandemic response set up by council with help of TSI. Started by doing some of same work i.e. directory of community groups, but then took up joint approach. Partnership work happened naturally, with help of grassroot.
3. **South Lanarkshire** - Worked closely with TSI to mobilise communities, to provide support to food banks. Were inundated by requests from the community to volunteer. The council's Community Engagement Team worked with VASLan (Third Sector Interface) to coordinate all the requests to ensure they were targeted to help those most in need. In total, 1,587 volunteers helped to deliver food parcels, collection and delivery of prescriptions and carried out friendly phone calls. This work has also been in partnership with community groups and this has helped to forge greater links between community groups and the council. Despite not having locality plan/structures in place before, they supported communities in locality areas. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service supported urban areas with prescription deliveries. Groups have been knitted together so they can come as a single response in local area. Created virtual communication structure to share information with partners. The delivery officers group held fortnightly meetings, which helped share what other partners were doing. This helped strengthen existing networks and relationships with the TSI, resulting in better relationships and avoided duplicate work.

Co-ordination and connecting local and national responses
1. **Angus** - Need for better coordination of groups. As lots of new groups have been formed local people often get confused about who they should receive support from. For example, in some cases local people can receive up to three or four different food packs from different groups. Funding streams should be coordinated.
2. **Dumfries and Galloway** - External funding should be monitored to ensure everyone receives an equal share, there is no duplication in effort and that communities most in need receive the support required. It is important for national policy makers / funders to connect with local partners. Recognition that partners are not always well connected within their own sectors but when partners work collectively communities generally have a good relationship with one of the partners and this is what D&G have built upon.
3. **Glasgow -** New groups do not always have the right capacity/knowledge. Similar issues encountered in other areas where people are getting multiple knocks on their doors offering help. Everything needs to be tied to local evidence and needs. Call for a reset in relationship with the Scottish Government and closer working together.
4. **North Ayrshire** – One of the main roles of the Community Planning Team was signposting to relevant information. This was done through the Community Planning website with links to COVID support. Also published North Ayrshire wide daily briefings and if the information was available, they would also provide daily locality updates.
5. **North Lanarkshire**- There should be better coordination of funds and a better grasp of what money is coming in and when. This should be built into the recovery plan – what's coming in and how

communities are supported. Guidance and support should be provided to newly formed groups which are doing a good job at supporting communities but often struggle to understand procedures, language, governance etc. Community support should be looked at in a rounded way.

6. **Renfrewshire** - Work carried out to identify which groups should receive funding. There are different funding streams available and it is important to coordinate partners' approaches and ensure that the funding goes to the areas which need it the most.

7. **Scottish Borders -** Various funding streams available at the moment. Focus required on keeping track of where money has come from and what the funding will be used for to ensure groups aren't duplicating any work. Optimum position would be to join up efforts and maximise funding.

8. **Shetland Islands** – A key role was around the communication of information. Challenge around the national direction and how it fitted into the Shetland context in terms of capacity and proportionality.

Refreshing/resetting existing LOIPs

1. **Aberdeen** - A short life working group has been formed to lead on the Socio Economic Rescue Plan which was published in July 2020. While the plan is an immediate and dynamic response to the impact of Covid-19, it will inform the scheduled refresh of the LOIP in 2021. The plan aligns to the LOIP strategic themes of Economy, People and Place. Partners have been asked to prioritise their work around the Socio Economic Rescue Plan to ensure activity across the partnership is coordinated. A Route Map for the refreshed LOIP has been published. In 2021, workshops will take place across the partnership and community to see the impact of the current situation on the LOIP and its priorities. Although priorities will likely remain the same, the workshops will give a better understanding of the data and highlight whether priorities remain valid for the future.

2. **Angus** - The Angus Community Plan will not be refreshed as the priorities within it are still relevant. For example, a priority within the plan is around improving mental health

3. **Dundee** - Plan to review and update current outcomes, progress and targets.

4. **East Lothian** - The CPP taking lead in terms of economic recovery: drive economic development strategy, working with local communities, businesses etc.

5. **Falkirk** – Current LOIP requires review with plan to revise for January 2021. The board have asked to incorporate feedback from community groups, lessons learned and recovery. This is a challenging deadline given lost time for community engagement.

6. **Fife** – CPP was due to review progress on their LOIP in the coming year but in light of the Covid pandemic they have decided to pause that work and instead focus on five priority areas in the short term; tackling poverty and food insecurity; building community wealth through local economic development; promoting digital working and inclusion; supporting mental health and wellbeing; and addressing the climate emergency. The plan is to combine this with the refresh of the Council Recovery Plan. Aiming to adopt a 'sprint approach' where actions happens quickly and learning and experiences feed into the refreshed plan. 12 ambitions in the plan for Fife won't change however, some will be updated to reflect the learning and experiences from pandemic.

7. **Glasgow** - The Social Recovery Taskforce formed, enabled by the Community Planning Strategic Partnership as part of the council's renewal and recovery programme, brings together representatives from community planning partners, third sector and voluntary organisations, to look at how the city can rebuild and recover socially from coronavirus. They will also work in Partnership with Economic Recovery Taskforce. The work of the group will be used as a vehicle for a refresh on the LOIP and it is anticipated that the workplan of the Social Recovery Taskforce will in turn become the new Community Plan (Glasgow's equivalent of a LOIP).

8. **North Ayrshire** – LOIP is still considered fit for purpose. Comprehensive in terms of supporting local communities. Looking at refreshing "Fair for All" strategy which is focused on reducing inequalities and resetting Locality Partnerships.

9. **Perth & Kinross** – Creating new overarching 'Perth & Kinross offer' with a series of programmes of delivery under the five Es (Equalities, Empowerment, Education, Economy, Environment). This includes new focused LOIP to be developed by CPP. Key areas include locality working, improving how

communities participate in decision making, mental wellbeing and resilience, climate change, poverty, employability and digital participation.

10. **Renfrewshire** - Currently looking at a recovery plan which will be based around social and economic recovery.

11. **South Lanarkshire** – Plan to review and update LOIP for reporting year. This will be updated with any COVID partnerships work and themes from individual partner feedback i.e. volunteering. Plan for full review in the long-term. Some themes include: Planning with communities, digital connectivity, mental and physical health.

12. **Shetland Islands** – Looked at LOIP and feel that the priorities are right for the longer term. Will do impact analysis on targets and data sets to see the likely impact of COVID.

COVID-19 Research:

Common Themes and Lessons Learned August 2020 v1.0

Research undertaken throughout the COVID-19 pandemic allows us to understand the immediate response of the voluntary sector, the impact on organisations and citizens, and what support will be needed post-pandemic. This summary report is the first version of what we plan will be an evolving document throughout autumn 2020. In this August edition following themes emerge:

1. Economically Unsettled

There will be long-term economic consequences for the voluntary sector and additional funding is needed.

Nationally, organisations were struggling financially pre-pandemic and the further reduction of income is going to have long-term consequences for the voluntary sector. Research conducted by OSCR found that this will affect charities of all sizes, ages and incomes to a similar extent. OSCR found that local authority funding (33%), other independent grant funding (33%), and simplified requirements for reporting on grant outcomes (32%) were considered the most helpful kind of funding support (1).

In Edinburgh, the TSI Survey found that almost half of organisations are seeing/anticipating a reduction of income from fundraising (48%) and a reduction of income from trading (43%). Almost half of Edinburgh organisations said that they need funding to get through this and they have been able to access some of what they will need (2). SCVO report that the Wellbeing fund, Third Sector Resilience Fund and Supporting Communities Fund have been appreciated, however additional funding is needed (3).

2. Increased Need for Support

There is a growing demand for support due to effects of the pandemic, such as job losses and poor physical and mental health.

The National Emergencies Trust SEFAB Briefing found that 1 in 6 people in the UK has sought charitable support as a result of the pandemic (4). SCVO's #NeverMoreNeeded Campaign highlights the importance of the sector at this time due to growing demand, and the level of support has increased with pace and flexibility (3).

The Poverty Commission have found that service users already connected to a statutory or third sector organisation can access support easier than those who are not connected to local support organisations. The Poverty Commission recommends that as organisations begin activities, support for those who have lost their jobs will be needed on an unprecedented scale. Although some activities were stopped during the pandemic, organisations such as youth work, arts and culture, sport, nature, community cafes, transport schemes and childcare will be needed in the aftermath and long-term recovery (5).

3. Repurposed Services and Collaboration

Evidence shows that the voluntary sector responded quickly and adapted well. There was increased collaboration between organisations and local networks were valued.

The sector has responded flexibly to the crisis, adapting well. OSCR found that the most common reaction from charities was to change the way in which they deliver services (1). SCVO recognise the extraordinary response of the sector and state that 'the value of the sector's support must be understood and appreciated by the government once the immediate crisis is over' (3).

In the TSI Survey, over half of Edinburgh organisations responded that they were 'doing really well' adapting to the use of digital. This signifies that many organisations have continued to provide support during the pandemic by alternative methods such as telephone and digital contact (2).

Additionally, 59% of Edinburgh organisations reported seeing improved collaboration between organisations (2). The Poverty Commission reports that hundreds of groups have worked together to make sure food, medical supplies, support and advice services are available to those who need it. The pandemic has pulled different groups together to offer support and has shown the importance of local groups and networks (5) Research from Scottish Community Alliance found that community anchor organisations had an important role in the response due to their understanding of the community's needs and their access to local connections (6).

4. **Effects on Communities**

The damaging effects on individuals and communities will have long-term consequences.

ECHF member's practical support and services were described as a 'lifeline' during lockdown, in particular for people experiencing health inequalities. The contribution to emergency response work supported clients through difficult times, and online services provided safe spaces to engage with the organisations and allow for social connection (7)

For people on low incomes who were already struggling, coronavirus has added significant pressure and the Poverty Commission state that 'the current crisis has exacerbated many of the injustices'. Effects of the pandemic on individuals, such as job losses or poor health, can pull anyone into poverty and this means communities are vulnerable (5).

Within Edinburgh, organisations are most concerned about mental health and loneliness for their communities (2). VOCAL conducted qualitative research with carers and found that due to COVID-19 it was difficult, and in some instances impossible, to prioritise their own wellbeing. The pandemic has had a huge impact on wellbeing, and carers have struggled due to the increased intensity of caring (8).

COVID-19 Research Studies

The following pieces of quantitative and qualitative research highlight national and local experiences:

1. **OSCR COVID-19 Impact on Charities [Summary] and [Full Report.]**
   Research from OSCR details the impact of the pandemic on charities and the actions taken. By early May nearly every charity had reported negative impacts, with charities of all sizes, ages and incomes similarly affected. The research also asked what support will be needed in the future and found that charities will find guidance, access to funding and the simplification of funding procedures most helpful. For a breakdown of all the responses view the full report.

2. **TSI Scotland Network Coronavirus Survey [Full Report] and [Edinburgh Findings.]**
   The National TSI Network survey heard from 1,184 voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises about the impact of COVID-19. The findings present the financial position of organisations and which funds were accessed. The report also gives an understanding of the immediate response from the Third Sector, including the adaptation to digital and the redesigning of services. Additionally the research asks about the effects of COVID-19 on the communities which the organisations work with, considering the long-term effects and future planning. View the full report to see the national picture and the Edinburgh findings for a local understanding.

3. **SCVO Briefing to the Scottish Parliament. [Debate: COVID-19 Next Steps (Communities).]**
   SCVO's briefing recognises the invaluable and crucial work of the voluntary sector, which has continued throughout the pandemic. However, Scotland's charities and community groups were already in an unsettled financial position pre-pandemic and the consequences from COVID-19 will be severe. Immediate financial support from the Scottish Government has been welcomed, however additional funding is needed in part due to increased demand and the sector's role in recovery. Read the briefing in full, where SCVO consider the next steps for Scotland's voluntary sector.

4. **National Emergencies Trust: Trusted in Times of Need SEFAB Briefing**
The SEFAB Briefing looks at statistics across the United Kingdom and the access to emergency essentials throughout the pandemic. This report has found that 1 in 6 people in the UK sought charitable support as a result of the pandemic, and around half of the early funds helped people access food and essentials. The next steps are to ensure funds raised continue to be distributed to those in need and to create a community of rapid responders.

5. **Poverty Commission Poverty and Coronavirus in Edinburgh Interim Report [Summary](#) and [Full Report.](#)**
Research from Edinburgh Poverty Commission focuses on the impact of COVID-19 in Edinburgh for the citizens, in particular for people living in poverty. The report looks at employment issues and the struggle to find support throughout the pandemic. There is a need for continued long-term support due to the impact on citizens, and the Poverty Commission states that Edinburgh needs to rebuild with compassion and collaboration.

6. **Scottish Community Alliance [Community Response to COVID-19.](#)**
This qualitative research from Scottish Community Alliance interviews nine community-led organisations across Scotland to understand common themes and lessons learned from COVID-19. This research specifically looks at community anchor organisations which have connections to wide local networks, provide direct service provision along with coordinating local provision and working successfully with local authorities.

7. **Edinburgh Community Health Forum (ECHF): Forum Members Contribution to the COVID-19 Crisis.**
Throughout the pandemic, members of ECHF adapted their work to enable them to continue to meet the needs of communities, as well as meet emerging needs and issues. Their work has been recorded by interviews with ECHF members, and presents the agility and rapid response of the sector. This research shows how organisations in Edinburgh have supported their communities, and also looks at the importance of partnership and strategic working during COVID-19.

8. **Voice of Carers Across Lothian (VOCAL) Reports**
VOCAL have looked into the use of Self-Directed Support (SDS) by unpaid carers during COVID-19, in particular asking whether unpaid carers knew about the SDS COVID-19 guidance and if they had been able to use SDS in a flexible way during lockdown. In another piece of research from VOCAL, they focus on how carers feel about wellbeing, and how this has changed during the pandemic.

EVOC

AUGUST 2020

Purpose

1. As requested by the CPIB at its meeting on the 28 February 2020, this paper sets out Audit Scotland's assessment of the key strengths and ongoing areas of challenge in Scotland's 32 Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs).   The paper draws on:

   - the findings of 21 recent Best Value Assurance reports (BVARs) published between June 2017 and January 2020

   - the key national themes identified in three Community Planning performance audit reports: *Improving Community Planning in Scotland*, *Community Planning: turning ambition into action*, and *Community planning: an update*

   - our *2018 impact report* which summarised national and progress against our improvement recommendations

   - the joint Improvement Service, Audit Scotland, NHS Health Scotland Local Outcome Improvement Plans stocktake – emerging themes review.

2. The paper covers the following two themes:

   - What areas of strength are we seeing through our Community Planning audit work?

   - What challenges are councils and their partners continuing to experience in implementing Community Planning?

3. It is important to note that BVARs inevitably focus on councils' leadership and performance in relation to community planning and community empowerment and therefore provide only a limited perspective on the contribution community planning partners are making to this important shared agenda. Nonetheless, it has still been possible to identify some useful issues and themes for consideration by the CPIB, particularly from the national and local CPP audits and the recent joint work on LOIPs with the IS and NHS Health Scotland.

What areas of strength are we seeing through our Community Planning audit work?

4. In many ways our findings largely echo those set out in the paper 'Prioritising Community Planning – How can the CPIB support improvement?' which was considered by the CPIB at its February 2020 meeting. That is the audits report highlight steady and improving progress with Community Planning, but that a considerable gap still exists between current CPP performance and what would be required to deliver on the expectations of the Statement of Ambition for Community Planning.

5. We have found that most councils work well with their partners, and there is widespread support and commitment to the concept of Community Planning amongst councils and their partners. Community Planning continues to be seen as an important vehicle for co-ordinating multi-agency work in areas of shared interest and is increasingly seen as a useful means of engaging jointly with communities to improve outcomes at local level.

6. There is generally a good use by councils of both council-wide, locality and specific interest group consultation arrangements using a wide range of consultation methods.

7. Councils and their partners are increasingly making more effective use of data and intelligence on community needs when setting priorities and targeting resources. This was particularly evident in relation to the development of LOIPs.

8. There are many examples of projects and programmes that are making a real difference in communities and councils are showing strong leadership around the Community Empowerment agenda, increasingly in partnership with others.

9. Focusing specifically on community empowerment the audits report shows a mixed picture of progress. On the positive side:

    - There are many examples of physical assets being transferred to communities (e.g. East Lothian's Harbours), often utilising the asset transfer powers contained in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act

    - Many communities are now running community centres and other local community resources, having taken them over from the local authority

    - There are several examples of community-led action plans (e.g. East Ayrshire, Fife, East Renfrewshire, West Lothian)

    - There is extensive use of Charettes and other community engagement activity across many councils (e.g. Inverclyde, West Lothian, Orkney Islands, Fife)

    - Participatory budgeting is now almost universally in use across councils, but the extent of its use and its effectiveness varies enormously.

    - LOIPs that councils have prepared with their partners are evidence-based and clearly focused on prevention and reducing inequality-related negative life outcomes

    - there appears to be an increasing focus on CP partners working together to tackle inequalities caused by poverty and disadvantage within many communities, with efforts being made to 'join-up' activity in this area with wider national and local work. Particularly striking examples were City of Glasgow, Renfrewshire and East Ayrshire.

10. Still focusing on community empowerment, less positively:

    - The shift towards widespread engagement and power-sharing and the associated cultural change required by the Community Empowerment Act was less clear in some councils, where their practices still seemed to be focused on consultation and engagement not empowerment

    - Whilst all LOIPs have a strong prevention focus they are generally not yet backed up by delivery plans which contain specific actions and clarity about how resources will be deployed to turn the LOIP's ambitions into change on the ground

    - Too many councils were making slow progress in developing locality plans

    - Many communities still did not feel that their voice(s) is/are actively influencing decision-making by public bodies.

What challenges are councils and their partners experiencing in implementing Community Planning

11. The findings of our audit work largely echo the findings of the paper 'Prioritising Community Planning – How can the CPIB support improvement?' which was considered by the CPIB at its February 2020 meeting and include:

- The culture and behaviour within CPPs often still failing to demonstrate effective collaborative leadership, with councils still being seen as the lead agency for driving and managing community planning. In a small minority of councils, the need for improved leadership was explicitly highlighted in their BVAR

- Difficulties within CPPs in establishing robust governance arrangements through which partners can and do truly hold each other to account for their performance.

- The level and quality of third sector involvement in Community Planning still varies considerably. In some areas, the local third sector interface is finding it difficult to engage with the plethora of planning and delivery groups in place to support Community Planning.

- A continued lack of alignment between national policy objectives and local improvement priorities within CPPs, with national priorities often 'trumping' local partnership priorities when difficult choices have to be made

- Challenges in integrating community planning priorities with other significant programmes of change such as health and social care integration and Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs). However, in general BVARs have been positive about the way in which City Region and Growth Deals are being used to support CPP strategic objectives, particularly in relation to addressing economic disadvantage.

- Difficulties in securing shared resources and shifting resources between organisations towards agreed priorities where internal priorities outcompete shared priorities. However, BVARs tell a more positive story about the progress that is being made in the strategic alignment of partner resources and activity around shared priorities where better progress is being made than in pooling or sharing resources. Similarly, BVARs tell a generally positive story about operational joint working in key areas such as community safety and working to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people.

- Difficulties encountered in integrating corporate and single-agency delivery and planning models with new locality/community based planning arrangements. Interestingly, BVARs indicate a number of councils have been reviewing their locality delivery and governance arrangement in light of the Community Empowerment legislation.

- Challenges in creating and supporting multi-agency innovation. Whilst BVARs report many great examples of innovative projects there is much less evidence of lessons being learnt and efforts made to deliver the kind of system-wide change anticipated by the Statement of Ambition for Community Planning.

- Challenges in implementing CPPs' commitment to Community Engagement because of factors such as:

  o Lack of capacity within communities

  o Resource constraints within the council and its partners

  o The range and complexity of communities CPPs are seeking to reach

  o Ongoing differences of views about the balance that needs to be struck between representative and participative democracy

  o Difficulties in demonstrating the impact of CE activity

- Patchy progress being made by CP partners in translating strategic improvement commitments into practical programmes of change with agreed actions, allocated resources and clear measures of success.

12. Collaborative leadership clearly lies at the heart of the success or otherwise of community planning, as the CPIB has already clearly identified. The collective response to Covid-19 across the public sector which

Audit Scotland is monitoring closely appears to be an excellent example of public bodies quickly and dynamically galvanising around a complex shared agenda. There must be an important opportunity to be grasped here of maintaining and building on this momentum as we move from response and management of Covid-19 to shift into the next phase of social and economic recovery and renewal.

13. This seems particularly relevant to the work of the CPIB given the alignment between both the community planning and community empowerment agenda and the emphasis in the Scottish Government's approach to adjusting to a new normal of living with the virus on:

- rebuilding Scotland's economy, overcoming inequality and advancing human wellbeing.

- working with Scotland's communities to build cohesion and mutual support.