



*The 'go to' organisation for
Local Government
improvement in Scotland*

Built Environment and Construction Workshop

31st July 2023

Key Points

Outcomes

General feedback – these themes emerged in relation to several outcomes:

- One-size doesn't fit all: Ensuring that outcomes consider differences between urban and rural areas and whether outcomes are achievable e.g. workforce considerations will depend on local labour markets, differential costs of refitting buildings, ability of smaller businesses esp. in remote areas to engage with existing procurement methods.
- Investment and funding need to be put in place long-term.
- Delivery should be a focus – ensure monitoring and evaluation in place.
- Strong link with community wealth building.

Jobs and Skills – The focus was primarily on developing new skills with the public sector taking a lead in this area. Ensuring this was inclusive and equal (accounting for rurality and deprivation) and appealed to younger people especially through apprenticeships.

Communities and Place – There was a positive response to these outcomes, and participants were keen to explore opportunities for retrofitting and upgrading, and for selling these benefits to communities. Respondents were also keen to ensure that communities are supported to be able to engage effectively in terms of skills and capacity. Noted that positive engagement experiences create positive engagement loop for further engagement.

Environment, Biodiversity, and Adaptation – Circularity was an important consideration ensuring that reuse of buildings and materials is prioritised, while recognising this may present challenges. Language could be strengthened here – not “contributing to”, but “leading to” or “causing” biodiversity.

People and equity – recognition of unique rural challenges. Potential strategic investment in places most likely to face fuel poverty.

Actions

Funding - Sufficient funding to ensure necessary resource to support delivery of outcomes. Examples include; funding for work-based learning linked to “green jobs”, funding to community orgs to assist homeowners and private landlords to transition.

Engagement between local authorities, community councils and community groups - Continuous cycle of engagement needed to ensure there is involvement in decisions, and feedback and justification on progress. This can highlight impact and encourage further engagement. More deliberate, democratic processes needed. Encourage and respect participation from Community Led Climate Action Hubs.

Engagement within and across sectors - Collaboration and engagement between business/construction sector and education to forecast skills needed, encourage take up of relevant courses, develop the workforce and join up available job opportunities.

Joining up initiatives - Need to ensure different initiatives link together, e.g. Community Planning Locality Plans, Place Plans, shaping places for wellbeing etc. Themes of wellbeing economy and community wealth building need to be incorporated throughout. For example;

- Incorporate adaptation, biodiversity, greenspace within buildings standards. Ensuring The Place Principle is incorporated in construction projects.
- Local land use plans should take account of all the competing desires, including climate adaptation. Current approach has multiple land use plans for housing, education, agriculture, irrespective of the use most likely to deliver to national outcomes - less ownership driven, more co-benefits.

Common core messaging - Centralised campaigns with core messaging in plain terms which cuts across sectors, highlights the co-benefits and can be adapted to suit local needs. Communities need to understand their abilities to create community wealth and just transition.

Specific Actions for the Built Environment and Construction Sector

- Develop a new standard for Scottish timber to encourage its increased use in construction.
- A national standard for climate adaptation would facilitate construction sector quantification and then lead to improvements in supply chain.
- Events with Procurement and Property networks to inform on sustainable procurement policies and how these can be implemented.
- Bring forward Passivhaus Standard for all new buildings and EnerPHit for refurbishments as a response to the Climate and Ecological emergency.
- Absent landowners responsible for VDL could perhaps have their land used for local benefits, e.g. energy generation, or if floods planted as a flood zone instead of retained as housing - assign powers and set requirements in national policy, not should or encourage.
- Provide requirements in community benefits clauses for organisations to demonstrate additionality.