
**Argyll and Bute Community Planning
Partnership**

**Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning
Group, 13th May 2010**



**“Forward Together” - Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning Group
Consultation Event Saturday 6th March 2010.**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1** The Argyll and Bute Community Plan 2009 – 2013, includes the ambition to “increase community involvement in community planning processes – locally and on key topics.” Local Area Community Planning Groups have been established to bring Community Planning closer to local communities and encourage effective links between strategic policy and the planning of frontline services. Local Area Community Planning Groups are committed to running two consultation events per year.
- 1.2** This report outlines the first Bute and Cowal Local Area Community Planning Group community consultation event (Forward Together,) held in Dunoon Grammar School on Saturday 6th March 2010.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** That the Local Community Planning Group note the feedback and success of the Bute and Cowal conference, and consider this format in relation to future events.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** Representatives from Argyll Volunteer Action, Bute Step Up Project, Help Project and Cowal Youth Information Project were involved in a short life working group, led by Community Learning and Regeneration, convened to plan and prepare for the conference. It was agreed that the aims of the conference would be:-
- To encourage community engagement and extend the involvement of local communities in the Local Area Community Planning Group.
 - To consult with and obtain the views of community representatives on the proposed Local Area Community Planning Group priorities. Feedback from the event will be used to influence the development of the Local Area Community Planning Group plan.

- 3.2** The focus of the consultation day was the four priority themes identified by the Bute and Cowal Area Planning Group – **Town Centre Development, Transport, Community Safety and Health and Well Being**. The conference was carefully structured to provide an opportunity for local community representative and community groups to have their say on the issues. Each participant took part on a workshop on each of the 4 themes – 32 workshops were held on the day.
- 3.3** 103 people attended the conference with approximately 70% of participants representing community and voluntary organisations or individual community reps. Twenty nine different voluntary organisations were represented including five community councils. Pupils from Dunoon Grammar school and Rothesay Academy also participated.
- 3.4** The morning session was chaired by Steven Waddell a fifth year pupil at Dunoon Grammar School. The first of two speakers was Stewart Shaw (head teacher Dunoon Grammar School,) who welcomed everyone to the school and talked briefly about “DGS@theheart” an initiative the school is developing to increase its profile and involvement in the community.
- 3.5** Andrew Campbell (SNH) gave the keynote speech which covered the background to Community Planning in Argyll and Bute, the role of the Local Area Community Planning Groups, examples of community planning in action and the need to be realistic given the challenges and constraints partners face. All the speakers successfully pitched their inputs at the right level, which helped get the conference off to a good start.
- 3.6** Having only two, fairly brief, speakers was deliberate as the working group felt strongly that the day should be participative with attendees involved in discussion and debate rather than listening passively to speakers. It was also a conscious decision not to have an Argyll and Bute Council representative as keynote speaker as it was important to illustrate that this was a Community Planning exercise and not an Argyll and Bute Council conference.
- 3.7** Each participant took part in four workshops examining the four priority themes from the Area Plan. Each workshop had a facilitator and a topic “expert” to inform discussion and assist the facilitator. Participants were asked to highlight and prioritise issues/proposals/thoughts under the four priority themes. The feedback from the workshops was then used as the basis for an electronic voting exercise held with the whole group in the afternoon.

3.8 Summary of the electronic voting exercise results:-

Priorities for Town Centre Development.

Lack of town centre facilities	34%
Fabric of town centre	20%
Local markets and produce	15%

Priorities for Transport

Integrated Transport Routes	26%
Condition of roads	23%
Ferry Transport	21%

Priorities for Community Safety

Anti-social Behaviour	30%
Road Safety	18%
Substance Misuse	17%

Priorities for Health and Well Being

Older People Services	23%
Ambulance Service	22%
Children and Young People	22%

Each of these headings can be further divided into geographical areas for closer analysis and comparisons. There is also a substantial amount of detailed workshop information which is currently being collated and analysed.

3.9 The participant's evaluation was very positive with 96% being either very satisfied or quite satisfied with the day.

3.10 Funding to support the conference was accessed through Working and Learning Together (WALT) and was key to tackling barriers to participation such as transport, childcare etc.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The conference represents a positive first step in developing an ongoing dialogue with local community representatives and organisations. The model developed for the conference in Bute and Cowal proved to be effective in engaging and involving a significant number of community representatives and organisations.

4.2 The information and feedback from the conference will be taken to the next meeting of the Bute and Cowal Area Planning Group and will be used to influence the development of the Area Community Plan and local service delivery.

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