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Submitted to Community Planning - call for views
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3 What is your name?

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5 Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Organisation

Organisation details

6 Name of organisation

Name of organisation:
Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership

7 Information about your organisation

Please add information about your organisation in the box below:

Community Planning Partnership Management Committee for Argyll and Bute. This reply has been prepared by the Communities and Partnership Manager, employed by the Council, who's remit is to manage the Community Planning Partnership for Argyll & Bute Council area.

Consultation (page 1 of 3)

8 What action has been taken at a local level to improve community participation and collaboration between partners since the requirements of the 2015 Act came into force? Can you provide examples of success?

Please provide your views:

Actions to improve community participation:

1. Improving Community Participation in the formal structures/ governance of the Community Planning Partnership

- Encouragement of community organisations to attend and contribute to the four area community planning groups (local community planning meetings). This is supported by Community Development Officers and has resulted in improved community attendance and participation in local community planning and collaboration on local community planning matters with partners who also attend and contribute to those local forums.

- Support and encouragement to enable members of the community to chair the local area community planning groups. This has resulted in the uptake of the chair position of area community planning groups by community members including young people. This has provided opportunity for improving community empowerment.

- chairs of the area community planning groups sit on the Management Board (Community Planning overall governance board). This has improved community participation from the local community planning groups within strategic discussions and collaboration with partners on improving outcomes. Successes from this include influencing decisions on trialing digital hubs in remote rural locations and establishing a climate change working group, webpage and resources to fund joint work on climate change.

2. Improving community participation in shaping work of Community Planning

- Alongside improvements to community participation and collaboration with partners within the formal governance of Community Planning we have also improved informal community participation to shape work of the partnership for example:

- Undertaken regular engagement with communities across Argyll & Bute using the Place Standard tool. Doing this on a bi-annual basis we have improved the participation of communities in our engagement and this has successfully enabled us to understand community needs and shape work on outcomes.

Further, we have engaged regularly with community organisations on Covid-19 impacts and from this we have collaborated on a series of projects to mitigate impacts.

3. Improving collaboration between partners

- design of the Community Planning Management Board: The Management Board functions in a purposeful way to encourage engagement and collaboration of its community members and partners. The chair encourages questions, debate and scrutiny at meetings.

- Development Days for the Management Board are held annually and these serve to help build relationships and trust to enable collaborative working between partners. They offer time to reflect on key issues and to 'team build' as a partnership.

- Given the points above, the success is in the work of the Management Board and its members (community members and partners) to collaborate on improving outcomes and they are achieving this through the following successful examples:

----- a working group on climate change in which resources have been collated to enable the production of a webpage and resource to produce a climate change strategy for the partnership.

----- successful influencing of funds to be given to the partnership to promote awareness of digital opportunities and improve skills in community.

----- successful delivery of poverty awareness training across the community planning partnership.

----- collaboration on the design of engagement has improved participation of young people.

----- increased number of young firefighters programmes across the area due to the collaboration of partners following a presentation on an initial pilot success.

----- collaborative approach to community wealth building with third sector, HIE and Council following initial collaborative discussions at Community Planning Management Committee to shape this.

-----successful project to trial a triage project for mental health crisis support in remote communities.

----- successful water safety partnership project; then rolled out nationally

----- road safety collaborative to help prevent road fatalities

----- successful collaborative approach to preventing digital fraud and scams through the partnership funding and collaborating on a joint project to issue call blockers to vulnerable households and promote digital safety. This project had benefits of over £1million estimated preventative costs from an investment of approx £30,000.

The above is an example of some of the successes. Our annual reports provide more detail, and further examples, since 2015.

9 What progress has your CPP made in tackling inequalities since the 2015 Act? How are you responding to the current cost-of-living crisis?

Please provide your views:

1. We have made progress in improving the equality of opportunity to participate in community planning by:

- encouraging young people to attend community planning forums and meetings by working with Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament and with local youth workers. This has resulted in MSYPs being active members of the Community Planning Management Board and positive feedback of feeling heard and empowered.

- supporting understanding of non-partners who sit on Community Planning Management Board to understand the agenda items and therefore have better equality of opportunity to participate in meetings. We do this by holding pre meetings to go through the agenda. This improvement is a direct result of feedback from young people and community members to the CPP.

2. We are addressing inequalities within improvement of outcomes through:

- engagement with 'less heard', to understand the impacts of covid-19 by undertaking focus groups facilitated by community development trained officers the outcomes of which partners deliver to meet needs identified.

- 'Building Back Better' programme of partnership work has been informed by engagement with less heard voices and with community organisations and partners representing those most in need in communities.

- Work of the Community Planning Partnership to address digital inequalities includes: project on understanding access to digital training and support across the area; and development of digital hub pilot projects on islands to address digital inequality in remote rural locations.

- Work of Community Planning Partnership to address financial inequalities and cost of living crisis includes: poverty awareness training across the CPP, promotion of cost of living support which includes innovative partnership between Council, Community Food Forum, Bute Advice Centre and ALIenergy. The Fund provides a one-off cash payment to families on low incomes to help with food and fuel. Claimants are offered a second cash payment if they have engaged with support agencies, the Bute Advice Centre and ALIenergy, in financial management. The project achieved national acclaim in October 2021 for Excellence in Innovation from the Institute of Revenue Rating and Valuation. Applicants to the project, through different routes, have received a total of £2 million they could otherwise have missed out on.

- Work of the Community Planning Partnership to address financial inequalities and the current cost-of-living crisis includes meeting with OFCOM and promoting through partners social tariffs for digital access/ broadband.

- Work of Community Planning Partnership to address health inequalities includes a pilot project in Dunoon (Shaping Places for Wellbeing) with partners, community groups, the Improvement Service and Public Health Scotland. This collaborative partnership group is looking at place based approach to improving health inequalities.

10 To what extent has your CPP adopted a preventative approach in seeking to tackle inequalities? Can you provide examples of success?

Please provide your views:

The Community Planning Partnership is participating in a preventative approach to tackling inequalities through its participation in 'Shaping Places for Wellbeing: Dunoon'. This is a pilot project to look at the systems of collaborative working needed to prevent and reduce health inequalities. This project is a partnership with the Improvement Service, Public Health Scotland and community planning partners.

In addressing covid-19 and cost of living impacts the Community Planning Partnership identified risks of increasing inequality particularly around financial income and digital inclusion. The partnership took a preventative approach to addressing these by developing innovative projects to increase income in a sustainable way for households through incentivising access to quality advice on financial management and energy. Applicants to the project have received a total of £2 million they could otherwise have missed out on. The partnership also implemented a successful project to prevent digital scamming and fraud, and as a result prevent financial harm and mental health impacts. Analysis of the project is that it achieved over £1m in preventative spend.

11 How have Local Outcomes Improvement Plans and locality plans reduced inequalities? Can you provide examples?

Please provide your views:

The priorities within the plans, and the actions to improve these, are based on data, partner knowledge and community engagement. This approach ensures that the actions meet the needs arising and address the pertinent areas of inequality - either strategically or locally - depending on whether it is the LOIP or locality plan.

The LOIP is reviewed annually in an annual report and monitored quarterly in meetings. This approach enables partners to monitor and support delivery of the actions to reduce inequalities.

The locality plans are monitored and supported at the area community planning groups by membership of these groups which is partners and community organisations. This local accountability helps to ensure that the actions taking place are addressing local inequalities specific to that locality.

When the community planning partnership undertakes engagement to inform its plans the protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, are monitored and targeted approaches are taken to ensure there is a breadth of community voice participating/ having the opportunity to participate.

The local outcomes improvement plan and the locality plans have reduced inequalities through the multiple projects that have been undertaken by the project over the years since 2015. Many of these projects have been referenced in our response to the previous questions and include addressing equality of opportunity to participate in community planning, addressing inequality of access to financial income and to digital. The inequality of access to services in remote rural communities has also been a success of the partnership through for example its partnership work to trial a mental health triage project for those in mental health crisis in remote locations, and the partnership work to pilot digital hubs in islands.

Consultation continued (page 2 of 3)

12 What are the challenges faced by CPPs to the effective planning and delivery of their outcomes? How has the Act changed how community planning partners deliver their services?

Please provide your views:

One of the main challenges to effective planning is the lack of data at an appropriate scale and to a level of detail so as to understand how the data relates to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act. Having quality data to inform how life is being experienced in a place, based on protected characteristics, would enable an approach to addressing inequalities to be data led and informed. This requires nationally led data sets to be of a suitable quality.

Another challenge faced by CPPs to effectively plan is the use of the term 'community planning' in multiple national policies that continue to be produced. The use of community planning within policy often places a statutory requirement for community planning to have a role within that policy area. This adds to the remit of the Community Planning Partnership outwith the statutory requirements as set out in Part 2 of the Act. This can be confusing for effective governance, and impact planning and delivery as it places extra work alongside the work of the partnership on delivering the Outcome Improvement Plan and locality plans. It can also undermine the requirement for plans to be based on community and local needs when individual subject matter policies define what priorities should be for community planning.

The Act has changed the breadth of partners involved in community planning and took the emphasis away from community planning being the sole responsibility of local government to it being the responsibility of the partners set out in Schedule 1 of Part 2 of the Act. Many partners have embraced this statutory duty, committed to meetings, to shaping and delivering actions and to aligning their plans with the strategic priorities of the Local Outcome Improvements Plan. Partners have also embraced engaging and collaborating in local community planning and locality plans (known in Argyll & Bute as locality plans). Statutory partners have also led community planning through roles as chair of Management Board, leading improvement plans and leading collaborative working groups to improve outcomes.

13 What role did your CPP have in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic? What has the legacy of the pandemic been to approaches to community planning?

Please provide your views:

The Community Planning Partnership continued to meet during the response to the pandemic to share information on the various partnership actions taking place and consider any resource sharing requirements to meet priorities.

The main role the Community Planning Partnership had was as the overall strategic forum for understanding and responding to the needs arising from communities as a result of covid-19 and the corresponding cost of living crisis.

The CPP supported the workstreams of Building Back Better (which included digital inclusion, financial inclusion, mental health, young people, volunteering and community wellbeing) to grow and to be fully resourced so as to be successful in meeting the needs.

It is not what the legacy of the pandemic has been to community planning but rather what the legacy of good community planning has been to the response to the pandemic. To clarify this, the response to the pandemic in Argyll and Bute CPP was an excellent partnership response due to the relationships that had been built through a conscious effort to build a collaborative, dynamic and 'team' of Community Planning Partnership Management Committee members, and the work of building good relationships with communities through community development approaches.

What the pandemic, and ongoing programme of actions to address need, shows is that there needs to be flexibility within 10 year plans focused on long-term outcomes to include capacity for needs arising and to adjust to these. What remains from the pandemic in our Community Planning Partnership is an openness for 'cross-cutting issues' of importance to our partnership working and improving lives in communities to be included in the work planning and for priorities to adjust accordingly where needed.

14 Does the existing guidance for Community Planning Partnerships need to be updated?

Please provide your views:

Not to our knowledge at this point in time although consideration may want to be given to an increase in the partners referenced as statutory within Schedule 1.

15 How does community planning align with other strategies and planning requirements?

Please provide your views:

In Argyll and Bute the Outcome Improvement Plan is viewed as the overarching plan for the area and others strategies and plans are to take recognition of the priorities identified in the LOIP.

There is ongoing liaison with organisations and community groups in the area producing plans and strategies to discuss any cross-over or to share data where this is of relevance.

The area-wide engagement undertaken by community planning has its results shared and published so that they are available to be of use to community groups preparing locality plans, local place plans or other action plans, and also for partners to use in their strategic planning. This is an example of best value and best use of resources.

Consultation continued (page 3 of 3)

16 Do partners in your CPP contribute resources to enable the delivery of outcomes?

Please provide your views:

Yes. This has been both in forms of staff resources and financial resources.

17 Has inclusion as a planning partner changed the way your organisation works, spends its budget and makes decisions?

Please provide your views:

Yes, the Community Planning Management Board is the forum where discussion takes place on strategic matters of importance to the area that needs partnership working or working together to resolve in relation to the LOIP and any cross cutting themes arising as important to the partnership. This means that many matters of importance are shared and many asks to support collaborative work are put forward. The way in which the Board works together - through honesty, trust, willingness to work 'as a team' and willingness to lead and collaborate mean that resourcing actions is a constant subject matter at the CPP Management Board. This has resulted in collaborative financial spend and resources working together on important projects for the area.

18 Does the statutory membership of Community Planning Partnerships need revisiting?

Please provide your views:

It may be beneficial to do this.