



**“Forward Together 2” - Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning Group
Consultation Event Saturday 23rd October 2010.**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1** The first series of community consultations run by Local Community Planning Groups was held in the spring and early summer of 2009, and delivered a successful model for effective community engagement for the Partnership to build on.
- 1.2** This report outlines the second Bute and Cowal Local Area Community Planning Group community consultation event (Forward Together 2,) held in Rothesay Joint Campus on Saturday 23rd October 2010.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** That the Management Committee note the feedback and outcomes of the Bute and Cowal conference, note that this model is being replicated across Argyll and Bute over a four week period, and consider this format in relation to future events in developing community engagement and consultation for the Community Planning Partnership. The Management Committee is further requested to note that a full report on the outcomes of all of the planned seminars will be provided to the December Management Committee, and that detailed information in regard to budget and service delivery priorities identified through the seminars will be provided at that time.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** A short life working group came together to plan and organise “Forward Together 2”, and agreed that the aims of the conference would be:-
- To encourage continued community engagement and extend the involvement of local communities in the Local Area Community Planning Group.
 - To communicate and consult on the public sector budget situation, including Argyll and Bute Council’s budget
 - To consult with and obtain the views of community representatives on the proposed Local Area Community Planning Group priorities as a basis for the development of the Local Area Community Plan. This is an ongoing commitment of the CPP to our communities.

- 3.2** The focus of the consultation day was two workshops, one which looked at the public sector budget situation, and one which looked at the Local Community Plan. Attendees were split into 4 groups, with each group carrying out the same two workshops.
- 3.3** 41 people attended the conference, with approximately 70% of participants representing community and voluntary organisations or individual community reps.
- 3.4** Inspector Gordon Anderson of Strathclyde Police gave the welcome and introduction to the day, outlining briefly 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.
- 3.5** Jane Fowler, Head of Improvement and Strategic HR with Argyll and Bute Council gave a detailed presentation on the public sector budget situation, specifically in relation to the Argyll and Bute Council budget. Input was also given by Elaine Garmen on the budget challenges facing NHS Highland. Both speakers outlined the challenges being faced, and emphasised that the status quo is not an option. The decision to have input from more than one public sector organisation was deliberate, and was made to emphasise that the budget situation is not one faced by an individual organisation, but is an issue for all organisations and one in which communities have a key role to play in identifying priorities and addressing some of the issues.
- 3.6** Having been made aware of the challenges being faced, participants then took part in 2 workshops. The first asked them to consider the budget information which had been shared, and to then identify services which they felt were high priority and which must have resources focused on them in the future, to identify areas where services should be continued but with limited financial input, areas where costs could be driven down subject to minimum standards being achieved, and things which the public sector could stop doing altogether, ie things we need to do more of, things we need to keep doing to similar levels, things we can reduce, and things we can stop. Outputs from the workshop were collected on flipcharts.
- 3.7** The second workshop then asked participants to carry out the same exercise as workshop 1, but in regard to the priorities and outcomes contained within the Bute and Cowal Local Community Plan, ie to identify things in the Plan, or priorities for the area which should be in the plan, which must be continued/expanded, things which must be maintained, things which should be reduced, and things which should be stopped altogether. Again, output from the workshop was collected on flipcharts.
- 3.8** Feedback from the workshops was then used as the basis for an electronic voting exercise held with the whole group in the afternoon.
- 3.9** Six local community groups were allocated 5 minute slots immediately before and after lunch to highlight how they are meeting the outcomes of the Area Community Plan, and to showcase the local good practise which exists within Community Groups.

3.10 Summary of the electronic voting exercise results:-

Budget Priorities We Need to Do More Of

Economic and business development
Commercial approach to service delivery

Budget Priorities We Need to Maintain at Current Levels

Education Standards
Ferry Services

Budget Priorities We Could Do at Reduced Level.

Reduce costs of overheads
Reduce red tape
Reduce admin costs by outsourcing- feedback on each of these options was about changing the way things are done, rather than actually reducing anything

Budget Priorities We Could Stop Doing Altogether.

Consider school closures (with the strong caveat that consultation procedures need to be very carefully followed)

LACPG Priorities We Need to Do More Of

Initiatives to attract/retain working age population
Effective partnership working

LACPG Priorities We Need to Maintain at Current Levels

Health and well being projects
Town Centre Developments- CHORD

LACPG Priorities We Could Do at Reduced Level

Reduce resources targeting speeding drivers

LACPG Priorities We Could Stop Doing Altogether

Neighbourhood Watch
Health Living Initiative

In regard to specific issues/questions which had been raised through the workshops, voting on these was as follows.

Would You Pay More For Library Services?

Yes	58%
No	42%

Would You Pay More For Cemetery Services

Yes 51%

No 49%

Should the Third Sector or a Trust Deliver Leisure Services?

Yes 84%

No 16%

Should all Services be Cut by the Same Percentage?

Yes 18%

No 82%

It should be noted that this report is a preliminary summary of identified priorities, and there is a substantial amount of detailed workshop information which is currently being collated and analysed. Each of the headings above can be further divided into geographical areas for closer analysis and comparisons.

- 3.11** The participant's evaluation was very positive with 85% being either very satisfied or quite satisfied with the day.
- 3.12** 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 information and feedback from all of the planned conferences will be submitted to the CPP Management Committee in December to help inform the budget setting process of partner organisations, and will be taken to the next meeting of the Bute and Cowal Area Planning Group to influence the development of the Area Community Plan and local service delivery.

For more information contact: Shirley MacLeod, Area Manager Customer Services
(Bute and Cowal)

Telephone: 01369 707130