

Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships:

Community Learning and Development

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: STRATEGIC GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIPS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This guidance comes against the backdrop of the most ambitious set of reforms to post-16 learning ever undertaken in Scotland. The Government is pursuing those changes with three clear objectives in mind: to align the system more purposefully with our ambitions for jobs and growth; to improve people's life chances; and to ensure the sustainability of our system in a time of inescapable pressures on public spending.

Community learning and development (CLD) is an integral part of this story. It already plays a central part in ensuring individuals, families and communities across Scotland reach their potential through lifelong learning, mutual self-help and community organisation - and that the available support and opportunities are community-led, built around people's aspirations.

This strategic guidance clarifies our expectations of Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), within the broad framework of public service reform, and in line with the Review of Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs). We expect local authorities to provide clear leadership and direction, and to drive the action needed to ensure we maximise the contribution of CLD partners in the reform of public services.

It is important to be clear about the purpose of CLD. We see it as empowering people, individually and collectively, **to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities, through learning**. This guidance outlines the action necessary to maximise CLD's impact, resulting in better alignment of services and optimal use of resources.

The Government's National Performance Framework sets out the strategic objectives for all public services, including those delivering CLD. CLD's specific focus should be:

- 1. improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship;**
- 2. stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.**

The implementation of this guidance must be led by CPPs, with support from Government bodies such as Education Scotland and with national and local Third Sector partners. It should form an integral part of public service reform, ensuring that Community Planning provides the vehicle to deliver better outcomes in partnership with communities.

Using an evidence based approach; reducing outcome gaps between areas; jointly prioritising outcomes; and strengthening community engagement and participation are the principles which will shape work on community planning and SOAs. This will, in turn, improve partnership working, including CLD partners, in delivering SOAs.

Evidence from a range of sources, and in particular from the inspection of learning communities, demonstrates the powerful impact of CLD on the lives of learners and communities. To secure yet further improvement, we need now to strengthen the coordination between the full range of providers, and communities themselves.

Our communities face major challenges from the wider economic outlook, falling public expenditure and our changing demographics. But Scotland cannot afford the potential consequences of high levels of youth unemployment, the decline of vulnerable communities and the challenges faced by an increasingly elderly population. This is why it is essential we build resilient communities and release the talents of people (particularly those of our young people) across Scotland. That is what this guidance aims to do.

1. CONTEXT

1.1 In this guidance, the Scottish Government is renewing its commitment to Community Learning and Development (CLD). This matters because building a learning culture is central to the well-being, resilience and dynamism of our communities - and, ultimately, in achieving our purpose

To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

1.2 The Government's response to the *Commission on the Future of Public Service Delivery* sets out a vision of how Scotland's public services need to change:

*'We will empower local communities and local service providers to work together to develop practical solutions that make best use of all the resources available. The focus of public spending and action **must build on the assets and potential of the individual, the family and the community** rather than being dictated by organisational structures and boundaries. Public services must work harder **to involve people** everywhere in the redesign and reshaping of their activities.'*¹

1.3 In our 2011 proposals for reforming post-16 learning, *Putting Learners at the Centre*, we made clear our wish to work with partners in strengthening the strategic approach to CLD in Scotland. The result is this refreshed guidance for local Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), community planning partners more generally, and other national stakeholders.

1.4 CLD is an essential means of delivering Scottish Government priorities, in particular Curriculum for Excellence, GIRFEC and the Government's social policy frameworks for combating poverty, tackling health inequalities and prioritising early years. [Annex A](#) illustrates the current Government priorities of particular relevance.

1.5 We have developed this guidance through talking to a wide range of interested and expert stakeholders. It builds on recent progress and forms the starting point for a process of implementation, learning and improvement, that - crucially - focuses on outcomes for learners and communities.

¹ [Renewing Scotland's Public Services](#), Scottish Government, 2011

2. THE PURPOSE OF CLD, AND THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT

2.1 CLD should empower people, individually and collectively, **to make positive changes in their lives and their communities, through learning**. The principles that underpin practice are:

- *empowerment* - increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence matters affecting them and their communities;
- *participation* - supporting people to take part in decision-making;
- *inclusion, equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination* - recognising some people need additional support to overcome the barriers they face;
- *self-determination* - supporting the right of people to make their own choices; and
- *partnership* - ensuring resources, varied skills and capabilities are used effectively.

The purpose and principles are embodied in the competences and ethics for CLD practice as set out by the CLD Standards Council for Scotland.²

2.2 Our current guidance (*Working and Learning Together*, 2004) outlined CLD priorities as (i) achievement through learning for adults; (ii) achievement through learning for young people; and (iii) achievement through community capacity building. These priorities provided a clear focus for CLD, but we were told in our recent discussion phase, they sometimes led to artificial boundaries for practice between age groups and between work with individuals and groups.

2.3 The Government's National Performance Framework sets out the strategic objectives for all public services, including those delivering CLD (see [Annex B](#)). Within this, CLD's specific focus should be:

- **improved life chances for people of all ages, including young people in particular, through learning, personal development and active citizenship**
- **stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.**

2.4 CLD helps to develop the resilience and ambition needed to combat the effects of economic factors which cause deprivation and inequality. It ensures that barriers to achieving better life chances are identified, understood and overcome and that communities are full partners in delivering practical and policy solutions.

3. EFFECTIVE DELIVERY

3.1 This guidance sets out the principles within which CPPs should co-ordinate planning of CLD provision, setting out specific priorities. By clearly defining roles and responsibilities, it provides a basis on which community planning partners should work together to make best use of available resources.

3.2 CLD is a coherent and distinctive set of practices, defined by clearly identified competences; it is delivered in diverse settings and sectors, by practitioners with a wide variety of job titles, working with people of all ages. We must link all this together effectively if we are to achieve the impact that we seek.

² See the [CLD Standards Council for Scotland](#) website

3.3 CPPs should ensure CLD has a core role in delivering identified outcomes for communities. This will depend on maximising the contribution of the following partners:

- services in local authorities and government bodies with an identified CLD remit, and in voluntary sector organisations publicly funded for this purpose. These services should be closely aligned with education, culture, sport, leisure and library services and should use the resulting synergies to deliver agreed outcomes;
- those - often in the voluntary sector - in settings such as community health, housing, social enterprise, anti-poverty work, equalities or sustainable development;
- other public service organisations such as colleges and universities, the NHS and Skills Development Scotland;
- local communities or communities of interest, for example ethnic minorities or people with disabilities, concerned with shaping CLD services in order to deliver the outcomes that are important to them.

3.4 All these partners should aim to deliver CLD outcomes through:

- community development (building the capacity of communities to meet their own needs, engaging with and influencing decision makers);
- youth work, family learning and other early intervention work with children, young people and families;
- community-based adult learning, including adult literacies and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL);
- volunteer development;
- learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the community, for example, people with disabilities, care leavers or offenders;
- learning support and guidance in the community.

3.5 Local strategies for CLD should maximise the synergies between all these roles, across sectors; to do this, CPPs should consider if they are delivering the core activities of CLD through a sufficiently joined-up approach.

4. IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR COMMUNITIES

‘Communities have high expectations of public services and have a key role to play in helping to shape and coproduce better outcomes within their communities. If community planning partnerships are to unlock that potential, their foundations must be built on a strong understanding of their communities, and provide genuine opportunities to consult, engage and involve them. CPPs must be able to engage closely with the needs and aspirations of their communities, within the context of local and national democratic control...’³

³ Review of Community Planning and SOAs: [Statement of Ambition](#), 2012

4.1 The foundation of CLD delivery is an assessment - in partnership with learners and communities - of needs, strengths and opportunities. This clearly aligns with the Government's response to the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services, which sets out the approach to public sector reform as built on four *pillars*:

- a decisive shift towards prevention
- greater integration of public services at local level
- enhanced workforce development and effective leadership
- a sharp focus on improving performance through greater transparency, innovation and use of digital technology.

Prevention

4.2 A focus on prevention is a long standing feature of CLD practice. CLD practitioners prioritise preventative measures, work to reduce inequality and target the underlying causes of inter-generational deprivation and low aspiration.

4.3 Working with communities to realise and build on their own strengths or assets is at the core of the CLD delivery model. We want everyone involved in delivering CLD to emphasise this primary role. Activities must be designed with individuals and communities as active partners, in ways that focus on reducing the longer term need for input by public services - including CLD.

4.4 Public service planners and decision-makers will want to prevent problems from emerging and increase the opportunities for individuals, families and communities to shape their own lives. To this end they should make full use of CLD's ability to:

- build an in-depth understanding of people's needs, strengths and aspirations through sustained dialogue;
- identify issues and solutions at an early stage;
- identify barriers to participation and strategies for overcoming these;
- mobilise and support direct participation in planning and service design; and
- enable community organisations to develop their infrastructure.

Effective partnerships: services and communities

4.5 The growing diversity of CLD provision coupled with the increase in partnership working to deliver a wide variety of programmes, services and initiatives means CLD activities and approaches now have a role in many partnerships.

4.6 Partnership working is already embedded in how CLD is delivered, but, as part of our drive for reformed public services, we need it to be deepened further, widened and more closely focused on outcomes.

- First, we want providers to go further in involving learners and communities as active partners in planning and delivering CLD, and to strengthen their focus on helping communities to influence, shape and co-produce services more generally.
- Second, we want to see partnerships that plan and deliver CLD include the full range of relevant partners. This means each local authority should have a clearly defined framework for planning and delivering CLD, through partnership, as a key element of its reformed public services.

- Third, partnership working to deliver CLD outcomes should provide the basis for delivering key priorities such as:
 - securing agreements to ensure effective links between learning in the community and college-based learning;
 - joined-up working to deliver better outcomes for children and young people through Curriculum for Excellence, including family learning;
 - more clearly focused and integrated support for communities to build their own capacity;
 - engaging fully in delivering shared outcomes with national and local Third Sector organisations, including culture and sport;
 - developing stronger links with Community Justice Authorities and community safety partnerships;
 - further development of CLD's role in local employability partnership work.

Finally, we want CLD practitioners and managers to build on the role they already play in helping other public service providers to engage effectively with service users and communities. The delivery of the three Change Funds, for Older People, Offenders and Early Years, should provide opportunities to use CLD expertise, making best use of existing resources.

Workforce development and effective leadership

4.7 At national level, CLD policy and related legislation are being developed in response to changing needs. We ask that workforce development keeps pace with these and supports their implementation.

4.8 The national CLD CPD Strategy and the *i-develop framework* provide the focus for developing a learning culture across the sector. The CLD Competences provide a common framework for practice, underpinned by a code of ethics.

4.9 Education Scotland, in partnership with the CLD Standards Council, will work with others to support CLD providers to build partnerships that continue to develop the CLD workforce. We welcome the joining-up of CPD partnerships across local authority and professional boundaries, for example the joint CPD programmes in the North Alliance and Glasgow Life.

4.10 We want to see an integrated approach to all stages of professional learning. A core of highly skilled practitioners will remain essential to achieving the impact we expect from CLD, and we recognise the need to consider further the future of pre-service training in that context.

4.11 Clearly, effective leadership is crucial to CLD delivering its role and impact. Further work to develop the skills, understanding and confidence for leadership at all levels within the CLD workforce should be a key focus for CPD.

Improving performance, innovation and sharing good practice

4.12 Effective self-evaluation by groups, services and partnerships is essential to improving performance and delivering better outcomes for learners and communities. Education Scotland will provide public accountability through inspection, challenge and support to local authorities and partnerships. In addition, CPPs should ensure that CLD providers are part of the planning and reporting process supporting Single Outcome Agreements, paying particular attention to local indicators.

4.13 In this context, CLD providers have developed a range of management information systems to support performance management and improvement. The information and evidence these produce is strong in relation to individual projects – but need more development in relation to wider programmes and outcomes at partnership level.

4.14 Valuable work has been done to quantify the impact of CLD and to identify savings it can help deliver for other areas of public investment. We will work with partners to build on this and develop the best unified, flexible framework possible for self-evaluation, performance management and measurement of impact, to meet local needs and improve understanding at national level.

4.15 We will work with partners to support CLD providers in driving forward the modernisation of their own services, using self-evaluation as a tool for continuous improvement.

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPPORT

5.1 The implementation of this guidance provides the impetus for CLD to be delivered as a consistent, central element of public services in Scotland and will be based on a continuing dialogue with key stakeholders.

5.2 Throughout this guidance, we have laid out what we expect from community planning partners, with local authorities providing clear leadership and direction. We have also asked Education Scotland to develop an implementation framework, ensuring its own programmes of policy implementation, inspection, self-evaluation and practice support provide the necessary challenge in order to secure change.

5.3 This approach will achieve greater consistency in the provision and practice of CLD across Scotland, continuing to foster local flexibility in establishing priorities and delivering services, whilst improving outcomes. The implementation process should ensure that:

- the core purpose of CLD is closely aligned with developments in post-16 education reform and community empowerment policy;
- CLD services will help to deliver the new partnership with communities envisaged by the Christie Commission reforms;
- the roles of all partners are clarified both within core services and wider CLD landscape;
- local authorities will be supported to audit the need for CLD, in line with the proposed duty in forthcoming legislation.

5.4 We recognise that the current financial climate means, while there is increasing demand for CLD intervention and expertise, there is limited current scope for additional investment. We hope that Community Planning partners approach this challenge by focusing on prevention and seeking to innovate in their use of existing resources, including Change and Regeneration funding.

5.5 Specifically, we see the following responsibilities as being necessary.

We expect CPPs to:
Ensure that systematic assessments of community needs and strengths provide the basis for SOAs and service strategies and plans.
Ensure this assessment is based on engagement and continued dialogue with communities, utilising CLD expertise, as well as on analysis of other data.
Ensure SOAs have a clear focus on prevention and community empowerment as the foundation of reformed public services and utilise CLD provision and methods for these purposes.
Review current partnership arrangements for planning, monitoring and evaluating CLD and ensure that they are fit for the purposes set out in this Guidance.

Education Scotland will:
Raise awareness of the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities outlined above.
Ensure its own CLD activities have a clear focus on implementing this Strategic Guidance and build and maintain a national overview of the impact of CLD. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy implementation; • practice development; • support and challenge to local authorities and their partners; • support for self-evaluation; and • evaluation and scrutiny including inspection.
Promote the national CPD strategy and the <i>i-develop</i> framework.
Promote high standards of practice underpinning CLD.
Contribute to delivering the implementation framework and subsequent action plans.
Highlight to Scottish Government any issues arising relating to workforce development.

Education Scotland, working with key national partners, will:
Establish an implementation framework, ensuring that issues identified in this Guidance are addressed and that existing and proposed strategic developments in the broad CLD field are integrated with this implementation process e.g. ALIS 2020
Ensure learning from the implementation process is shared by local and national partners, and informs its continuing development.
Keep under review the progress in implementing this Guidance and report to Scottish Government annually or with specific issues.
Support the CLD Standards Council to become an independent registration body for practitioners.

We expect the CLD Standards Council for Scotland to:
Establish a registration system for practitioners delivering and active in CLD practice.
Deliver a professional approvals structure for qualifications, courses and development opportunities for everyone involved in CLD.
Develop and establish a model of supported induction.
Convene a CLD employer group for Scotland and explore options around workforce, including links with UK wide work on National Occupational Standards.

The Scottish Government will:
Explore legislative powers for CLD and communicate progress with partners.
We will pursue improving the involvement of colleges in community planning as part of implementation of the recent SG/COSLA review.
Examine the need to consider further the future of pre-service training.
Continue to involve CLD stakeholders in its post-16 Education Reform Programme.
Continue to promote the benefits of CLD methods across a wide range of policy areas.
Support Third Sector national organisations through the distribution of core funding.
Fund the SCQF Partnership to allow it to support and credit rate CLD courses.
Continue with plans to refresh the current youth work strategy, <i>Moving Forward</i> , in partnership with national youth work organisations.
Work with the Improvement Service and Education Scotland to develop improved indicators for the impact of CLD work as part of the on-going Local Outcome Indicator Project which supports CPPs in Scotland.
Commission Education Scotland to provide an evaluative report on the impact of the guidance, based on inspection evidence and any other thematic evaluative activity.

Annex A: The Policy Context For CLD in Scotland



Note: An interactive version of this diagram, including weblinks, will become available on the [Education Scotland](https://www.education.scot.nhs.uk/) website.

Annex B: The Outcomes of CLD in Scotland





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