

- Consultation in context: Fife Council's policy
- The need to evaluate
- Employing consultants
- Using existing data sources
- Useful contacts and further reading
- Event reminder checklist

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### Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS)

'Understanding The Policy Maze: A Guide to Social and Health Policy in Scotland'

A comprehensive, systematic explanation and overview of the key policies which impact on the implementation of health and social services in Scotland. The publication is free to community and voluntary groups, and £7.50 per copy for statutory organisations. Copies are available from HEBS, tel: 0131 536 5500 or from local Health Promotion Departments.

### Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations: [www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)

SCVO supports a network of 55 Councils of Voluntary Organisations in Scotland, and set up to represent and support the voluntary sector at a local level, to help voluntary groups in coming together to achieve common goals, and to enable local people to make an impact on the decision-making processes which affect their community. It is also the umbrella organisation for: **Voluntary Health Scotland** [www.vhscotland.org.uk](http://www.vhscotland.org.uk) which seeks to maximise the impact of the voluntary sector in the development of health policy in Scotland and to promote best practice in the provision of health services; and **Partnership Representatives Network** [www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk) a network for community and voluntary sector representatives involved with Social Inclusion Partnerships.

### Volunteer Development Scotland [www.vds.org.uk](http://www.vds.org.uk)

Promotes volunteering in Scotland and promotes the aims of the Active Communities Initiative. It is also the umbrella organisation for Volunteering in Health, which aims to raise the profile of volunteering in health services.

### Audit Commission: [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk)

'Listen Up: effective community consultation'.

Guidance on what, when and how to consult, including managing expectations, overcoming barriers, evaluation and effectiveness.

### Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions: [www.detr.gov.uk](http://www.detr.gov.uk)

'Community Empowerment Fund Preliminary Guidance'.

This guidance for England is concerned with how the Community Empowerment Fund should be used at an early stage to ensure that communities and voluntary sector organisations can effectively participate in local strategic partnerships as they are established. Although for England, guidance covers issues relevant to Scotland.

#### Contact CHEX

If your CHI is interested in sharing its experiences of community planning and/or would like further information on the CHEX Inquiry, contact Janet Muir Tel: 0141 248 1990, email: [Janet@scdc.org.uk](mailto:Janet@scdc.org.uk).

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## Briefing on Community Planning for Community Health Initiatives

Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) are being developed across the country and taking root as the principal arena of decision making for service providers in health, social, educational, economic and environmental services. Partnerships are being developed to take account of local characteristics, inter-agency agendas, and the priorities of community and voluntary organisations. In ensuring that community priorities are reflected within the Plans, community engagement is a core element in shaping and implementing decisions. Engagement suggests a relationship, whereby decision-makers fully understand community dynamics and are prepared to adapt and develop structures and processes that are accessible and relevant to the wider community; it suggests community involvement and participation with greater opportunities for community members to influence local decision-making structures. To ensure that community members are supported in the engagement process, public sector agencies and community and voluntary organisations must be equipped with relevant information and guidance. This Briefing aims to assist Community Health Initiatives (CHIs) - community health projects, healthy living centres, and community food projects - in providing support to enhance community engagement. It contains information on the background and role of community planning, insights into local experiences, practical steps on carrying out effective community engagement and helpful resources.

### Community Planning - The Roots

The purpose of Community Planning is to make a difference by:

- Committing the Partners to develop and deliver an agreed strategic vision for their community; and
- Addressing key cross-cutting issues, which affect the social, economic, environmental, health and other aspects of community well-being.



When community planning was first introduced in 1998, the then Scottish Office and COSLA established a working group to address the local implementation of strategies and plans affecting Local Authority areas. At that time, some areas had as many as fifty different local strategies and plans, with the majority being developed separately by council departments and public sector agencies.

There was an obvious need to bring together local authorities, health boards, other local agencies and community and voluntary organisations to develop and implement a common goal on health, social, economic, and environmental policies.

Community planning would provide the framework to streamline, integrate and generally improve the delivery of services and approaches to crosscutting issues such as health, area regeneration, and sustainable development. The key concepts were a strategic vision for the whole area, community consultation and involvement, partnership working and community leadership. Over the last four years, key stages have informed the transferring of community planning into practice: the Community Planning 'Pathfinders' in 1998; the Scottish Executive Consultation Paper 'A Power of Community Initiative, Community Planning, Political Restrictions on Council Employees' in 2000; the setting up of the Community Planning Task Force in 2001; introduction of Local Government Bill in April 2002 and the impending Royal Assent of the Bill in Spring this year.

## Community Health Initiatives - Getting Involved

An Inquiry undertaken by CHEX (during Autumn 2002) into the experiences of CHIs in community planning, discovered that few were actively involved in the process, although many wanted to be and sought more information on opportunities to get involved.

From the thirty Initiatives contacted, only two felt they were influential and in a strong position to support local people in participating in consultation and decision-making. While the majority were aware of the process going on in their area, they did not feel part of it and viewed it more as a bureaucratic mechanism for bringing local agencies together rather than a planning process intended to involve community and voluntary organisations. Although several of the Initiatives were involved in Joint Health Improvement Plans and/or Community Learning Plans, they did not automatically associate these with community planning.

The Initiatives that were positive about their engagement, cited early involvement in the planning stages and effective development support from the public sector agencies as key elements in their ability to influence the process. The ECHO Community Health Project in Dumfries highlighted the commitment that was given to pursuing health priorities identified by local people as a major factor.

CHEX discussed the Inquiry Findings with CHIs at a follow-up meeting, and there was an obvious need for more recognition of the benefits of CHIs' involvement and what this could contribute to the community planning process. Valuable information was provided about the resources and contacts available to help with engagement, in particular the role of local authority officers responsible for developing community planning.

These officers are located in every local authority, and they can provide information on the 'vision', plans, objectives, activities, decision-making structures, and expected impact on the community's health. Crucially, they can provide advice and support on how CHIs can get involved and contribute to the overall process. Health Improvement Officers within local authorities and Public Health Practitioners within primary care were also highlighted as key contacts. A list of the designated officers accompanies this Briefing.

Given that experiences are so different amongst CHIs, the sharing of information, ideas and practice across the country is essential. Local community health networks like West of Scotland Community Health Network and Lothian Health Projects' Forum are in a strong position to facilitate local networking. CHEX is in a strong position to support national networking and provide information on national resources.

To this end, CHEX is organising a national seminar to take place on **Wednesday 25th June, in Edinburgh**. In addition to sharing experiences and ideas with each other, CHIs will have the opportunity to talk with community planning policy makers. CHEX is also distributing regular information on community planning through our CHEX-POINT Snippets e-group service, CHEX-POINT Newsletter, and website.

## Scottish Executive:

[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk) Empowering Communities, Social Justice Action Note (June 2000)  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/sjan-00.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/sjan-00.asp) - summarises actions being taken by the Scottish Executive to make community empowerment an increasing reality; for example, through Social Inclusion Partnerships, working for Communities Pathfinders, and various other initiatives (e.g. to promote financial and digital inclusion)

## Reports & Publications

**Involving Local People in Community Planning in Scotland**, booklet published by Community Development Foundation, written by Scottish Community Development Centre in association with Community Planning Task Force (2002) [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk) This booklet offers guidance on the involvement of local communities in the development and implementation of community planning in Scotland. It addresses what we mean by 'community', the role of councils and their community planning partners in relation to local communities, and principles for involving local communities in community planning.

**Capacity Building for Community Planning - A Report to the Community Planning Task Force by Scottish Executive Research Section. (2002)** [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk) The report highlights research into the capacity building requirements of Community Planning with particular reference to the training and development needs of staff directly concerned with developing and implementing community planning.

**Community Planning - Good Practice**, authors C. Duffy, Researcher & C. Lardner, Policy Analyst (2002) [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk) This report identifies good practice in the various elements of community planning. Good practice in 'community involvement' is highlighted in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire, Stirling and West Lothian.

**Models of Community Engagement** - Scottish Community Development Centre. S. Hashagen (May 2002) [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk) This short paper describes the different models of community engagement in community planning. It is designed to provide additional material to the Guidance on 'Effective Community Engagement' and accompanies the Local Government Bill.

**Community Planning and Community Health Initiatives** - Seminar Report (2001) [www.chex.org.uk](http://www.chex.org.uk) This covers the outcomes from CHEX's seminar in Aberdeen in November 2001 and highlights the key issues and opportunities for community health initiatives in community planning, including: promoting the communities' agenda; investment in community development; undertaking innovative methods; responding to diverse needs; and capacity building for policy makers, practitioners and community members.

**The Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) Guide**, Community Development Foundation & Urban Forum. This booklet explains how community and voluntary organisations can achieve effective involvement in the new local partnerships in England. The issues are similar to Scotland's, and there is helpful information on how the planning of services, and how community and voluntary organisations can get involved.

## Aberdeen City Council

'Guidelines for Consultation with Service Users'

The Guidelines, intended to support a co-ordinated approach to consultation, cover:

- *Involvement of the public in service review corporate consultation processes*
- *Management of consultation with service users and the wider public*
- *Checklist of key tasks for service review consultation*
- *Consultation pro forma*

**Contact:** Community Development Section. Tel: 01224 522 777

## Fife Council

'Consultation Guidelines: effective public involvement' (1999)

These Guidelines draw on the Council's experiences, and cover:

# Helpful Resources

## Websites

The Community Planning Task Force website [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk) is a good place to start. It is comprehensive and informative and you can view/download reports, executive summaries, working group findings, and minutes of general meeting.

COSLA's main website [www.cosla.gov.uk](http://www.cosla.gov.uk) has 'Guidance on the preparation of Joint Health Improvement Plans'. Its aim is to help community planning partners prepare and develop Joint Health Improvement Plans (JHIMP). Aimed at all partners in community planning, it sets out Joint Health Improvement Plans within the context of community planning and specifically emphasises how JHIMP should be integrated into every part of the Community Planning Process. Importantly, it suggests practical ways in which all partners can engage with, contribute to, and be accountable to the decision-making process.

## Legislation - Draft Guidance

Draft Guidance can be viewed on [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk)

The Local Government in Scotland Bill was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 8th January 2003 and will receive Royal Assent this Spring. The draft Guidance has been prepared in three main sections: including:

### Introduction -

*Sets out the key features of Community Planning and the purpose of the Guidance.*

### Section 1 -

*Statutory Guidance, which gives a detailed explanation of the legislative provisions and how these should be implemented.*

### Section 2 -

*Supplementary Advice. The aim of this section is to build on the statutory provisions and provide a framework that can assist in the implementation of Community Planning.*

The Bill's Associated Guidance is on the Scottish Parliament's website or through the Community Planning website and sets out the key principles in taking planning forward. It emphasises the importance of linking up national, regional and local priorities, partnership working, and effective community engagement and making community planning work at a national and local level.

## Community Development Foundation:

[www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk) - a range of helpful publications on capacity building and community development.

## ADEPT:

[www.adept.org.uk](http://www.adept.org.uk) is a non-profit specialist agency providing community development and capacity building services, including checklists and toolkits.

## Local Government Association:

[www.lga.gov.uk](http://www.lga.gov.uk) Effective local strategic partnerships: advice note for working with the community and voluntary sectors. 'Let's Talk About It' - principles of consultation on local governance leaflet setting out core principles [www.lga.gov.uk/lga/blg/letsstalk.pdf](http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/blg/letsstalk.pdf)

## Local Government Information Unit:

[www.lgiu.gov.uk](http://www.lgiu.gov.uk) Consulting and involving the public: good practice in local authorities, 1995.

# Community Health Initiatives Taking Part in CHEX's Community Planning Inquiry

