



Making Community Empowerment a Reality

**Feedback from the
Discussion Sessions**

January 2008



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1. AT A GLANCE

A very wide range of views were shared by people who were involved in the dialogue. Not everyone agreed on key points. However, there were a number of key general messages which underpinned the debate.

From the discussions it was clear that there was support for the concept of community empowerment and that communities should have a greater say in the issues and services that affect them.

There was a wide range of views about what the role the Scottish Government, Local Authorities, and Community Anchor Organisations could play in the process, but there was general agreement that there was a shared responsibility to empower communities.

You will find below some of the main points that were frequently raised throughout the dialogue process:

- Empowerment is not something that can be done to communities. Empowerment processes should be led by the community and communities must want to empower themselves;
- Communities will need to have access to support and resources to enable them to build their capacity to become empowered;
- Real community empowerment is about equality, with all sectors of the community being involved and having their voice heard;
- People agreed that community empowerment involved communities taking more direct control of change in their communities. However, many people felt that simply having more involvement in the planning and delivery of services would be what some communities would want;
- There needs to be a culture change in many public bodies in order to provide the right circumstances and support for communities to become more empowered;
- There is no one size fits all model of community empowerment. Any action which supports community empowerment has to recognise communities' circumstances and their existing level of ability to do things for themselves;
- There needs to be partnership working, accountability, and trust between all those involved in the community empowerment process;
- For many equalities groups, such as disabled people and those from black and ethnic minorities backgrounds, empowerment on an individual basis will enable them to become more involved in their community.



2. INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Government is committed to doing more to empower individuals and communities to have more control over their own lives and more choice in how their needs are met. They are particularly keen to see people living in areas of deprivation more empowered.

In making this commitment a reality, the Government were keen to talk with a wide range of people who had experience of community empowerment. In order to do this, Communities Scotland developed a series of events from October to December 2007.

The aim of these events was to provide participants with an opportunity to identify the principles of empowering communities, consider the practical issues around empowering communities and identify ways in which community empowerment could become a reality.

This document provides a summary of the discussions. We have highlighted areas where there was a general consensus and also where there was not. Throughout you will find some individual views highlighted in the form of text boxes.

How we developed the discussions

- A discussion paper to stimulate the dialogue around community empowerment was developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders including the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), the Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland (BEMIS), the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA), Glasgow City Council, Fife Council and Local People Leading. This can be found at **Annex A**.
- Between October and December 2007, Communities Scotland held three discussion sessions in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. In addition, six focus groups were arranged through Positive Action in Housing (PAiH), BEMIS, The Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA) and the Registered Tenants Organisations (RTOs).
- Two events were run on our behalf externally by the Community Voices Network (CVN) and Community Development Alliance Scotland (CDAS), and these were in a similar format to the three held by Communities Scotland.
- A range of people attended the events, from community activists and volunteers to public sector workers and officials and service providers.
- Approximately 374 people took part in these discussions. The discussion papers used at the events can be found at **Annexes A to D**. More details on Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Workshop Evaluations are provided in **Annex E**.



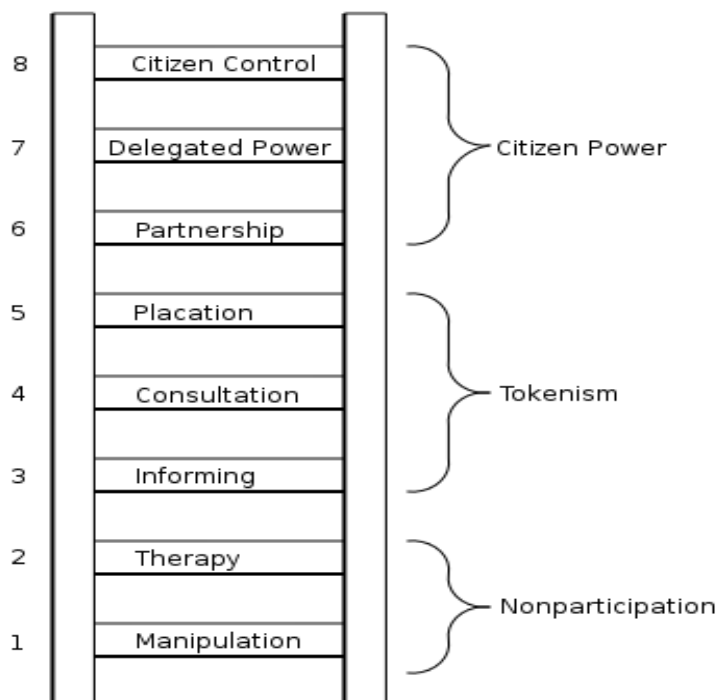
3 WHAT PEOPLE SAID

3.1 WHAT IS COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT?

What we asked:

Community empowerment is very complex and can mean different things to different people. Our vision of community empowerment is based on the upper levels of Sherry Arnstein's ladder of participation, which include delegated power, citizen control and partnership. Delegated power, involves citizens holding a clear majority of seats on committees and having delegated powers to make decisions. Citizen control involves the public handling the entire job of planning, policy making and managing a programme.

Are the concepts of delegated power and citizen control helpful?



What was said:

- There was strong agreement that the concepts were helpful. Most people highlighted a need for communities to have a foundation to build on if they were to become more empowered;
- Empowerment is about more direct control of resources or decision taking;
- Concerns were raised about who would decide on what resources or decisions could be controlled by communities;



- Improved Community engagement is enough for some people, but a strong view that in too many places community engagement was not working well;
- Empowerment is not something that should be done to people;
- People start at different places and have different aspirations. The individual circumstances of each community will dictate the level at which they embark on the empowerment process;
- Regardless of where a community begins the process of empowerment, people must know they have a role to play and have a right to participate;
- Some communities are already very closely involved in decision making and planning, and work in partnership with policy makers and service providers;
- For communities who have become isolated, citizen control may enable them to become less isolated and more active;
- It was welcomed that the Scottish Government are committed to enabling people to have more say in the policies and services that affect them and their communities. However, the need for everyone to have a voice and to have that voice heard by decision makers is fundamental to any empowerment process;
- For many people community empowerment is seen as a way to recognise the effort and work of the many community groups across Scotland who aim to improve lives within communities.

“Citizen control should be viewed as an aspiration – the process should start with participation at an early stage, rather than having complete control from the outset”

“Community involvement in my area usually only goes as far as consultation”

“There is a need for communities to become more directly involved in the services and policies that affect them”



3.2 CONTEXT FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

What we asked:

Our suggested approach aims to recognise the long term nature of empowerment and to achieve sustained change.

We see community empowerment as part of the broader agenda of community engagement in service delivery. It should be seen as part of a wider debate on how people engage in decision making and influence what happens in their communities. It forms the community led dimension to that agenda. It is about developing models that will see people deciding for themselves what should be done to achieve positive change in their communities.

We also believe that community empowerment should be a shared agenda across Government at national and local level and across the public and voluntary and community sectors. We believe that there is currently widespread support across a range of sectors for delivering a higher degree of community empowerment. However, being serious about community empowerment will mean real culture change across a range of sectors.

Is this the right context for community empowerment?

What was said:

- There was strong consensus that community empowerment was part of the broad agenda of engagement between communities and agencies and that delivering community empowerment was a shared responsibility between a wide range of people;
- Community Engagement is not working in some parts of Scotland and this must improve;
- The role of councillors will be key in supporting communities;
- There is no need for new processes or structures as there are examples in place that could be adapted, for example, community planning;
- Empowerment process should be more joined up, less bureaucratic, and with stable and simple funding;
- Policy makers and service providers will need to give up power for empowerment to work;
- Trust and commitment is needed at all levels;
- It could be hard to get volunteers involved in the process as there is already a shortage of people willing to become involved;
- In order for there to be a long culture change children need to become involved;



- There are currently big barriers to participation that would have to be broken down;
- Communities need support to be able to engage;
- Whilst it was recognised that community empowerment will create change in the longer term, utilising community knowledge is seen as key to the process;
- Information provision is key to empowerment as community members need this to be able to fully participate and make informed decisions.

“There needs to commitment from the top, including services providers, workers and the community”

“Empowerment needs to be about equality”

“Community empowerment could promote active and responsible citizenship”



3.3 MODELS FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

What we asked:

We described three contrasting models which could potentially be developed to empower communities. One model involves communities having control over budgets and resources. Another model involves communities scrutinising public services and their delivery in their local area. The third model involves neighbourhoods making decisions on the priorities, issues and services that affect them.

We asked if these models were helpful and whether people knew of any others

General comments on models:

- Overall the models were viewed as being helpful
- One size will not fit all communities
- People will need to be encouraged to become involved
- A mix of the models could be the best model to use
- There should be no prescription involved by Scottish Government on choosing a model which would empower communities

“Simply imposing models for empowerment on communities will not work – communities must decide themselves what empowerment means to them”



3.3.1 MODEL 1 – BUDGET AND RESOURCES

What we asked:

For this model, budgets and other resources, for example assets like land and buildings, would be identified locally and devolved to local community led organisations. Community Anchor Organisations (CAOs) are viewed as the catalyst and driver for change under this model.

What was said:

- There were concerns over existing structures such as Community Planning Partnerships where a lot of community members feel excluded from the process;
- Focus could be taken away from the purpose of organisations and why they were originally formed;
- There are risks involved in owning an asset if there is no money available to support the running costs and other expenditure;
- There should be community representation on the boards and committees that make decisions;
- Sustained funding would be needed
- It was recognised that financial experts would be required to oversee and ensure that budgets were being spent correctly as there is potential for communities to be blamed if the process fails;
- Some communities might not want empowerment due to the possibility of rigorous monitoring and evaluating processes;
- This model could place additional pressure on volunteers who are already often overworked;
- Capacity building and education is needed;
- There is an element of risk involved in this model and some communities would welcome a risk analysis process.

“In my area, young people have responsibility for a small budget and they commission work that they feel needs done. This has been very successful: they are responsible, accountable and innovative”

“Not all communities will be in a position to manage their own budgets and resources”



3.3.2 MODEL 2 – SCRUTINY OF SERVICES

What we asked:

Communities would scrutinise services. Public sector service delivery agencies (and perhaps parts of the voluntary sector) would make a binding commitment that communities would assess the quality of the delivery of agreed service within an area. Careful consideration would have to be given to existing scrutiny regimes and legal accountability for service delivery.

What was said:

- Scrutiny could lead to enhanced decision making which would ultimately improve service delivery;
- This model would improve the relationship of communities with policy makers and service providers;
- There is a need for clarity as to how this would work;
- Community involvement at the outset of service planning could eliminate the need for this model;
- Results would need to be seen to show that scrutiny is in fact making a difference;
- There were concerns over this process being misused and people becoming disruptive;
- Decision makers and service providers have to be made accountable;
- Partnership working is essential for this model to work;
- Have to look at how elected members would fit into this model;
- Should be community led with a robust framework and guidance;

“Policy makers and service providers should be accountable at all times”

“I have completed a number of surveys for various services but do not see any difference or change”

“There is a need to ensure that communities are not being manipulated by service providers”



3.3.3 MODEL 3 – DEVOLVED DECISION MAKING

What we asked:

Devolved decision making to neighbourhood level with the community in the majority on decision making structures. This could build on existing models of governance at community level and could involve community bodies like community councils, community forums or Registered Tenant Organisations.

What was said:

- There was a mixed response to this model, some felt that having a community majority on a decision making body would ensure the voice of the community is heard, while others were not sure whether this structure would be empowering;
- Some community activists questioned whether or not this model would work in reality;
- There are people already paid to make decisions;
- People can be working to their own agenda and this can influence the process in the wrong way;
- Some people want to have their voice heard without the addition of responsibility;
- Beneficial if incorporated with public scrutiny;
- Identify needs and how these should be met;
- Accountability is important as is the need for feedback;
- Mechanisms to deal with conflict required;
- This model would help utilise knowledge and skills available;

“People do not necessarily want full control but they do want to influence and be listened to”

“Having a community majority on any decision making body could act as a safeguard against service providers and policy makers railroading through plans”



3.4 ROLES

We suggested that the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and Community Planning, and Community Anchor Organisations each have a key role in enabling communities to become empowered.

3.4.1 ROLE OF SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

What we asked:

Our proposal is that the key role for Scottish Government is to provide leadership at National level to encourage and promote community empowerment. This is in line with the Government's determination to avoid duplication at local level and to take a strategic approach to supporting change in communities. This role could involve leading discussions with other key sectors, for example Local Authorities and other public bodies, to ensure there is explicit, strategic level buy in to community empowerment.

We asked people if they thought this was right.

What was said:

- There is a need for the Scottish Government to provide a level of national support. This could include guidance or a framework for community empowerment and a national networking and learning forum;
- Any frameworks or guidance should be flexible and not prescriptive;
- Could have an enabling and development role in community empowerment
- Should make information on national policy available;
- Should ensure that equality is at the heart of community empowerment;
- Intervene where community engagement structures are not effective;
- Take action against Local Authorities who are not effectively supporting community empowerment;
- Ensure long term stream lined funding is available;
- Have a clear vision and indicators;
- Strengthen and implement existing legislation;
- Have a national level commitment to long term development of community and voluntary sectors.

"There should be a forum for exchanging ideas, sharing good practice and networking"



“The different needs and circumstances of communities across Scotland need to be understood and taken into account when developing guidance”

“The Scottish Government could act as facilitator or mediator, enabling communities, organisations and the public sector to work together”

“Short term funding can have a negative impact on the provision of services to communities”



3.4.2 ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

What we asked:

Communities can't be empowered by someone else. Communities must empower themselves. However they will often need help and support to achieve their goals. In each of our proposed models we see Local Authorities as having a key role to play to create the conditions where communities can empower themselves. This will be true of both elected members and officials.

We want to encourage Local Authorities to make firm commitments or pledges about what they will do to help local communities empower themselves. In doing this we would expect Authorities to think very carefully about the complexities involved and how empowering communities fits with their overarching strategies on community engagement and service planning and delivery. In particular we would see Local Authorities having a key role in co-ordinating the Community Capacity Building that underpins empowerment and in identifying resources which could be devolved to local community led groups.

However, Local Authorities should not be seen amongst the public sector as responsible for community empowerment. As we said earlier this should be an agenda shared across the public sector. Local Authorities in turn need the support and commitment of the wider public and voluntary sectors. We believe that the key mechanism for co-ordinating public sector support for community empowerment should be Community Planning.

We asked if this was right.

What was said:

- Local authorities need to provide the link between national policy and local priorities and to ensure processes are in place for communities to become empowered. This includes providing information and education to actively promote empowerment;
- Better communication, reporting and negotiating structures are needed. Partnership working between the community and service providers is needed. To be successful all departments would have to work to this agenda, both through policy and funding decisions;
- There was concern that Local Authorities would not devolve any power to communities or improve their engagement with communities;



- An empowerment or engagement committee could be established in each LA to work with all departments with the purpose of breaking down internal barriers and promoting joint working;
- There has to be an incentive for power to be devolved;
- Community planning has not achieved involvement for all communities;
- Local authorities may not be the best placed to deliver services in all cases;
- Local authorities could become champions of empowerment with honesty, transparency, and commitment needed;
- An equal partnership between the voluntary and statutory sector needs to be established;
- Could be a role for Audit Scotland to highlight good examples;
- Need to train staff within Local Authorities to work more closely with communities;
- Provide guidance for elected representatives to be able to work better with their local community and ensure their voices are heard.

“Being involved in a decision making structure does not necessarily result in empowered communities”

“There should be equal partnership between councils, voluntary groups and the community”

“It shouldn’t be ‘us and them’. Councils should work with communities earlier to set budgets. Communities need to trust councils”

“Local Authorities should provide practical help and support to enable communities to become empowered”



3.4.3 ROLE OF COMMUNITY ANCHOR ORGANISATIONS

What we asked:

One key element which could make a lasting, long term difference to community empowerment, is the role played by locally based, community led organisations. These strong community led groups are sometimes referred to as Community Anchor Organisations (CAOs). The attached draft definition is being adopted by the Local People Leading campaign and is based on an existing definition produced in England.

Community Anchor Organisations could play a number of key roles on a day to day basis in community empowerment. They could ensure that local people have a say in identifying the priorities for change in their neighbourhoods; they may deliver services directly themselves; and they might influence the public sector on behalf of local people.

In particular, in the first of our proposed models they would be the bodies who control devolved resources.

We asked people what they thought the potential of CAOs was.

What was said:

- There was confusion over whether CAOs would be new bodies or would be a re-branding of existing organisation;
- Concern over who would designate a body a CAO;
- Concern that designating a group a CAO would make them a magnet for resources at the expense of the wider community sector;
- A central hub would be important in providing information about what is going on and how to get involved;
- Organisations would need to be community led;
- Could enable better partnership working by linking the grass roots community with policy makers and service providers;
- Should have capacity to help organisations manage budgets and resources;
- No consensus regarding the suitability of community councils as CAOs. They also do not exist in all areas of Scotland;
- Support and funding of CAOs is necessary if they are to be developed;
- A clear role for organisations must be defined;
- Proper representation of the whole community is essential in the governance of any body who would be a CAO;
- Would need to maintain credibility in the community;
- Flexible structures would allow better reflection of changing needs and priorities of communities, but communities should decide what is best for their circumstances.



“Having too many people involved, too many layers, is confusing and blocks progress”



3.5 MEASURING PROGRESS

What we asked:

The issue of measuring empowerment and the change that is brought about in communities because of empowerment is tricky. There are issues around establishing baselines, identifying indicators and the process of monitoring and reporting on progress that need to be resolved. We are interested in people's initial views on the challenges of measuring progress in community empowerment and any experience they have which may be helpful.

What was said:

- The whole process does require monitoring;
- Sustainability is the key to community empowerment. Need to move away from short term gain and quantitative data collection to focus on longer term outcomes and actual change in communities;
- The outcome of any monitoring and evaluation must be shared with the community;
- There were monitoring procedures through the Regeneration Outcome Agreements but people were concerned these are not robust enough;
- Processes will take time to bed in for long term change to be sustained;
- Resources could be made available to Local Authorities for the monitoring and evaluation process;
- Guidance on monitoring and evaluation must be robust and flexible enough to take into account the different circumstances of each community;
- Some people felt that the process should be community led. A suggestion was made to bring in an external assessor but a lot of agreement that this is not a role for Local Authorities;
- It is hoped that through a national monitoring framework the Scottish Government will gain a better understanding of local issues;
- There should be a national coordination of monitoring and evaluation. This would help share good practice and encourage people to become involved. It could improve partnership working with policy makers and service providers;
- Some people stated indicators for progress and success should be based on perception of people within communities and a variety of methods were discussed for example the LEAP framework.

"There needs to be clarity on what we actually want to achieve through empowerment and identify how we can measure progress towards these aims"



“There needs to be full and proper assessment of progress”

“Good examples should be highlighted and could be used to promote community empowerment to other areas”

“Indicators could be based on perception. For example, do people feel that they have had the opportunity to influence?”



3.6 MAKING COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT A REALITY – HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

What we asked:

As we said earlier communities cannot be empowered by other people, but others have a clear role in developing the right conditions for empowerment and in supporting communities. This suggests that to move forward to a Scotland where more communities are more empowered, the first step will be a process of local negotiation between communities, often led by Community Anchor Organisations and the local statutory bodies through Community Planning Partnerships.

As a catalyst and framework for those local negotiations, it would be possible to build on the outcomes of this dialogue to develop jointly owned guidance on what we would expect to see from community empowerment.

We asked if issuing jointly owned guidance would be a helpful step in starting the process of community empowerment and if there were any other ways the process could work.

What was said:

- There was broad agreement that issuing guidance on what community empowerment is and how to achieve it would be helpful;
- The Scottish Government should develop guidance in partnership with communities and Local Authorities/service providers
- Clarity is required on the roles of various organisations and agencies involved
- Some suggested that the National Standards for community engagement should be compulsory
- Any guidance that may be produced should be based on good practice
- Views were mixed as to whether the process should be voluntary or enforced. Many believed there should be sanctions for those who do not comply
- A framework would be useful
- Build on what is already there, don't invent new structures or processes.

“If the guidance is too ‘soft’ it will just be ignored”



4. WHAT NOW?.....NEXT STEPS

How we will use this report

The diverse views in this report will help us to advise Ministers on how best to make community empowerment a reality in our most disadvantaged communities. It will ensure that our advice will be based on the experience and opinion of a very wide range of people with very different perspectives on community empowerment.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the time to be involved in the dialogue. We recognise that this was a big commitment but it has provided us with invaluable information which will impact on how community empowerment develops in Scotland.

We expect Ministers to announce the next steps in making community empowerment a reality later in the spring and we will make sure you receive details of what is announced, including how these views influenced that decision.

In the meantime, if you would like any further information please contact us at the following address:

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58 Waterloo Street
Glasgow
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ANNEX A

Making Community Empowerment a Reality - Getting your Views

The Scottish Government is committed to doing more to empower individuals and communities to have more control over their own lives and more choice in how their needs are met. They are particularly keen to see people living in areas of deprivation more empowered.

To turn this into a reality Ministers want to hear the views of a wide range of people. They have asked us to organise a dialogue across Scotland from now until the end of December 2007.

This paper sets out the key issues that we believe have an impact on empowerment. It also makes some suggestions about what might be done to ensure that more communities become more empowered. The paper has been shaped by early discussions with a few people with a key interest in empowerment.

The questions in each section are designed to help us understand your views on our suggestions. Your views, along with the views of everyone else who will be involved in the dialogue, will help to inform the decisions Ministers take to make community empowerment a reality.

What is Community Empowerment?

Community empowerment is very complex. It can mean different things to different people. Over the years community empowerment has often proved difficult to achieve. Also, trying to achieve empowerment can lead to increased tensions in the relationships between the people involved.

Any attempt at making community empowerment a reality that does not recognise these complexities or the scale of the challenge will not succeed. However, we believe that community empowerment can be achieved with the right level of commitment, and practical skills and understanding.

Our vision of community empowerment is based on the upper levels of what is often called the ladder of participation. In the 1960s, a woman called Sherry Arnstein described these as citizen control and delegated power. Here is a description of what these two ideas can mean:

- **Delegated power:** Citizens holding a clear majority of seats on committees with delegated powers to make decisions.
- **Citizen control:** Public handle the entire job of planning, policy making and managing a programme.

Community empowerment should offer opportunities for everyone living in a community regardless of their background or personal circumstances. The promotion of equalities must be at the heart of any community empowerment work. An approach that empowers some people in a community at the expense of others is not community empowerment.



ANNEX A

Question: Are the concepts of delegated power and citizen control helpful?

Why Community Empowerment? - Strategic Context

Our proposal is not to develop a stand alone community empowerment initiative with a separate grant scheme attached. Neither do we want to impose another level of bureaucracy or governance. Our suggested approach aims to recognise the long term nature of empowerment and to achieve sustained change.

We see community empowerment as part of the broader agenda of community engagement in service delivery. It should be seen as part of a wider debate on how people engage in decision making and influence what happens in their communities. It forms the community led dimension to that agenda. It is about developing models that will see people deciding for themselves what should be done to achieve positive change in their communities.

We also believe that community empowerment should be a shared agenda across Government at national and local level and across the public and voluntary and community sectors. We believe that there is currently widespread support across a range of sectors for delivering a higher degree of community empowerment. However, being serious about community empowerment will mean real culture change across a range of sectors.

Question: Is this the right context for community empowerment?

Suggested practical models

To help make a concrete reality of empowerment we believe that we need to identify possible models that could be developed locally. We have suggested three possible models here - but there may be more. We believe each of these models fits within the upper levels of ladder of participation. We know that across the country some work along these lines is already taking place and our aim is to see more of it happening.

Model One

Budgets and other resources, for example assets like land and buildings, are identified locally and devolved to local community led organisations. This model would use the concept of Community Anchor Organisations (CAOs) as the catalyst and driver for change. CAOs are described later in this paper.

Model Two

Communities would scrutinise services. Public sector service delivery agencies (and perhaps parts of the voluntary sector) would make a binding commitment that communities would assess the quality of the delivery of agreed service within an



ANNEX A

area. Careful consideration would have to be given to existing scrutiny regimes and legal accountability for service delivery.

Model Three

Devolved decision making to neighbourhood level with the community in the majority on decision making structures. This could build on existing models of governance at community level and could involve community bodies like community councils, community forums or Registered Tenant Organisations.

Question: Are these models helpful and do you know of others that might work?

Role of the Scottish Government

Our proposal is that the key role for Scottish Government is to provide leadership at National level to encourage and promote community empowerment. This is in line with the Government's determination to avoid duplication at local level and to take a strategic approach to supporting change in communities. This role could involve leading discussions with other key sectors, for example Local Authorities and other public bodies, to ensure there is explicit, strategic level buy in to community empowerment.

The Scottish Government could also develop and resource a national support programme for community empowerment. This might include support for skills development, for evaluating the impact of empowerment and to help networking across Scotland to make sure people learn from each other about what is working. Any programme along these lines would be developed in partnership with people involved in community empowerment.

Question What do you think the role of the Scottish Government should be?

Role of Local Authorities

Communities can't be empowered by someone else. Communities must empower themselves. However they will often need help and support to achieve their goals. In each of our proposed models we see Local Authorities as having a key role to play to create the conditions where communities can empower themselves. This will be true of both elected members and officials.

We want to encourage Local Authorities to make firm commitments or pledges about what they will do to help local communities empower themselves. In doing this we would expect Authorities to think very carefully about the complexities involved and how empowering communities fits with their overarching strategies on community engagement and service planning and delivery. In particular we would see Local Authorities having a key role in co-ordinating the Community Capacity Building that underpins empowerment and in identifying resources which could be devolved to local community led groups.



ANNEX A

However, Local Authorities should not be seen amongst the public sector as responsible for community empowerment. As we said earlier this should be an agenda shared across the public sector. Local Authorities in turn need the support and commitment of the wider public and voluntary sectors. We believe that the key mechanism for co-ordinating public sector support for community empowerment should be Community Planning.

Question What do you think the role of Local Authorities and Community Planning should be?

Role of Community Anchor Organisations

One key element which could make a lasting, long term difference to community empowerment, is the role played by locally based, community led organisations.

These strong community led groups are sometimes referred to as Community Anchor Organisations. We think this could be a helpful term to identify a particular kind of local community led group. The attached draft definition is being adopted by the Local People Leading campaign and is based on an existing definition produced in England.

Community Anchor Organisations could play a number of key roles on a day to day basis in community empowerment. They could ensure that local people have a say in identifying the priorities for change in their neighbourhoods; they may deliver services directly themselves; and they might influence the public sector on behalf of local people.

In particular, in the first of our proposed models they would be the bodies who control devolved resources.

The type of organisation that would play the role of a Community Anchor Organisation would vary from place to place across Scotland, but crucially they would have a fairly high level of existing capacity to work on behalf of the wider community. We think models might include Housing Associations, Development Trusts, Community Councils, Registered Tenant Organisations, Community Forums, and other forms of locally based social enterprises.

Question: What do you think about the potential role of Community Anchor Organisations?

Outcomes and evaluation

We obviously want to see community empowerment making a difference to communities. From previous research the kinds of outcomes we would expect to see from community empowerment would include:

- More innovative and responsive solutions to local problems;



ANNEX A

- Increased confidence and skills amongst local people;
- Higher numbers of people volunteering in their communities;
- A greater sense of pride in a neighbourhood; and
- Higher levels of quality of life in a local neighbourhood.

Some of these would be more immediate outcomes related to the process of community empowerment and some would be longer term outcomes.

The issue of measuring empowerment and the change that is brought about in communities because of empowerment is tricky. There are issues around establishing baselines, identifying indicators and the process of monitoring and reporting on progress that need to be resolved. We are interested in people's initial views on the challenges of measuring progress in community empowerment and any experience they have which may be helpful.

Question What do you see as the main challenges in measuring progress and do you have any experience that might help?

Making Community empowerment a reality - How to make it happen?

As we said earlier, communities cannot be empowered by other people. But others have a clear role in developing the right conditions for empowerment and in supporting communities. This suggests that to move forward to a Scotland where more communities are more empowered, the first step will be a process of local negotiation between communities, often led by Community Anchor Organisations and the local statutory bodies through Community Planning Partnerships.

As a catalyst and framework for those local negotiations, it would be possible to build on the outcomes of this dialogue to develop jointly owned guidance on what we would expect to see from community empowerment.

Question Do you think that issuing jointly owned guidance is a helpful step in starting the process of community empowerment? Are there other ways you could see the process working?



ANNEX B

Making Community Empowerment a Reality – Summary Document

The Scottish Government is committed to doing more to empower individuals and communities to have more control over their own lives and have more choice in how their needs are met. Community empowerment should be a shared agenda between national and local Government, the public and voluntary sector, and communities. We recognise that community empowerment is very complex and challenging but through working together, we can make this a reality.

We need your views to help inform the decisions Ministers will take to make community empowerment a reality.

HOW CAN COMMUNITIES BECOME EMPOWERED?

We have based our vision of community empowerment on citizen control and delegated power and have identified 3 models which could potentially be developed at a local level, to empower communities:

1. Local community-led organisations have control over budgets and resources
2. Public services and delivery are scrutinised by communities
3. Decision making is devolved to a neighbourhood level

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND COMMUNITY ANCHOR ORGANISATIONS?

We are proposing that the **Scottish Government** should:

- Provide leadership at a national level, encouraging and promoting community empowerment
- Develop and resource a national support programme for learning and networking

We are proposing that **Local Authorities** should:

- Have role in creating conditions for communities to empower themselves with the support of Community Planning partners
- Have a key role in coordinating the Community Capacity Building that underpins empowerment
- Identify resources that could be devolved to local community-led groups

We believe that **Community Anchor Organisations** (locally based, community-led organisations), could make a lasting, long term difference to communities by:

- Ensuring local people have a role in decision making
- Delivering some services themselves
- Influencing the public sector on behalf of local people

HOW CAN SUCCESS BE MEASURED?

There are a number of outcomes that we would expect to see from an empowered community, such as more innovative and responsive solutions to local problems and a higher quality of life in local neighbourhoods.

MAKING COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT A REALITY – HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

Communities cannot be empowered by other people. We do recognise however that others have a clear role in developing the right conditions for empowerment and in supporting communities. There should be adequate support available to enable communities to become empowered.



ANNEX D

Making Community Empowerment a Reality - Questions

SETTING THE SCENE

We have based our vision of community empowerment on citizen control and delegated power. We see community empowerment as part of a broader agenda of community engagement in service delivery.

- **Are the concepts of delegated power and citizen control helpful?**
- **Is this the right context for community empowerment?**

SUGGESTED PRACTICAL MODELS

We have identified 3 models which could potentially be developed to empower communities. One model involves communities having control over budgets and resources. Another model involves communities scrutinising public services and their delivery in their local area. The third model involves neighbourhoods making decisions on the priorities, issues and services that affect them.

- **Are these models helpful and do you know of others that might work?**

ROLES

We are suggesting that the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and Community Planning, and Community Anchor Organisations each have a key role in enabling communities to become empowered.

- **What do you think the role of the Scottish Government should be?**
- **What do you think the role of Local Authorities and Community Planning should be?**
- **What do you think about the potential role of Community Anchor Organisations?**

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

Community empowerment should ultimately improve the lives of those people living and working within that community.

- **What do you see as the main challenges in measuring progress and do you have any experience that might help?**

MAKING COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT A REALITY- HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

Community empowerment will not be a stand-alone initiative with a separate grant scheme attached. We do recognise however that there should be adequate support available to enable communities to become empowered.

- **Do you think that issuing jointly owned guidance is a helpful step in starting the process of community empowerment?**
- **Are there other ways you could see the process working**



ANNEX D

Definition of Community Anchor Organisations

This is based on the definition provided by Local People Leading

ON THE GROUND ANCHOR ORGANISATIONS

Background

An examination of the characteristics of strong and independent communities shows that they possess the ability to unite – and `hold together` - usually around some local organisation which they own. For some reason – in certain areas – the local community sector, the fragmented array of small voluntary groups, invest authority in a local umbrella vehicle to champion their collective interests. There are no examples of sustained community empowerment without some locally embedded organisation. In theory structures like the Scottish `Community Planning Partnerships` can strengthen communities by linking them to decision making – but experience has shown that, without reference to some independent local organisation, community representatives are too isolated.

Community empowerment policy in England is led jointly by the Office of the Third Sector (The Cabinet Office) and the Dept. of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). They have both endorsed the importance of community led vehicles like development trusts for building strong and independent communities. They have jointly adopted the term `Community Anchor Organisation` (CAO) as a generic category for such vehicles – to give new emphasis to their significance.

LPL (Local People Leading) has adopted, as a central theme in our campaign, the promotion of Community Anchor Organisations – both the concept – and their realisation, in every community in Scotland which wants one. This requires us to be clearer what we mean by the term.

Definition

The first use of the term Anchor Organisation was in the government report Firm Foundations, which was published by the Home Office in 2004 when David Blunkett was Home Secretary. This radical document is the government's official framework for community capacity building and it states: "We are calling them `community anchor organisations` because of the solid foundation they give to a wide variety of self help and capacity building activities in local communities and because of their roots within their communities." In 2005, the Home Office funded the `Community Alliance` to develop the `Anchor` concept and to promote the model around England. The Community Alliance website carries information, historical and current.



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In June this year (2007) the Dept. of Communities and Local Government published a draft of its Third Sector Strategy in which CAOs feature prominently. The Strategy refers to the `Firm Foundations` origin of the term `Anchors` but also offers a carefully developed definition of what it is intended to signify.

“Working with the Office of the Third Sector, we are exploring the increasing potential of approaches involving `community anchor` organisations. These are independent community led organisations with multi-purpose functions, which provide a focal point for local communities and community organisations, and for community services. They often own and manage community assets, and support small community organisations to reach out across the community.”

LPL considers that this definition contains the essential characteristics to fit the purposes of our campaign and we have adopted it accordingly.

Six essential characteristics

- ***Independent community led:***

CAOs are independent organizations under community control. They may engage in joint venture/partnerships with public or private bodies – but are themselves accountable to the communities they serve and have mechanisms of local accountability.

- ***Multi-purpose functions***

CAOs address the needs of their area in a multi-purpose holistic way. They take an `overview` of their community. Organisations which wish to remain `single purpose`, eg `housing` or `childcare` can't fulfill the `anchor` role.

- ***Focal point for local communities and organisations:***

CAOs are the `lead` organisation in the area – with the ability to `hold together` the constituent neighbourhoods and organisations. Many CAOs are structured to represent the views of local people and have networks reaching beyond their community – particularly to public bodies.

- ***Focal point for community services:***

CAOs provide the focus for communities to assess the range and quality of local services available and to participate in the planning of new services. They provide services directly themselves; encourage community led enterprise generating independent income; act as a gateway to helping people get access to the other services they need.

- ***Own and manage local assets:***



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In order to achieve economic stability CAOs look to acquire and develop assets both for their own use and to provide a sustainable income. CAOs which can generate core income independent of public bodies have more autonomy.

- ***Support small community organisations***

CAOs act as the `engine house` for the development of the community sector in their area, supporting and helping build the confidence of smaller groups and levels of social capital. They often provide a physical space, as a hub for building local capacity.

While some Anchors will not match all 6 of the above characteristics – most will reflect at least the first three. If the government adopts the term CAO, and it becomes widely used, pressure will grow for a standard definition, but LPL believes that it would do more harm than good if this were to become too prescriptive. Anchors are created by local people in response to local needs and they will all be different. The next section offers examples of this diversity.

ON THE GROUND ANCHOR EXAMPLES C5

Community Anchor Organisations might develop from a variety of different kinds of organisations. The most common examples are probably Development Trusts or Community owned Housing Associations which have diversified into wider action – but there are many other models. In some areas a community enterprise, perhaps recycling or providing transport, becomes the lead organisation. In others, community action is environmentally led by the management of community woodlands or a park. There are examples of CAOs which grew out of community councils, residents associations, faith based organisations, community buildings – almost any local activity can develop into the organisation which galvanises local energy and becomes the anchor of progress.



ANNEX E

Evaluation Feedback from Empowerment Discussions

A total of 148 completed forms were received from the workshops and events. The scores detailed below are an average on a scale where 1 is 'not very good' and 5 is 'excellent'.

Location: 4.4
Access: 4.3
Catering: 4.3
Facilities: :4.3

Workshop Structure: 4
Facilitation: 4.1
Programme of Day: 4

Overall Rating: 4

The evaluation form also allowed attendees the opportunity to comment on how they felt the day went and any other points they wanted to highlight.

Reasons for attending:

- Student at college studying for an HNC in Community Development
- To take part in an educational experience and to see if more could be learned and could contribute
- Representing two groups of Muslim women who all hope for a better future for their children and how they can become involved
- Increase knowledge about engaging with community
- Listen to what the government has in mind for communities and to try and influence some policies
- Articulate views on community development
- Obtain more information on empowerment
- Find out what the government means by community empowerment and how they intend to support it
- To contribute to the debate
- To hear other peoples views on this subject
- To report back to other people
- Be able to highlight challenges faced by communities
- To hear more views and information on Community Anchor Organisations
- Networking and information gathering
- Relevant to work and future of community planning
- Put forward views of community/voluntary sector
- Lots to be done in Glasgow region and hope to see change
- Want to be involved
- Had hoped to learn about proposed models of community empowerment



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General Comments:

- More time for discussion would have been helpful. Was good to hear everyone's views
- Would have liked outline in simpler language
- Would like to know outcome
- Please start working for the community
- If all policies and suggestions implemented it will be very positive for Scottish communities
- Mobile phones should be banned as very distracting
- Well presented, well done
- Policy needs to be implemented at local level
- Very worthwhile event and pleased to participate
- Good sized groups and good facilitation
- Very interesting points of view and discussion
- Think agenda already set and lip service being paid. There will be nothing new at the end of the day
- Would have been useful to have more community members involved. Unbalanced show of people considering discussion on empowerment
- Surprised that Communities Scotland will no longer exist
- Would have been useful if people could have discussed wider issues
- Some participants following own agenda
- Would like to be kept up to date with developments
- Don't reinvent the wheel
- Government needs to recognise all communities, geographic and thematic
- Excellent networking opportunities
- Pre conference support and information excellent and much appreciated. Valued opportunity to attend with expenses paid.
- Very interesting and wait with anticipation to see where this goes
- More information on participants would have been useful
- Workshops could have been better structured or more tightly focused
- Requires additional local area discussions
- Still lots to discuss as such a big issue cannot be done in one day
- Need to think more clearly how to make Community Planning Partnership's more accountable to and more representative of local communities rather than seeing another layer of community sector or asking Community Anchor Organisation's to do this.
- Need more elected members/chief executives to take part in discussions
- Follow up conference with results of nationwide proposed solutions.
- Excited about idea but not hopeful about communities being involved. Have been to meetings and never received feedback
- Workshops could have been more interactive in terms of communication between group and facilitator
- Good event - good input from group
- Process appears to be rushed – who is consulting communities



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- Need to encourage more young people, disabled people, and ethnic minorities
- Need more of this kind of dialogue
- Would be concerned if all comments were taken on board as bias can creep in from attendees
- Confused about empowerment
- Very lively and informative
- Thanks for involving us has made us feel wanted in society
- These events are very helpful. Good to hear other peoples comments and learned a lot from this. Should take place more often in order to gather views from different communities.
- Hope views of marginalised communities will be taken into account
- Hope ideas will be implemented. Would help us transform our communities
- Believe this is the way forward for Scotland and it's people. Integration and community empowerment are crucial.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Feedback

Every individual who attended one of our workshops or focus groups was given an equal opportunities monitoring form. We received a total of one hundred and thirty eight completed forms.

AGE

Up to 24:	6
25-39:	31
40-49:	35
50-64:	49
65+:	17

DISABILITY

4 people with a mental health condition.

2 with a learning disability

2 with a sensory impairment

17 with a physical impairment

2 with any other disability or impairment

112 with no disability or impairment

ETHNIC GROUP

British:	13
Irish:	1
English:	14
Welsh:	1
Northern Irish:	1
Scottish:	70



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European Other:	3
Polish:	1
Chinese:	5
Pakistani:	9
Middle East (Arab):	6
South African:	2
East African:	3
North African:	1
Central African:	4
West African:	2
Multiple Ethnic Other:	1

GENDER

Male:	60
Female:	76
Undisclosed:	2

RELIGION

None:	42
Church of Scotland:	27
Muslim:	20
Roman Catholic:	18
Other Christian:	24
Pagan:	2
Jewish:	1
Buddhist:	1
Any Other Religion:	1
Undisclosed:	2

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Heterosexual:	110
Undisclosed:	23
Lesbian/Gay:	4
Bisexual:	1