Strengthening Community Involvement at this Time of Change

1. Introduction

This project was initiated to explore ways in which community involvement in Shetland can be strengthened. Participation of individuals and communities is a key element of community planning: national work, such as the Christie Commission Report on the Future Delivery of Public Services[1] and the development of the Community Empowerment Bill[2], and local developments around community planning, including the Shetland Partnership Board, Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement, mean that it is timely to consider Shetland's approach to ensuring people feel involved in their communities and in supporting their communities and Shetland, as a whole.

The purpose of this report is to present the findings from a piece of work which aimed to explore the views of key people in Shetland on how best community involvement can be strengthened. And, based on this information proposes points for discussion.

The report is set out, as follows:

2. Methodology;
3. National and local drivers for strengthening community involvement;
4. Findings from the consultation meetings;
5. Learning from elsewhere in Scotland;
6. Key Successes Factors;
7. Points for Discussion and Recommendations; and
8. Next Steps.

2. Methodology

The first stage aimed to establish a firm understanding of the national and local drivers for strengthening community involvement, teasing out the key points of importance to the Shetland Partnership Board.

The second stage involved consultation meetings with members of the Shetland Partnership Board, Councillors, representatives of Community Councils, a number of senior managers, and local officers with a role and remit for strengthening communities. A list of those who have been involved is provided at Appendix A. The focus on the meetings was based on a framework of questions, provided at Appendix B.

In addition, the internet sites of 11 Local Authorities and Community Planning Partnerships were searched, to establish examples of how they supported community involvement, highlighting areas of good practice. In particular, this focused on establishing the pros and cons of different methods of engaging local communities, through local community planning structures. Six were selected for further investigation[3], and a phone interview held. The purpose was to understand the process; the views and attendance of key stakeholders; what had led to success (or failure); and the impacts.

The information has been drawn together to tease out Shetland's vision for community involvement. People's views and experiences have been used to form key points for discussion.

3. National and Local Drivers

Community Planning is a process by which public agencies can work together and with communities to plan and deliver better services, and achieve a positive impact on the lives of people and their communities. Each

[1] Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/publicservicescommission
[2] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/engage/cer
[3] Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute, Fife, Highland, Moray and Stirling.

local authority is required to lead this process, within their local authority area, involving partner agencies and the communities within it.

Therefore each area is required to have a partnership which is able to plan strategically for that area and have in place effective mechanisms for consulting and working with local communities, linking to and with the strategic plan (Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement). Consultation responses to the Community Empowerment Bill have highlighted that, to date, Community Planning has been more about joint-working between agencies and service delivery, rather than on genuine community involvement.[4]

National guidance continues to highlight the importance of agencies and communities being able to work effectively together, if the public sector is going to rise to the challenges it faces. The Christie Commission work made clear that many of the answers to the challenges of reducing public sector resources can be found when public agencies focus on communities and working more effectively together[5]. There is now an expectation on public agencies to achieve this:

"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 hard to involve people everywhere in the redesign and reshaping of their activities."[6]

Detailed information on national drivers is set out in Appendix C. The Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill[7] is of particular importance, and is currently being developed. It is designed to significantly improve community participation in the design and delivery of public services and build community capacity, recognising the particular needs of communities facing multiple social and economic challenges. The Bill is expected in the autumn. It aims to:

- strengthen community participation
- unlock enterprising community development; and
- renew our communities.

Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill – Responses to Exploratory Consultation, Summer 2012

447 responses, from organisations and individuals, were received based on a range of ideas put forward by the Scottish Government. Responses and comments under Strengthening Participation are summarised below, providing a flavour of thoughts from agencies and communities across Scotland and an indication, perhaps, of what the legislation may require:

- Community Planning and Community Engagement
  - Communities and their representative bodies often feel isolated from the Community Planning process and do not feel that they have much influence over decision-making processes.
  - There is a lack of consensus about whether there is a need for additional legislation around community engagement.
  - There is a need to deepen democracy, giving communities decision making power to change things for themselves.
  - A structured approach, which allows for the complexity of communities, is required, which enables the easy to ignore to participate. This is noted as challenging when resources are reducing.
- Community Councils
  - They provide an important interface role, between communities and agencies.

[4] Consultation on the proposed Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/01/5167
[5] Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/publicservicescommission
[6] Renewing Scotland's Public Services, Scottish Government, 2011 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/09/21104740/0
[7] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/engage/cer

- There are queries over the capacity of some Community Councils to fulfil this role adequately as they are not always representative of their communities.
- A number of Community Councils felt they should be the first point of call for all public agencies on any engagement issues.
- A number felt that their current role is too constrained, and they should have greater powers and be able to influence decisions in relation to the design and delivery of public services.
- Some community organisations other than Community Councils play a more active role in communities, with support for developing the role of 'community anchors'.
- Most respondents did not favour Community Councils in their current form delivering services: their primary role being to influence the design and delivery of services and also to ensure that these services are accountable to local communities.
- Issues faced by Community Councils included:
    - Overstretched by a myriad of demands;
    - They can feel that they are not taken seriously by public agencies;
    - They exist between representative and participatory democracy: members are not formally part of representative democracy with a structure that reinforces that they are a lower tier of elected representatives. Yet, at this time they could play a key role as facilitators of participatory democracy, as it should be developing;
    - They can be self selecting, closed shops, therefore development is required so they become more inclusive and representative, e.g. ensuring active engagement with other groups in their area.

- The Third Sector
    - Widespread agreement that third sector could play / was already playing an important role acting as an interface between the community and community planning partners.
    - The establishment of Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) across Scotland is important, with a specific remit to engage with each CPP.
    - Some scepticism about the role of the third sector in supporting community participation, because of its disparate nature.
- National Standards for Community Engagement
    - Desire to review and bring up to date, with some suggesting legislation to ensure use.
- Community Engagement Plans
    - Many respondents, primarily from community organisations, felt there should be a duty on public bodies to produce, publish and communicate these, in order to provide greater transparency and accountability. Local authorities and CPPs were less keen on this introduction, referring to SOA and a need to improve transparency, rather than introduction of plans, per se.
- Auditing
    - Polarised views between CPPs / agencies and communities as to whether this should increase, with a focus on the need to ensure quality of participation, rather than quantity.
- Named Officer responsible for community participation to act as principle point of contact for communities
    - Favoured by communities, to simplify and improve communications, but not by agencies, as participation is the responsibility of every officer involved in service design.
- Community Service Delivery
    - Desire for procurement processes to be easier for community groups to bid to deliver services.
    - Support for increased community involvement in how services are delivered, rather than direct delivery.
- Community Directed Spending
    - Support for communities having greater say in budget decision, to ensure resources are targeted at local need; however, there is a danger that those with quieter voices will be ignored.

The Scottish Government has indicated to the Shetland Partnership that establishing effective and meaningful community engagement in Shetland is one of their three priorities for the coming year. In addition Community Engagement is included within the Audit Commission's audit framework for Community Planning Partnership, currently in draft.

Strengthening community involvement can be achieved by creating partnerships at a more local level, to be able to work more closely with communities in the planning and delivery of services, taking account of local differences. Over the last seven years, or so, Shetland has attempted to develop local community planning, through the Local Service Delivery Groups, based on the Community Health Partnership Plus model, of integrated health, care and other services within a locality. It has had mixed success and resulted in mixed opinions.

Included within the Community Planning Structures resulting from the 2012 review and implementation of new governance arrangements are a Community Engagement Network and Local Area Forums. The guide states that the purpose of Local Area Forums needs to be explored, setting out a number of options (see Appendix C). This project seeks to contribute to this work.

4. Findings

This section sets out a summary of the responses provided locally, as a result of the consultation, based on the questions set out at Appendix B.

4.1 The Conditions for Communities and Agencies to Work Well Together

When communities and agencies work well together, an environment has been created where there can be open and honest discussion. This enables the development of mutual respect and understanding about the issues being addressed and any constraints. The result may not be of mutual benefit, but there is understanding and respect for the outcome.

1. The community and agency have a desire to achieve a common purpose, often resulting from both being able to understand there is a need for change.

   At times, this can be when a community or community facility is at risk, such as the Bigton Shop, Foula Airstrip and Scalloway Hall. The challenge is to ensure that both communities and agencies see a common end and the need to work together to achieve this.

Resolving Issues at Rudda Court and Areas of Sandveien & Nederdale, Lerwick

Three or four years ago there were examples of threatening behaviour from some residents, resulting in older people being frightened to go out and concerns over the safety of young children.

There was a common desire by Councillors, Residents Associations, the Police and the Community Council to improve the area. They were able to come together to discuss and listen to the issues and work together to resolve. The Neighbourhood Support Workers and Police spent more time in the community and responded directly to complaints; the community began to feel listened to and were able to work directly with staff.

There have been significant improvements in the area and people are no longer concerned for their safety, and that of others.

2. There is a partnership approach, based on cooperation. Decisions can be made together. This has been described as a shift of existing power from agencies to communities; it is about agencies relinquishing some control and communities taking on more responsibilities, creating a better balance and more equal relationship.

   For this to be able to happen, it is essential to have clarity on what can and cannot be discussed. For example, public agencies have certain statutory requirements, which have to be fulfilled, but they may be able to discuss with communities, how these can be delivered. Or an organisation may have decided to remove a service, so the discussion with communities becomes about what needs to be done as a result of that decision.

Yell Ferry Consultation, 2012/13

The first stage of this consultation was led by the Council and involved a drop-in, making information available to communities. This information was not easily understood and it felt like a tick-box exercise; it was not something that communities would want or could easily get involved in.

The second stage involved Senior Councillors and Officers in a meeting with the community. Through this process the community realised that changes to the service were inevitable, possibly resulting in a step change which would be very detrimental to their community. At the same time, officers were aware that they did not have the answers, but that the community, through the Yell Community Council, did. This resulted in a shift in power, towards communities, who were then able to take on to provide solutions. The process became meaningful, with good communication, the development of shared

understanding and a mutual desire to find the best practical solution.

The community felt there was room within the process for them to get involved and for their contributions to be listened to, understood and incorporated. Previous consultations felt like decisions had already been made and that their contributions wouldn't result in any change.

3. There is clarity about who the community or communities and service or services that need to be involved are, and clearly defined ways in which they can be involved.

   This is easier with small, defined, usually geographic communities, where there are clear boundaries and mechanisms for involving them. It is more challenging to resolve in larger communities or when communities of interest are involved. In these circumstances there are many more voices, some who are easy to ignore and others who choose to sit on the side lines.

The Development of Health Centres on Fair Isle and Foula

There was a clear understanding of the communities' and agency's (NHS) needs and a clearly defined aim. The process was made easier because of the geographic boundary of each Outer Isle, with a community-led mechanism providing a route into the community (for example, the Fair Isle Community Association). The community nurses, who are part of each community, also had local knowledge on how best to work together. The result was the establishment of Health Centres on each island, to mutual satisfaction.

4. Senior Managers and Politicians are involved in face-to-face dialogue and are able to provide leadership to processes.

   This ensures that decision-makers within organisations have a thorough understanding of the context and issues, and understand the view point of communities.

Fetlar Working Group

Support from staff within organisations had been provided to Fetlar for a period of time, but progress was slow. The establishment of the Fetlar Working Group was when 'things really got done'. Senior officers of the Council and Councillors were on the group, attending meetings in Fetlar on a regular basis. This enabled:

- Senior representatives to understand and discuss the issues the community faced, first hand, and together develop solutions;
- Actions to be progressed which were able to cut through normal processes; and
- Gave the community confidence, shifting their outlook, as they felt listened to.

5. Organisations are prepared to alter their processes to fit with the ways in which communities wish and can be involved.

   This requires an organisation's top-down approaches and hierarchy to be able to support and accommodate bottom-up approaches, driven by the community themselves.

Wir Community, Wir Choice & Sound Choices

These examples of Participatory Budgeting, in Shetland, have resulted in considerable community involvement in the process of establishing the needs of the area, the allocation of funding and the use of the funding to deliver meaningful projects in the community.

Although supported by Council staff, these were developed in such a way as to enable the communities and community groups to shape the processes to meet their needs. A relatively large number of people became involved; this has helped more people to get enthusiastic about improving their local area.

Key factors contributing to the successes were:

- Community ownership of the process and projects;
- Officers related to people as equals, encouraging voluntary groups and individuals to contribute to their community; and
- A well organised and practical approach, with enjoyable voting events, which the community felt were theirs.

The positive impact on the community continues to be seen, e.g. the Sound Primary visiting Eric Gray and Taing, and the coming together of different groups within the community for events.

Unst Response Team

As well as having other key conditions in place, such as clear leadership, a defined community and resources, the partnership leading the response made efforts to ensure that the community was able to develop and take ownership of progress. This required behind the scenes Community Learning and Development support to build relationships between the team and individuals and groups within the community. A framework was put in place which enabled the community to be involved on their terms.

6. Those with responsibility for the processes ensure it is well-planned and co-ordinated, with practical support to organise, realistic time-scales and clear communication about how communities can be involved. The most successful processes are those where members of the community have been involved in planning how best to involve others.

Local Housing Strategy

The recent consultation on Shetland's Local Housing Strategy (LHS), led by the Council's Housing Service, on behalf of the LHS Group, was set up to provide a number of different ways in which people could receive information and respond, including dedicated phone lines, online surveys and web pages.

7. Communities lead the process.

Northmavine Community Development Company (NCDC)

Since Initiative at the Edge status was awarded to Northmavine, there has been considerable community and economic development within the area, as a result of the work of NCDC. The company has developed a good relationship with communities and businesses in the area, and been proactive and clear on what it wished to achieve. Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and other organisations have provided support, but throughout, NCDC have led developments and have taken responsibility for their activities and the future. This includes ensuring anything they are involved in has to generate income.

One example is the reopening of the Hillswick Shop. NCDC were able to provide the framework within in which the shop could be purchased, refurbished and opened to become a viable shop now providing services to the community and local employment.

8. Organisations tap into communities, and the issues they are facing, by listening to information provided to staff working on the ground.

This is an ongoing process, and requires systems in place within organisations to gather this intelligence.

Police

In recent years the police have placed greater emphasis on being out and about in the community. This has enabled them to be able to pick up information from local people, to be used to tailor resources to certain areas and to provide intelligence for their work. It has helped develop trust between themselves and the communities they are supporting.

4.2 When Agencies and Communities Don't Work Well

When communities and agencies do not work well together, it is often because of their different cultures, processes and structures.

1. Organisations operate in a complex strategic environment, which includes delivering to national and European requirements. There can be a failure to translate the importance and language of this in a way that communities can value getting involved.

Local Service Delivery Groups (LSDGs)

These were an attempt, by agencies in Shetland, to efficiently draw together strands of work required by national government, including the establishment of Community Health Partnerships and local community planning. However, the approach failed to communicate to communities their added value within existing local structures. There was also a lack of leadership and misunderstanding within communities that funding was being removed from Community Councils and channelled into LSDGs.

2. Organisations may be required to consult, or believe it is something that they have to do, but those responsible do not value or understand the process. This can lead to a number of problems, including:
   - Informing dressed up as consultation;
   - The community not feeling listened to;
   - Confusion for communities and agencies and inappropriate methods of involvement as a result of poor planning; and
   - A failure to report back on how the consultation responses have been used.

   Not only does this impact on the piece of work being undertaken, but the impact can be felt for years to come as the community become disaffected and disengaged with other processes.

SIC's Consultation with Community Councils around Budget Cuts

In recent years the Council has cut the budget to Community Councils with little or no discussion or communication. This was frustrating to Community Councils.

Early in 2013 there was a Conference with Community Councils, organised by the ASCC / SIC Liaison group. The Community Councils had been expecting a discussion about the allocation of funding across Community Councils, but instead it was about what sort of services Community Councils could take on, with the opportunity for proposals from the event being put forward to the Council.

There is an impression that these suggestions have been ignored and that the Council went ahead with changes. Respondents felt this was due to poor communication and that the Council wasn't clear on what it wanted to achieve through the process.
NB: due to the relevance of this, to being able to move forward as a partnership between agencies and Community Councils, a summary of the outputs from the Conference is provided at Appendix D.

3. At the current time, many consultations are resulting from a reduction or termination of a service provided by an organisation. The immediate result, from communities, is a feeling of being threatened.

Blueprint for Education

The greatest challenge to this piece of work has been around the threats communities have felt about their schools being closed; no community is going to want their school to be shut.

There have been issues flagged up about the process, such as incorrect information and statements communities felt were inflammatory. This led to a feeling of distrust in the process and set communities up against each other.

However, no one service is responsible for a community, and in the future it is important to ensure that

other services and support workers are involved at an early stage, with community representatives, such as Community Councils, to work through these changes together.

4. Communities do not always understand how to seek assistance or what they need to do. This may be because agencies do not set out how they operate and how people can seek assistance. This may be particularly difficult at the moment, due to the speed of change within agencies, such as the Council. It is important that staff are able to provide the right support, at the right time (either directly or by sign-posting).

Vodafone Trial in Walls

The Community Council responded to a request from the MSP to become a pilot area for improved mobile phone coverage. The Community Council progressed with the project, without knowing that they had to inform the Council, to obtain permissions, at an early stage. When this was discovered, the Council did not respond in a way which assisted the project, nearly causing it to grind to a halt.

5. Strong voices within a community can lobby hard and use their influence to develop projects which may not have a deep-rooted need. In other words, the partnership between agencies and communities is heavily weighted in favour of the latter, which can lead to unnecessary use of resources.

   The importance of different personalities, and the skills and experiences they have, whether in communities or agencies, cannot be underestimated, to the benefit or detriment of change.

4.3 Building on Shetland's Strengths

Responses highlighted a considerable number of Shetland's characteristics which already ensure strong community participation and which can readily be built on. These include:

- Shetland is a relatively small place, with a clearly defined geographic boundary.
- The small population means that many people understand different roles and responsibilities within communities, and who represents them at a political level. This assists individuals and communities to have a voice.
- Its isolation means the community and communities within it are resilient and interdependent.
- Strong community networks, social cohesion and social support mechanisms.
- A strong sense of community and identity within local and Shetland communities, with a willingness to participate.
- Communities are dedicated to their future, and can be particularly motivated around a topical issue.
- Many committed and motivated individuals able to drive communities forward.
- Many people, within communities, understand how to participate: Shetland has a strong heritage of people coming together, within communities, to get what needs doing, done; giving of their time, and money, if necessary. Pre-oil, this is the way communities survived.
- Geographic communities are a mix of people, many who have considerable ability and expertise. People are willing to use their professional expertise within their communities, as volunteers.
- There is an untapped group of potential volunteers in Shetland's young people, returning from being away: doing so would assist them to find their feet again, at a time when family responsibilities are probably at a minimum.
- A vibrant third sector, with a willingness and commitment to do more. Hall Committees are a good example of the volunteering effort.
- A strong, organised and active Community Council Network, with individuals involved who are keen to do the right thing for their communities. It enables good communication with Councillors, particularly through the Clerks.
- Support staff, such as Community Workers and Development Workers, are known within communities, and are able to enable the voices of communities to be heard. A wider group of staff, too, such as

Neighbourhood Support Workers, are able to assist directly with flow of information between communities and agencies.
- As a result of the above, there are opportunities to identify needs within local communities.
- The significant reduction in Council funding, and withdrawal from delivery of non-statutory services provides an opportunity to build on community networks.
- Small communities, know each other therefore willingness to do things and be involved
- Opportunities to maximise benefits from the knowledge we have
- Community Councils knowledge of local priorities and ability to respond quickly and flexibly to support local projects / groups.
- People have a sense of identity and pride in their community e.g. the folk festival, Unst fest, Shetland wool week, fundraising events. There is hardly a week that there's not an event or festival - all done by volunteers, with a positive knock on effect on local businesses.

4.4 Overcoming Shetland's Weaknesses

Conversely, a number of weaknesses were highlighted:

- Policy makers have not demonstrated a belief in the participation of communities and being able to relinquish power to communities.
- A lack of understanding about the needs of different communities and how communities operate and thrive.
- A tendency to think 'we already know', with agencies deciding what communities want.
- Organisational systems restrict the way in which communities are able to participate, preventing bottom-up approaches.
- In recent times the Council has become invasive, even suffocating to communities. The Council has been able to take on the responsibility and delivery of certain activities that individuals and communities used to do for themselves, and, at times, started delivering services that communities did not ask for.
- This has led to a change in people's attitudes about getting involved, placing high expectations on the Council and eroding a historically strong level of community responsibility and skills.
- To a certain degree communities have become complacent and dependent on the Council, and a sense that problems within communities should be sorted by agencies.
- The level of resources meant that money, rather than creativity, could solve any problems.
- The Council employs a high proportion of the working population, which can make it difficult for them to think independently about the future. And a large number of people have only lived in Shetland, so do not have other reference points about the level of standards elsewhere.
- There is burnout amongst volunteers, as those who are capable get asked to take on too much.
- Succession planning within communities has been weak; the 25-50 year old generation tend not to have been nurtured to the level of volunteering required in the future – the lifeskills required by individuals to support Shetland's communities.
- There is an expectation on the voluntary sector to do more, for less.
- Some communities do not have sufficient individuals with the skills, experience or willingness required to engage.
- Other communities have become commuter areas, so the residents do not have the same sense of community identity.
- There is a mix of abilities and representations, amongst Community Councils.
- Community Councillors are mainly co-opted. This can mean that their views are the same as those of the existing members, preventing a broadening of representation.
- There is a lack of clarity about the role of Community Councils, the Association of Community Councils and the SIC/ASCC Liaison Group.
- Community Councils can feel sidelined from decision-making.

- The Shetland character means some are not willing to put themselves forward to take on responsibilities and express their views.
- People's history with their communities can lead to a high level of vested interests and emotional ties. And cliques can exist within communities.
- People can keep their heads down, for fear of reprisal.
- Communities can be risk adverse, some of which can be attributed to red tape.
- Shetland has created a higher level of bureaucracy around health and safety than is necessary.
- Communication between agencies and communities has been poor, but this is improving.
- An absence of information can lead communities to draw conclusions that may not be correct.
- Despite a large number of consultations, there is little evidence of these having an impact on the outcome. This is resulting in communities disengaging from consultation, and cynicism developing.
- Reasons for poor consultation include:
  - a lack of understanding at a senior level,
  - a lack of skills within services to consult,
  - a lack of creativity to involve the smaller voices,
  - confusion over whether an exercise is to inform, consult or involve,
  - queries over the representation of political structures, and
  - a failure to feedback on how information has been used.
- There are a myriad of community groups, which can make it complex and easy to get bogged down in spending time talking to tiny groups, who often have the greatest lobbying power, and fail to ensure the smallest voices get heard.
- Seldom has ongoing dialogue been established and consultations have been divisive for communities.
- Young folk are working and brining up families, so volunteers tend to be older people
- More and more is being asked of volunteers
- Lack of confidence to get involved – people don't want to push themselves forward, but are usually willing to join in once supported to participate. Volunteers need support and nurturing as so much hangs on volunteers – both social and economic outcomes
- Overreliance on individuals, which means that if one cog is taken out of the wheel things can break down

4.5 Effective Community Involvement and Participation in the Future – A Culture Change

Respondents described the need for a step change in the way communities are involved in Shetland life in the future: from involvement in discussions about their future needs, to delivering services within their communities.

One of the key drivers for this is that the Council and other public services are no longer able to do what they used to do. However, other drivers included the positive outcomes and experiences achieved when working in genuine partnership. This step change is seen to provide opportunities for the private, voluntary and community sectors.

The responses have a strong correlation with the outputs from the Scenario Planning process of 2011, informing the development of Shetland's Community Plan. This highlighted the desire and need for the Spirit of Shetland to be capitalised on whilst the dominance of the public sector and adversarial positions become a thing of the past.

Characteristics of this culture change include:

- For communities to understand the need for change, expressed in ways that mean something to communities: to galvanise communities around, 'how can you help us' and to see the opportunities this provides (as opposed to complaining);
- A culture of reduced dependence on agencies, in particular the Council, where communities and individuals are doing more for themselves, and agencies are able to support rather than do (with a developed sense of pride within communities, as they take on more responsibility – 'we do this now');
- For people, communities and organisations to accept a need to work together with honesty, integrity and trust, moving away from the existing adversarial positions. No one person or organisation has all the answers, so the challenges ahead can only be met by a coming together with respect and understanding for different views and constraints, in order to find the best ideas and solutions;
- Agencies and communities working together and across normal geographic and organisational boundaries, recognising that everyone has an equal contribution and part to play in the future;
- Leadership, optimism and motivation within agencies and communities to develop partnerships and ensure inclusive approaches, where those who are easy to ignore and those who do not appear interested, are encouraged to participate;
- Communities are empowered, informed, confident, resilient, and able to shape and influence their development and the way in which services are provided, recognising that agencies do not have all of the answers: 'an evolution of power';
- Building on past skills and ways of working, when individuals and communities did more for themselves. This can involve asking people to get involved, and /or exploring co-production models where there is currently no exchange between neighbours;
- Determining needs from wants;
- Developing a shared vision of what Shetland is trying to achieve, where top-down and bottom-up processes can come together; communities need to be able to develop positive solutions to issues being faced, whilst at the same time organisations need to be open and flexible to respond to the issues and solutions provided;
- Clear methods of communication; and
- Representative methods of consultation and participation.

Comments on 'Services'

'Service' implies something that is statutory, and needs to be delivered by 'professionals'. Therefore communities have a feeling that 'it's not my job'. The culture change required needs to alter this perception with communities taking on more day-to-day activities that they would have done in the past.

More 'services' tend to be delivered in Lerwick, for example grass-cutting, which rural communities undertake to do themselves.

'Services' don't have to be rewarded with money or Terms and Conditions. For example the Fire Auxiliary feel rewarded because of the uniform they receive.

De-Jargonising Community Planning

This is a term which is confusing. It could be translated into 'something needs done in this community, who is going to do it?' Or 'I have a project, how do I make it happen'.
NB: this could be at a local, community level, or Shetland wide level.

4.6 How Can This Be Achieved?

This section highlights thoughts on process, roles and support, to achieve the culture change, and summarises suggestions provided to assist.

4.6.1 Process

Respondents felt it was important to have a simple, clearly defined structure on how the interface between communities and agencies can work. But that this framework has to be flexible to the needs of both communities and agencies and operate so that agencies and communities can understand each others' points of view and share problems.

Any process involved needs to recognise different tiers of involvement:
1) Developing and sustaining two-way communication directly with communities: day-to-day discussions and information sharing within communities, where agency staff meet individuals and groups in their local areas. This includes visiting schools, working outside, meeting groups, which enables agencies to be able to key into what communities are thinking and facing.
2) More formal dialogue, such as at Community Council level, where elected representatives come together to raise issues and respond to agency requests.
3) Strategic decision-making bodies utilising structures for involvement and the views of communities to inform their work.

Process, therefore, needs to be able to achieve the following:

- Capture people's views, where they are; recognising and utilising informal ways of exchanging views;
- Develop a strong evidence base; building on Community Profiles (e.g. Scalloway) to drive forward change within communities and inform;
- Effective top-down approaches:
    - Agencies seek views only if there is seen to be a value to communities in doing so, providing clarity on the purpose and targeting those for whom it is most relevant;
    - Recognising ways in which communities operate rather than service specific silos (e.g. review of rural service delivery or transport);
    - Staff with the necessary skills;
    - Effective planning, realistic timescales, inclusive approaches reaching those who are easy to ignore and the small voices;
    - Feeding back and evaluating impact.
- Clear means of communication, including consideration of a gateway to information for Shetland and communities;
- To be able to 'join the dots' of silo service delivery, in a way that is meaningful to communities;
- Careful use of language: 'these are the problems we need to solve....'. and
- To be able to encourage volunteering at the community level, including exploring co-production.

Ring-Fenced Community Funding

In February 2013, the Council agreed to ring-fence £69,000 of previously Community Council funding, to enable Community Councils and Community Development Companies to use it creatively. Any comments provided during this consultation that relate to this fund are being considered by Community Planning & Development, SIC, as part of the scheme development.

4.6.2 Roles

This section begins to examine the different roles of key stakeholders. Although organisations and representative bodies will have different roles, there is a need for everyone to take on ownership of this culture change.

4.6.2.1 Strategic: The Shetland Partnership Board and Individual Agencies

With a leadership role, across Shetland, individuals, partnerships and agencies have a key role to play in developing a culture change.

This requires:

- Political and strategic buy-in to genuine partnership working with communities; valuing the opinion of communities and that communities have solutions;
- Devolving power to communities, stepping back to provide them with space;
- Commitment to assist communities to understand the need for this culture change and to encourage everyone to think positively and speak positively about the future (building on Scenario Planning outputs).

Suggestions to achieve this included:

- Provide leadership to be able to stand back and ask communities what they can do for themselves;
- Identify champions at a senior level for engagement and community activism;
- Attend training and development in this area;
- Ensure officers are able to work with communities and facilitate the change and value the contribution of Community Development Plans;
- Ensure agencies get it right every time; ten successes will be forgotten by one failure.

4.6.2.2 Community: Community Councils

Community Councils provide a key interface between Council, Councillors, partner agencies and the community. As highlighted in the Community Empowerment Bill consultation, they 'exist between representative and participatory democracy: members are not formally part of representative democracy with a structure that reinforces that they are a lower tier of elected representatives. Yet, at this time they could play a key role as facilitators of participatory democracy, as it should be developing.'

Therefore the development of their role is an essential part of this change.

Statutory Responsibility of Community Councils

"In addition to any other purpose which a community council may pursue, the general purpose of a community council shall be to ascertain, co-ordinate and express to the local authorities for its area, and to public authorities, the views of the community which it represents, in relation to matters for which those authorities are responsible, and to take such action in the interests of that community as appears to it to be expedient and practicable."

- A duty to 'ascertain', as above, and a statutory consultee on planning applications and other representations, such as licensing.
- Discretion to 'any other purpose' and to 'take such action', such as to grant fund other projects, pursue other external funding; act as facilitator, co-ordinate voluntary activity.

This requires:

- The disconnect between Community Councils and Community Planning to be addressed, enabling top-down to meet bottom-up approaches;
- Clarity on their role, with resources aligned to Shetland Partnership priorities;
- The status of Community Councils to be improved, to provide a more meaningful means of strengthening community involvement, which is valued by communities and agencies;
- Broadening the representation of Community Councils, with increased accountability resting with members;
- The often adversarial relationship between Community Councils and agencies to be overcome with the creation of dialogue to resolve issues; and
- Community Councils to become leaders in their community, for the development of projects and delivery of services.

Suggestions to achieve this include:

- Reducing the burden of letter writing, by ensuring agencies attending meetings are able to take concerns back to their agencies to respond;
- Ensure strong links are in place between Community Councils, Community Development organisations and other local organisations;
- Developing and implementing a plan for supporting, communicating and engaging with Community Councils;
- To ask Community Councils whether they would be willing to come together in an area (e.g. Multi-member Wards) on a regular basis, with Councillors and other elected representatives, such as Parent Councillors and representatives of Community Development organisations. This would be to discuss common issues, have direct contact with agencies, be a forum for discussing top-down strategy, and a means of developing dialogue between communities and agencies.

4.6.2.3 Community: Community Development Organisations

Organisations such as NCDC, Fetlar Developments Ltd and Sandwick Community Development Company are proving the benefits of communities taking on greater responsibility.

Suggestions were made about encouraging community activists in areas and rolling out these models.

4.6.3 Support

Many respondents recognised the need for support to the process and support for the development of roles. This support was seen to include:

- To have an understanding of communities (geographic and of interest);
- To develop the strength of communities to participate and develop their own future;
- To build and strengthen existing community mechanisms (Shetland is too small to add any more);
- To be aware of what is going on, within communities, to be able to assist and support, as necessary, when a community identifies an issue or need;
- To be aware of what is going on, within agencies, to be able to act as a link between agencies and communities;
- To provide a smooth channel of communication between communities and agencies, sifting out relevant information and removing the disconnect between communities and agencies;
- Assist in finding external funding; and
- To have an officer allocated to each Ward (or number of Wards), as part of existing role, to be able to support Councillors and provide liaison to bring different parts of the Council together around an issue.

A number of respondents highlighted the role of Community Workers in providing this.

In addition, support also included:

- Removing unnecessary bureaucracy; and
- Upskilling everyone involved in broadening participation (agency staff and communities)
- ICT support and skills development e.g. social media, webpage development

5. Learning from Others

This section highlights interesting, relevant approaches from elsewhere in Scotland, which demonstrate a good track record for impacting positively on community involvement.

It should be noted that none of the smaller CPPs (Clackmannanshire, Orkney, Western Isles) have local community planning structures in place. Other areas, such as Glasgow, have a population of over 100,000 within each Local Community Planning Partnership.

Aberdeenshire:

- Six Community Ward Forums, which bring together Community Councillors and representatives of constituted groups on a regular basis.
- Forums are linked in to Local Community Planning Groups, which involve Councillors and partners, and have responsibility for establishing the needs of communities in an area and addressing them.
- Both are supported by Community Work staff.
- Services are now more responsive.

Argyll and Bute:

- Four Area Community Planning Groups, with membership from statutory Community Planning Partners and local communities (as a resulting of a broadening of Council Area Committees).
- Responsible for ensuring that relevant partners and community representatives in their area have the opportunity to attend each meeting and that steps are taken to report on progress of the Local Community Planning Group to the area's residents.
- Involvement in development of SOA, and development in the area, as well as to resolve service issues.
- Supported by Committee Services and Community Work.

Fife:

- Seven Area Committees, broadened from Council Committees, to include all Community Planning partners. There is no formal link with Community Councils.
- Their role is to plan for the future, resolve issues and scrutinise the delivery of Local Plans.
- Supported by:
  - An Area Manager, who has a role in co-ordinating services to address issues in an area.
  - Locality Service Team Leader, who works closely with communities and community groups, to encourage engagement. Work closely with CLD (community capacity building staff) and individual Councillors.
  - Committees are supported by a Clerk from Democratic Services.
- There is a Local Community Planning Framework for Fife which sets out principles; structures and process for ensuring local areas are involved in community planning.

Highland:

- 22 Ward Forums, established in 2007. Meet in public, led by Councillors and including representatives of community councils and partner agencies. The meetings last for up to 2 hours, with a 20-minute slot allocated at the end of the meeting for questions from the public.
- Elected Representatives (Councillors, Community Councillors, Parent Councils) sit on the Forum, officers are in attendance.
- Supported by Ward Manager, who is responsible for leading the process of community planning at a local level, with responsibility for involving communities, bringing together relevant elected representatives, ensuring efficient delivery of services in a Ward and working with other agencies and communities, as required. This includes supporting CHPs.
- Ward Managers are managed directly by the Director of Corporate Services.

Highland Community Challenge Fund[8]

In June 2012 the Council agreed to work with Community Councils and other community organisations to encourage community empowerment, by introducing a community challenge fund of £1m of recurring expenditure to support community projects which explore new ways of delivering services at a local level. The prime objective of the fund is to help deliver the Council's Programme.

Community groups include:

- Community Councils
- New community groups, or groups coming together for the first time because of the Fund
- Established community groups (your group does not need to be registered as a charity)
- Established social enterprises

They are required to fill out a short form, and are provided with a named contact to keep in touch with.

Any area of Council business is considered, with no limit available for each project, examples include:

- Deliver the same level of Council service at a lower cost and be sustainable going forward,
- Provide a higher level of Council service for the same cost and be sustainable going forward,
- Help to reduce the Council's costs for maintaining premises, by taking on the maintenance and running costs going forward with a one-off fund contribution.

Groups will need to show:

- how the community would benefit,
- that there is support for the project in the community and
- that the project would not be achievable without a one-off contribution.

The Council has a Panel of elected members that will consider all expressions of interest. Some ideas may need to be considered by other elected members at a committee or Council meeting.

There has been strong interest in this, from across Highland, and the Council is currently working through applications. There has been a range of applications, from the very ambitious to small scale local level services.

Moray:

- Six Area Forums set up to cover secondary school catchment areas (two areas choose not to). Each Area Forum brings together representatives from local community organisations and local residents to tackle issues which have been identified through local consultation and influence the planning and delivery of services in their area and across Moray.
- Membership is open to anyone in the area and all community groups and voluntary organisations active in the local area. Elected members are able to attend.
- Funding is provided to cover administrative costs.
- Workers Groups were established in each area, bringing together 20-30 service providers at regular intervals to discuss common themes. Relevant members are expected to attend Forum meetings, when invited, to inform discussion around specific agenda items. These have largely faded away.
- Community Work Team and Community Council Liaison Officer provide support to Community Councils, Area Forums, Moray Forum and Hall Committees. They also facilitate consultation for Council and partners, which is appreciated by services and developing confidence in other staff.

Stirling:

- 6 area community planning forums made up of representatives from community councils, regeneration groups, development trusts and other local groups, chaired by local people. Councillors can choose to attend.
- Officers will attend to consult on issues and if asked to attend.
- Process of establishment was led by the communities: they were asked whether they needed something to improve dialogue with Council and partner organisations.

[8] http://www.highland.gov.uk/livinghere/communitiesandorganisations/communitychallengefund.htm

- Communities have the opportunity to develop a plan. These local plans form the foundation of the Community Planning process. The plan is owned, developed and updated by the community.
- Issues identified in Local Community Plans inform the Area Community Planning Forum priorities.
- They have improved communication, enabled issues between areas to be resolved and assist with the development of community-led infrastructure projects.
- Supported by CLD staff, with senior managers of partners providing a champion role for the process and being able to unblock barriers.
- Impacts around building good relationships, more responsive services, solution-focused and asset building approaches.

Learning:

- The size of Shetland means that it is not necessary to have additional structures, as in other areas;
- Although there is a need to have clear structures in place, particularly at Ward level, it is important to recognise and build on a multi-layered approach, reflecting the need for mixed engagement and targeting involvement to the relevant group or groups.
- Communication and understanding is enhanced in areas where Community Councils and other constituted groups in an area have been supported to come together in order to raise issues, and, if possible plan for the future;
- Local groups have responsibility for broadening engagement and providing information about issues in the area;
- Links have been made in other areas between existing Community Development Plans and Community Plans;
- Some areas have in place a framework for setting out principles, structures and methods of ensure improved linkages between local communities and strategic partnerships;
- Structured meetings, with opportunity for the public to ask questions / raise issues;
- Dedicated support in place provided by the Council (even if part of additional roles) to ensure effective operation of mechanisms; maximising community involvement and understanding; and ensuring services work effectively at a local level.
- Direct link between areas and the strategic partnership and partner organisations, for example, in the form of champions, to ensure accountability and to be able to easily remove any barriers being faced.

6. Key Success Factors

Discussion, to date, has provided a vision for how communities and agencies in Shetland will work together in the future:

- Communities are empowered, informed, confident, resilient, and able to shape and influence their development and the way in which services are provided;
- People, communities and organisations are working together, as equals, with honesty, respect and understanding finding the best ideas and solutions for the future;
- Communities are developing positive solutions to issues being faced, whilst organisations are open and flexible to respond;
- Agencies provide communities with the space to get involved;
- Leadership, optimism and motivation is provided by agencies and communities to ensure inclusive and representative approaches, where those who are easy to ignore and those who do not appear interested, are encouraged to participate and the louder voices are diluted;
- A shared vision of Shetland's future;
- Individuals are motivated to get involved and support others; and
- Methods of communication and dialogue and clear.

There is much strength on which to build:

- Shetland's strong sense of community spirit, and willing, motivated people with the experience and skills to participate and get involved;
- A strong voluntary sector and Community Council network, with willing people, motivated about their community; and
- A network of Community Workers and Community Development Workers.

The contraction of the public sector provides opportunities to capitalise on these and re-find lost skills.

But also challenges to overcome:

- Senior managers and politicians, collectively, have insufficient understanding and belief in a partnership approach with communities, and therefore commitment to the time and support required;
- The Council's erosion of community involvement in recent decades;
- Communities are at different starting points, in terms of their ability and willingness to be involved, with fragile remote and commuter communities being particularly vulnerable;
- Positive outcomes often depend on individuals;
- Mixed abilities and representations of Community Councils and a weak interface with agencies;
- Reaching quiet voices;
- A complexity of mechanisms with which to hold dialogue;
- Unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy; and
- Poor communication and understanding about how to progress a partnership approach.

7. Points for Discussion

The following section teases out key issues, under a series of headings. Recommendations on what needs to change and how this can happen, to address these issues, have been made, where appropriate. These aim to build on the findings of this consultation. In other areas, questions, to the Shetland Partnership Board, have been posed, for their consideration. In essence, there is a need for a culture change in Shetland around strengthening community involvement.

Framework and Process

Issues:

- There is a lack of clarity, about how agencies and communities can and should work together, both in terms of process and structures to use;
- This is particularly challenging where bottom-up meets top-down, at the level of Community Councils;
- There is an inconsistent approach, both across agencies and across Community Councils;
- There is a lack of trust in processes used;
- To achieve good quality and meaningful processes, will require a greater investment in time, at the outset; and
- There is a lack of belief in the need to work in partnership.

Recommendations:

- To strengthen the role of community involvement, using existing community structures by asking Community Councils in a multi-member Ward to come together on a regular basis, alongside Parent Councils, Elected Members and Community Development organisations. This would enable elected representatives to share issues within an area and allow communication with agencies to be streamlined. This would provide a clear framework within which community involvement in Shetland could function effectively. Consideration could also be given to the involvement on young people, and the wider public, in these meetings.
- To set out a clear process for community involvement, building on the three tiers of involvement and meeting any requirements likely to be necessary as a result of the Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill (CERB):
    - Developing and sustaining two-way communication directly with communities: day-to-day discussions and information sharing within communities, where agency staff meet individuals and groups in their local areas. This includes visiting schools, working outside, meeting groups, which enables agencies to be able to key into what communities are thinking and facing.
    - More formal dialogue, such as at Community Council level, where elected representatives come together to raise issues and respond to agency requests.
    - Strategic decision-making bodies utilising structures for involvement and the views of communities to inform their work.
- Develop guidelines to assist, clearly setting out the ethos and rationale for Shetland's approach to community involvement, the framework and process within which organisations and communities can operate and roles and responsibilities. This would meet any requirements, under the CERB, to publicise plans and build on the consultation responses provided in this report.
- Establish a partnership, to replace the Community Engagement Network and Community Regeneration Partnership. This would oversee the development of these recommendations and ensure the successful implementation of all elements of this work. It would report directly to the Performance Group, at each meeting, providing an opportunity to resolve any issues regarding community involvement. It would also be able to provide a strategic link between communities and strategic partnership leads.
- Any Community Profiles and Local Development Plans created by and with communities should clearly link to Shetland's Single Outcome Agreement. This will assist with linkages between strategy and communities.

Roles

Issues:

- Individuals, organisations, partnerships and groups are uncertain about their roles in relation to community involvement;
- There is, therefore, a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities and on authority to act.

Recommendations:

- To review the roles and responsibilities of various key players, within the framework and process established, above, and in consultation. This could be done in light of recent research into rights and responsibilities and must consider the CERB. Key stakeholders include:
    - Shetland Partnership Board
    - Performance Group
    - Decision-making bodies within partner organisations
    - Community Councillors
    - Senior Managers within partner organisations
    - Officers
    - ASCC
    - ASCC / SIC Liaison Group
    - Community Development Organisations
    - Parent Councils
- For those with a Community Learning and Development (CLD) role within organisations, to provide support to develop these roles and responsibilities. This should include the development and provision of training, as appropriate.

Leadership

Issues:

- To date, there has been a lack of consensus across those with a leadership role in Shetland, about community involvement;
- Different agencies have different approaches to consultation, and there has been little alignment and no partnership approach;
- There has been insufficient demonstration of a belief in relinquishing control to communities;
- There has been a lack of buy-in to the need to put the time and resources into developing partnerships with communities;
- There continues to be a lack of understanding about community planning processes, including the involvement of communities within it.

Recommendations:

- If the above recommendations can be implemented successful, it will require the Shetland Partnership Board, politicians and officers, as well as community representatives at a local level to believe in the need for change, and therefore provide leadership, time and resources.

Questions:

- Are the Shetland Partnership Board and the partner organisations represented, willing to lead the change required?
- Are the Shetland Partnership Board and the partner organisations represented, willing to empower communities and enable a shift towards greater control and responsibility resting with communities?
- Are the Shetland Partnership Board and the partner organisations represented, willing to support and assist in the recommendations made?

- If so, what suggestions do members of the Shetland Partnership Board have for achieving this?

- It is suggested that a senior manager within each organisation to be allocated a multi-member ward and to attend and represent the Shetland Partnership Board at meetings where Community Councils in an area come together with other. They would provide leadership, within that area, and strengthen the link between communities and the partnership – champions for community involvement.

<u>Support</u>

Issues:

- To date, support for community involvement has been patchy and inconsistent. The successful implementation of the level and extent of change required will require considerable, skilled support.

Recommendations

- For those with a Community Learning and Development (CLD) role within organisations, to provide support. The support required includes:
    - To build understanding and capacity of the key stakeholders;
    - To ensure the framework and processes for community involvement are in place and robust;
    - To provide a liaison role between organisations and communities;
    - To facilitate and support consultation; and
    - To support champions, should they be put in place.

    In addition support is required to develop roles and responsibilities and training, highlighted above.

APPENDIX A: Consultees

Members of the Shetland Partnership Board, Performance Group and Councillors
Ann Black, General Manager, Shetland Charitable Trust
Mark Boden, Chief Executive, Shetland Islands Council
Christine Ferguson, Director of Corporate Services, Shetland Islands Council
Catherine Hughson, Executive Officer, Voluntary Action Shetland
Rachel Hunter, Area Manager, Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Ian Kinniburgh, Chair, NHS Shetland
John MacDonald, Highlands and Islands Fire & Rescue
Angus MacInnes, Area Commander, Police
Laurence Odie, Association of Shetland Community Councils
Ralph Roberts, Chief Executive, NHS Shetland
Sarah Taylor, Director of Public Health, NHS Shetland

Central Ward: Councillors Mark Burgess, David Sandison and Vaila Wishart
North Isles Ward: Councillors Gary Cleaver, Steven Coutts and Robert Henderson
North Lerwick Ward: Councillors Malcolm Bell, Michael Stout and Allan Wishart
North Mainland Ward: Councillors Alistair Cooper and Drew Ratter
South Lerwick Ward: Councillors Peter Campbell, Cecil Smith & Jonathan Wills
South Ward: Councillors Billy Fox and George Smith
West Ward: Councillors Frank Robertson, Gary Robinson & Theo Smith

In addition:
Anita Jamieson, Executive Manager, Housing Service, SIC
Phil Crossland, Director of Infrastructure Services, SIC
Jan Riise, Executive Manager, Governance and Law, SIC
Helen Budge, Director of Children's Services, SIC
Jeff Shaw, Executive Manager, Mental Health Service, SIC / NHS

Community Councillors
Rosemary Inkster, Clerk, Sandwick Community Council
Kate Massie, ASCC
Averil Simpson, Lerwick Community Council

Members of the Community Engagement Network, Community Regeneration Partnership and Local Development Workers

Penny Armstrong	Sandness Development Worker
Frances Browne	Community Work
Pat Christie	Community Work
Mick Clifton	Community Work
Tommy Coutts	Economic Development
Jonathon Emptage	Environmental Services
Maree Hay	Northmavine Community Development Company Development Worker
Nancy Heubeck	Adult Learning
Catherine Hughson	Voluntary Action Shetland
Brenda Leask	Youth Services
Heather Moncrieff	Community Work
Emma Perring	Community Planning and Development, SIC
June Porter	Community Work
Mhari Pottinger	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Marjoelien Robertson	Planning

Elizabeth Robinson	NHS
Maggie Sandison	Environmental Health
Verona Shaw	Unst Partnership Development Worker
Vaila Simpson	Community Planning and Development, SIC
Maureen Stewart	Community Work
Robert Thomson	Fetlar Developments

APPENDIX B: Framework of Questions, for Discussion

CURRENT SITUATION

Qu 1: Can you please provide an example or examples of where an agency or agencies and community or communities have worked well together.

What worked well?

Why was this?

What was achieved?

Qu 2: Can you please provide an example or examples of where an agency or agencies and community or communities haven't worked well together.

What didn't work?

Why was this?

What was the result?

Qu3: In terms of Community Involvement, what are Shetland's strengths?

Qu4: In terms of Community Involvement, what are Shetland's weaknesses?

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Qu5: If community involvement was to be effective in 5 years time, please describe what that would look like.

Qu6: In order for this to happen, what would need to change?

APPENDIX C: National Context

The following section summarises, chronologically, the key national processes driving forward Community Planning in Scotland, highlighting, in bold, the relevance to community engagement and community planning in Shetland.

Christie Commission[9]

The Christie Commission was tasked with making proposals to the Scottish Government on how Scotland needed to approach the 12.8% real reduction in spend to 2014/15, against a backdrop of substantial growth in demand (such as ageing population and welfare reform) and a track record of failure to deliver to remove negative outcomes. The public sector had made some efficiencies and changes, such as workforce reduction and outsourcing, but a large gap remained, that was seen to require a different approach.

The key findings were around the need to improve outcomes and address issues of sustainability, with recommendations around:

- Acceptance of the need to address 'failure' demand - a whole system and outcome based approach;
- Local integration of public services - their funding, common powers and duties for all public services;
- Preventative action and tackling inequalities;
- Ensure **citizen and community participation in the design and delivery of services**; and
- Ensure greater transparency of costs and performance of public services.

The Scottish Government's response to the report has been to focus on the following:

- Prevention – tackle persistent inequalities (what matters, what works, what stops, thinking about impact on key groups)
- Partnership – place based integration of services (shared design, delivery, resourcing)
- People – workforce development & leadership (middle managers to work in partnership and focus on outcomes and for staff to enable community participation)
- Performance – improvement & transparency (shared accountability, local priorities).

This work, therefore, made clear that **many of the answers to the challenges faced across Scotland can be found when public agencies focus on communities and working more effectively together to reduce demand pressures through a significant shift to prevention, early intervention and a stronger and much more integrated focus on 'place'**[10].

Joint Review of Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreements[11]

The aims of this review recognised the importance of having in place effective Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) to respond to the conclusions of Christie (prevention, early intervention, integration and 'place') and the objectives of the Public Service Reform programme, such as the establishment of single police and fire services and the integration of adult health and social care services. The review recognised the importance of an outcome based approach and partnership working in order to address the challenges facing the public sector and the need to reduce **inequalities in our communities**.

The review has produced a Statement of Ambition, which sets out what is expected of the Community Planning process in terms of partner involvement, identification of priorities, and the achievement of **better outcomes for communities**.

Statement of Ambition[12]

[9] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/publicservicescommission

[10] Community Planning Review Newsletter 1: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/local-government/CP/communityplanningreview/newsletter1

[11] Initiated by Scottish Government and COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) in February 2012.

[12] Statement of Ambition http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/local-government/CP/soa

This document sets out expectations of how CPPs will achieve better outcomes and reduced inequalities for local communities in Scotland through the delivery of high quality public services. It requires CPPs to build on successes by removing barriers to effective partnership working and to ensure that leadership and cultures, systems and structures, and accountability arrangements across public services **fully enable the delivery of better outcomes for communities**.

It highlights **the role of coproduction between communities and the public sector** to help shape and achieve better outcomes within their communities. But that **this can only be achieved with a strong understanding of their communities, and provide genuine opportunities to consult, engage and involve them**. It states that **CPPs must be able to engage closely with the needs and aspirations of their communities, within the context of local and national democratic control**, with strategic oversight of other specific arrangements and accountabilities for key aspects of public service delivery.

The statement goes on to highlight the need for CPPs to understand their local needs and opportunities ('Understanding place') through robust and relevant data, which recognises the particular needs and circumstances of different communities.
It concludes with a set of principles to shape the further work of the review. One of these is:

- To strengthening **community engagement and participation** in delivering better outcomes.

COSLA's Three Mutually Reinforcing 'Locks'

The Scottish Government and COSLA agreed proposals to address the findings of the review:

1. Strengthening duties on individual partners through a new statutory duty on all relevant partners, (whether acting nationally, regionally or locally), to **work together to improve outcomes for local communities** through participation in community planning partnerships and the provision of resources to deliver the SOA.

2. Placing formal requirements on Community Planning Partnerships by augmenting the existing statutory framework to ensure that collaboration in the delivery of local priority outcomes via Community Planning and the SOA is not optional and is made as effective as possible. This includes recognition of the flexibility they afford local partners to **assess local needs, engage with communities and build relationships is fundamental to the success of community planning**.

3. Establishment of a joint group at national level to provide strategic leadership and guidance to CPPs.

As part of implementation of proposals a work-stream focuses on the **need to deepen and extend community engagement**.
The legislative change required to complete two of the three 'locks' outlined above is being taken forward under the Community Renewal and Empowerment Bill.

Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill[13]

This new legislation is currently being developed, and is designed to significantly improve **community participation in the design and delivery of public services and build community capacity**, recognising the particular needs of communities facing multiple social and economic challenges.

The proposed Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill is designed to:

- strengthen community participation

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http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/local-government/CP/communityplanningreview
[13] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/engage/cer

- unlock enterprising community development; and
- renew our communities.

Single Outcome Agreement Guidance[14]

The Scottish Government sees the development and implementation of a new SOA, as a shared, explicit and binding 'plan for place' in each CPP area, as a key element in the delivery of public service reform. The Guidance states that, through new SOAs, CPPs will mobilise public sector assets, activities and resources, together with those of the voluntary and private sectors **and local communities to** deliver a shared 'plan for place'.

Amongst other requirements, the new SOAs **should demonstrate how communities are being involved in the development and delivery of outcomes**. This is to ensure delivery on the Statement of Ambition, which set out that **effective CPPs have strong engagement with communities** and the third and business sectors.

'CPPs and partners should be engaging with their communities in identifying and prioritising the outcomes that are to be delivered, and working with communities to develop their capacity to contribute to community planning and to their achievement of their better outcomes.'

Each new SOA should therefore demonstrate that:

- Activity on community engagement is properly planned, resourced and integrated across partners;
- The quality and impact of community engagement is measured and reported on;
- Building the capacity of communities to engage and deliver for themselves is properly planned, resourced and integrated across partners; and
- Workforce development within and across partners ensures that key staff have the skills and knowledge required to engage effectively with communities.

Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development (CLD)[15]

This was developed by the Scottish Government to help promote a more integrated approach to supporting active community participation in the planning and delivery of services, within the broad framework of public service reform, and in line with the Review of Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreements. The Scottish Government see CLD approaches as integral to the achievement of their vision for how Scotland's public services need to change and that in order to achieve agreed national and local outcomes, community planning partners and national stakeholders need to integrate CLD into their activities:
'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.'

The implementation of the guidance 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.'

The principles that underpin practice are:

[14] http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/library/577-single-outcome-agreements/668-guidance/view-category/
[15] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/06/2208

- 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.

Community Engagement[16]

Effective engagement with communities is at the heart of Community Planning. There is no restriction on the type of community to be consulted, they can be linked to a place or can be a community of interest, for example young people. Information from engagement should feed into the planning and delivery of public services, making them more responsive to the needs of users and communities. Partnerships should, therefore, work together to coordinate community engagement activity and the information gathered. They can draw information on community views from a number of sources for example, the experience of service users, specific consultations, visioning exercises etc. Many Partnerships use the National Standards for Community Engagement to inform their work.

CPPs are also **obliged to report on progress to communities**, giving information on how they have implemented their duties and how services have improved as a result.

Local Context

2012 saw a review and implementation of new governance arrangements for Community Planning in Shetland, with the Shetland Partnership now responsible for Community Planning in Shetland. Included within the Community Planning Structures are a Community Engagement Network and Local Area Forums. The Shetland Partnership guide states that the purpose of Local Area Forums needs to be explored, setting out a number of options.

[16] http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/scrcs_006693.hcsp

Community Engagement Network

The role of the Network is to ensure community engagement is at the heart of community planning.

Remit

The Community Engagement Network will:

- Implement processes, which enable regular and effective communication between participants in the partnership and with the Shetland community
- Provide support for community engagement, sharing good practice and promoting opportunities for engagement
- To guide the further development and implementation of the National Standards for Community Engagement
- To raise awareness of the Community Engagement Standards within all partner organisations
- Implement processes, which enable the development of shared information and intelligence systems to support community planning
- Organise Shetland Partnership summits
- Design and carry out Citizen Panel surveys at least annually
- Share information on community planning partners' consultation and engagement with local communities
- Establish a two-way dialogue on the impact of community planning on the local community
- Carry out an annual review of the Community Engagement Network's progress and membership

Membership

Membership will be open to relevant officers from partner organisations

Chair

The Network will be chaired by a lead organisation

Schedule

The Network will meet at least 6 times per year

Reporting

The Community Engagement Network will report progress to the Board every six months.

Local Area Forums

The purpose of local area forums needs to be explored and clarified in Shetland.
Options for the remit of a local area forum include:
Bringing together a wide range of community representatives and service providers to look at key issues facing their local area

- Creating a shared vision and developing local community plans and related action plans
- Establishing task groups to take ideas forward or delegating actions to existing local groups
- Reaching out into the broader community to find out their views and getting local people more involved in decisions that affect them
- Functioning as a centralised point for consultations regarding initiatives and developments proposed for the area
- Local focal point for contributing to and reporting achievements of Shetland Partnership groups
- Reporting progress to the Shetland Partnership
- The Community Engagement Network will consider options, taking into account the role of Local Service Delivery Groups, Community Councils and other local groups. The network will present a report on options to the Board within three months.
- Once the Board has discussed and approved the way forward, the Community Engagement Network will implement and establish the preferred option in the community.

Membership

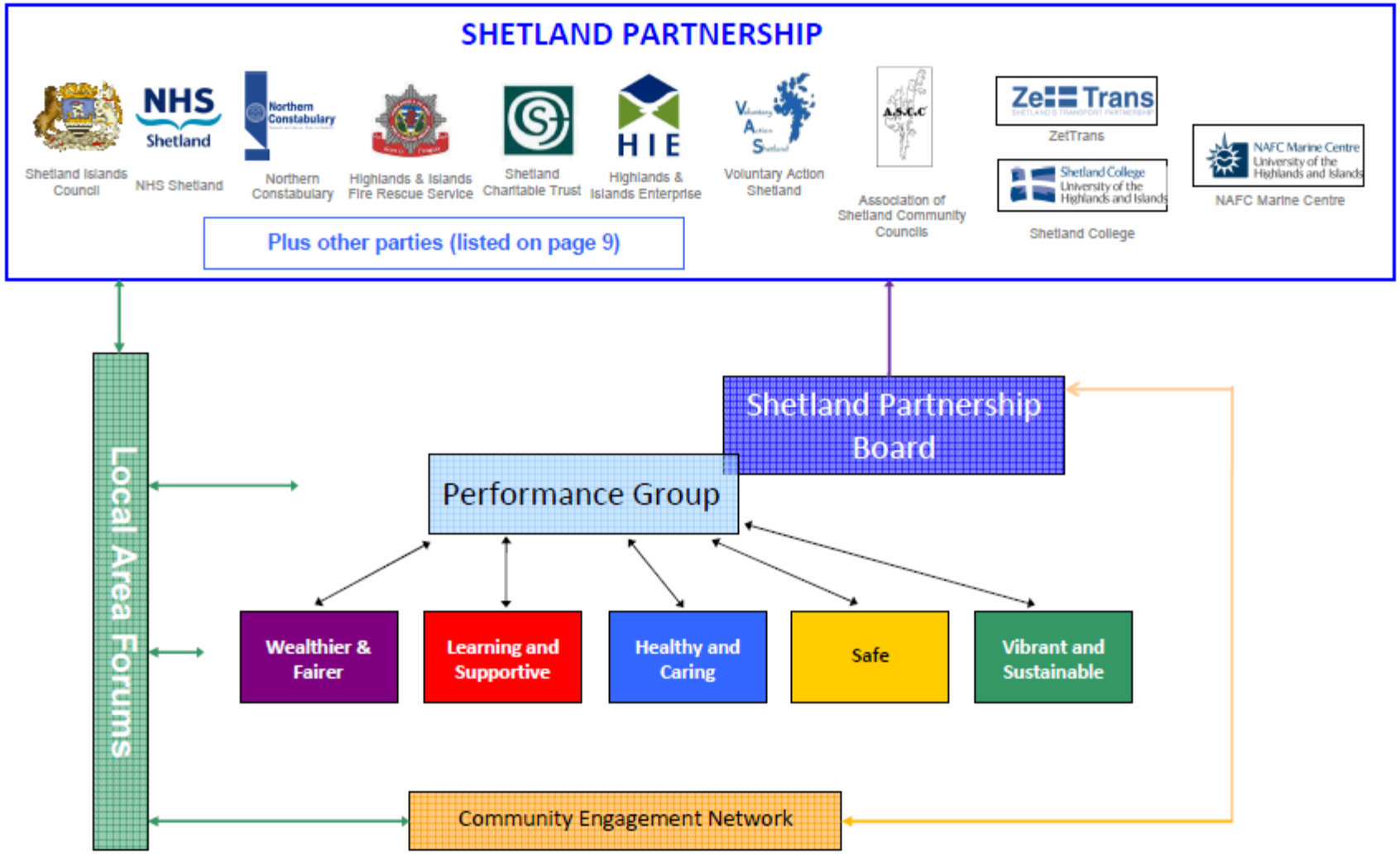
Membership could include community councils, voluntary and service groups, parent councils, youth groups, tenants and residents groups, local businesses, faith groups, local clubs, schools, elected members, local service providers, representatives from Community Planning partners including the Council, NHS Shetland, Police and Voluntary Sector

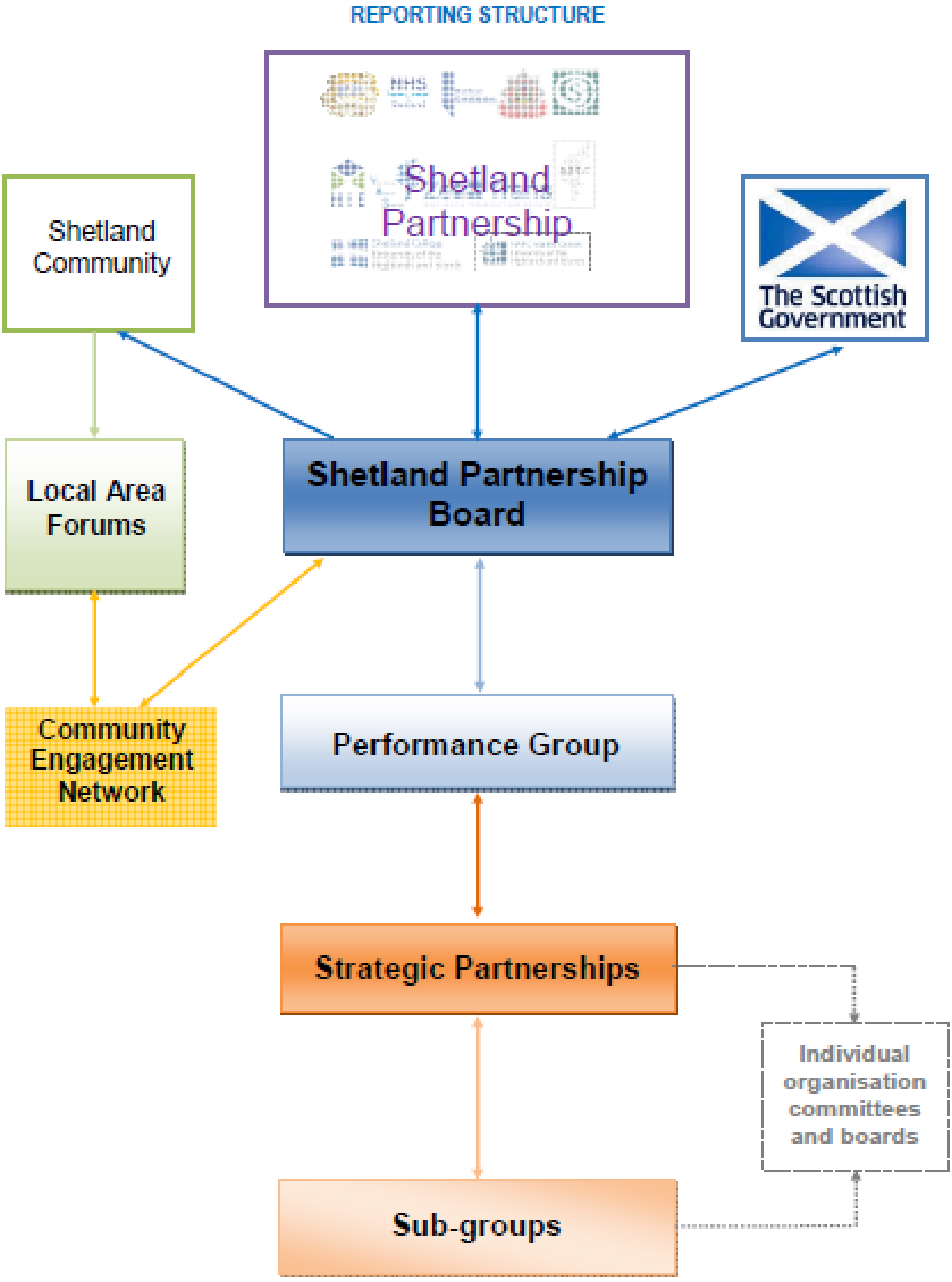
Role of Elected Members

Elected Members have a particularly important role within the Shetland
Partnership both because the Council has a statutory duty to lead on community planning and they have an important community leadership role in relation to engaging with communities.

Elected Members are involved in the Shetland Partnership as:

- Members of the Shetland Partnership itself, of the Board and of the Strategic partnerships where they have a strategic leadership role
- Members of partner bodies, playing a key role in determining the contribution of the partner body to community planning
- Representatives of the ‘voice’ of communities of place or interest


SHETLAND PARTNERSHIP
Shetland Islands Council
NHS Shetland
Northern Constabulary
Highlands & Islands Fire Rescue Service
Shetland Charitable Trust
Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Voluntary Action Shetland
Association of Shetland Community Councils
ZetTrans
Shetland College
NAFC Marine Centre
Plus other parties (listed on page 9)
Local Area Forums
Shetland Partnership Board
Performance Group
Wealthier & Fairer
Learning and Supportive
Healthy and Caring
Safe
Vibrant and Sustainable
Community Engagement Network


REPORTING STRUCTURE
Shetland Partnership
Shetland Community
The Scottish Government
Local Area Forums
Shetland Partnership Board
Community Engagement Network
Performance Group
Strategic Partnerships
Individual organisation committees and boards
Sub-groups

APPENDIX D: Conference Report

INTRODUCTION

A joint conference between Community Council Chairs (with a few other members), members of the Association of Community Councils, representation from Voluntary Action Shetland, SIC elected members and senior officers was convened to consider what additional, if any, services could Community Councils undertake in the future. Discussions had been ongoing between Association members and SIC officers for some time without demonstrable progress and therefore they had jointly agreed to arrange a conference. It became apparent towards the end of the conference that a number of delegates had expected the conference to consider the proposed budgetary reduction for Community Councils planned to be presented to the Council as part of the overall budgetary setting process on 20 February and thus concern was expressed that this topic had not been considered in detail during the conference.

FORMAT OF CONFERENCE

Following introductory remarks by Laurence Odie, Vice Chairman of the Association, the conference commenced with three Community Councils briefly presenting some of the work they were undertaking beyond that which may be considered standard Community Council duties. Lerwick, Sandwick and Scalloway members all gave examples of innovative work they were engaged in including supporting communities and individuals during difficult times, such as floods and fires, working with arms length companies to support the provision of services including large scale projects such as the Sandwick pier project at a cost of £800K. Supporting elderly people within the community was another example; this related to Christmas visits and gifts and was financially supported by local businesses. Supporting community garden spaces and woodland areas were also exampled. Other grant provisions made by Community Councils included sailing training for young people and town centre Christmas trees. Close working with other bodies was also described including with community policing. The community representation nature of community council work was exampled through engagement over previous Anderson High school plans. Other cited examples during the discussion period included specific work with the SIC on major reviews, most recently the ferry review where a community based and acceptable solution had been devised through the Yell Community Council. Supporting unadopted roads was also seen as valuable work. Emphasis was placed on the voluntary nature of Community Council members input and thus expectations of Community Councils should be considered with this in mind. The non-homogenous nature was Community Councils was described with different issues being prioritised between remote and rural areas compared to more populated areas, transport being a key consideration for more rural Community Councils.

Jan Riise, Executive Manager, Governance and Law then presented the current duties of Community Councils, highlighting the legal framework, the statutory obligations, duties, discretion and the limitations. He emphasised the ability to find 'work arounds ' where limitations existed, but was clear about the necessity of recognising limitations and dealing with them. He summarised his presentation by reminding Community Council members to:

- Make sure minimum legal requirements are met to satisfy duty;
- Awareness of risks and challenges when stepping into the arena of discretionary activity;
- Make sure you can evidence that the performance of either meets community expectations.

Christine Ferguson, Director of Corporate services then lead a session setting out possible future services for Community Councils (see appendix 1), the list had been developed by the Directors, two of whom were present (Phil Crossland, Director of Infrastructure and Neil Grant, Director of Development) and contributed to the presentation. She explained that the items on the list fell into two main categories; services the Council may cease and would not be in a position to support

financially and services the Council would like others to take on and would support. She also asked delegates to consider whether there were additional services that Community Councils felt they could support or provide more cost effectively than the Council currently does and therefore should be added to the list. She explained that where Community Councils are able to deliver actions relating to Single Outcome Agreement priorities more cost effectively than the Council then funding would be provided.

James Gray, Executive Manager, Finance also presented information on the Council's medium term financial plan confirming that council revenue funding will reduce by circa 30% over the next few years and the capital programme has been reduced by 50%. He also described national funding projections and comparative costs of community councils nationally, demonstrating the funding provided to Community Councils from the Council in Shetland is high compared to other Local Authority areas. He posed specific questions for delegates to consider:

- Given that the SIC is likely to make further significant cost savings in the roads budget should the Community Councils retain the current local funding for roads or should that funding be part of Shetland-wide spending on roads?
- Should the spend on Community Council administration continue at its present level of circa £100K given that it is now a higher proportion of the budget than was the case when the overall budgets were higher?
- Should Community Councils retain discretionary grant funds given the grant funds have been drastically reduced across the Council?

These questions invoked some debate where a number of delegates voiced their desire to retain the status quo although some views were expressed on how administration costs could be reduced including in relation to the costs of the Association (administration costs were further discussed during the group work).

GROUP WORK

Following lunch two group work sessions were held. Three groups were convened: North and North Isles, West and Central, and Lerwick and South, each group was facilitated by a Council Director. The first session asked delegates to consider what more, if anything, do Community Councils believe they could take on? The second session was designed to assess the viability of those additional things Community Councils identified in the first session, by asking them to analyse each proposed service under consideration using the following criteria: community benefit, legal constraints (if any), implementation costs, risks, opportunities, implementation requirements.

SUMMARY OF GROUP WORK OUTPUT

In effect the two work shop sessions overlapped with analysis taking place at the time of service consideration in some instances. The list provided by Christine Ferguson formed the basis for discussion. In summary delegates concluded that whilst everything on the list was of importance there were some services that Community Councils would wish to support rather than have a locus in providing. Those services included Community Care provision.

The main output from the workshops concentrated on potential involvement in infrastructure services and to a lesser extent transport. There was also an appetite for reviewing administration costs although Community Council Chairs were very clear on the value of their clerks.

The key concept developed in relation to Infrastructure was the potential to create geographically-based Community Caretaker posts. Groups varied in their view as to whether these post holders should be self employed, employed by the Council and tasked by Community Councils or employed through some arms length mechanism of Community Councils.

The tasks that such a post holder could undertake requires more detailed work, but the types of activities include overseeing public toilets, rural grass cutting including maintenance of graveyards, rural street cleansing, arranging uplift of bulky waste if the current arrangements for skips is

changed and potentially contributing to rural transport needs by driving the community mini buses. Cleaning and looking after bus shelters was also considered, but this would require the Council to agree to undertake any major maintenance. It was also suggested that reporting potholes could be incorporated in this role; however the Director of Infrastructure explained the legal ramifications in this area and why the current arrangements should be maintained. The aim would be that Community Councils would work along with Council officials to develop a specification for the afore mentioned job. Council officials would require to ascertain the financial resource available and then, regardless of the employment status of the post holders, Community Councils would prioritise the services to be delivered in their area so that community needs could be best met within the resources available.

Whilst arranging the uplift of bulky waste was suggested as a potential inclusion in the proposed Community Caretaker role it was specifically raised as an important area Community Councils would wish to be involved in plans to resolve the anticipated problems if skips are no longer available. Likewise maintaining public toilets was seen, by some, as a task that could be included within the duties of Community Caretakers, but there was also a view that, with the support of Community Councils and SIC, some public toilets could be taken over by the private sector.

Community transport was seen as a service that could be better organised with the potential for Community Councils providing a co-ordinating role for dial-a-ride services.

The bus station and rural freight transport service was debate by groups. The Lerwick and South group were keen to explore the possibility of outsourcing the bus station to a third party e.g. a taxi firm who could occupy and run the building thus providing a 24/7 facility at no cost to the Council, indeed income would be generated.

Some groups also debated the administration of community councils and in particular whether the duties of the Association could be performed more cost effectively within Community Councils thus freeing up funds. They also considered whether there was a case to amalgamate some Community Councils to reduce overheads and fixed costs. The value of promoting and developing partnership working with other bodies including with Voluntary Action Shetland was cited on a number of occasions during the Group work. Improving partnership working was also raised in relation to the Council, both Community workers and Local Service Delivery Groups were suggested as possible options to promote joint working.

There were a few items on the list presented by Christine Ferguson that brought mixed responses and thus should be considered in more detail by Community Councils, these were youth clubs, campsites and dial-a- ride transport.

OTHER ISSUES

Two specific issues were raised aside from the programme.

The first; as mentioned in the introduction to this report related to the proposed reduction in funds to Community Councils from the Council being presented to Elected Members as part of the budget setting process on 20 February. Community Council members were concerned this had not been debated as part of the conference and were clearly concerned about the viability of taking on additional work if funds were going to be reduced by the expected 30%. Whilst it was recognised there was not time between the Conference and 20 February to construct an agreed costed action plan it was agreed that Christine Ferguson would include information to Elected Members summarising the positive progress made as a result of the Conference. There were also a number of elected members present who heard and participated in the debate.

The second issue related to the need to improve communication. Delegates described how community council clerks currently spend an inordinate amount of time chasing up information from Council departments and others in order to fulfil their statutory duties in relation to consultation. This is an area that warrants further exploration.

NEXT STEPS

Community Councils should debate this report and draft action plan feeding back responses to the joint SIC/Association meeting in April where the action plan should be finalised.

A process should be agreed in early course to discuss community council funding with Community Councils for next year. In the meantime Christine Ferguson would include information to Elected Members summarising the positive progress made as a result of the Conference.

DRAFT ACTION PLAN

ACTION (what)	RESPONSIBILITY. (by who)	TIMELINE. (by when)	PLANNED OUTCOME
Community Councils to consider the conference report and action plan, make amendments where necessary	To be co-ordinated through Community Council Chairs and the Association	To be completed for discussion with Council Officers at the joint meeting in April 2013.	An agreed action plan
Develop the Community Caretaker model: Community Councils to develop a specification for a Community Caretaker role Council officials to ascertain financial resources available for Community Caretakers	To be co-ordinated through the Association. Directors of Corporate Services, Infrastructure and Development	Initial work to be done by April 2013.	An agreed position on Community Caretakers leading to implementation if viable.
Undertake a communication audit to ascertain the problems and extent thereof being experienced by Community Council clerks	Association	May 2013.	Improved communication, avoidance of duplication of effort in processing business.
Review value and costs of Association including by involving Community Council Chairs	Governance and Law	Summer 2013.	Best use of resources
Explore the possibility of out sourcing the bus station to a third party	Director of Infrastructure	May 2013.	24/7 facility for rural freight transport with potential income generation.
Agree a process in early course to discuss Community Council funding with Community Councils for next year	Director of Corporate Services/ Executive Manager Governance and Law	Before the end of March 2013.	Clarity of funding arrangements

Consider in detail whether there is any value in amalgamating Community Councils and, if so, whether the estimated savings would provide value for money.	Executive Manager Governance and Law working with The Association and Community Councils	Summer 2013	Agreed number of Community Councils
Further exploration should be undertaken to ascertain if closer partnership working with VAS could helpfully develop the role of Community Councils	Association and VAS	April 2013.	Increase community benefits through synergies where possible and practical.
Community Councils should consider whether they would wish to have a locus in: • youth clubs, • campsites • dial-a-ride transport	Community Council Chairs to debate with Community Council members and feedback their responses through the Association to Director of Corporate Services.	May 2013.	Clarity on Community Council input to those services that brought a mixed response at the Conference
Any plans to change the arrangements relating to bulky waste from skips should be discussed with Community Councils	Director of infrastructure.	As and when any changes are proposed	Ensure bulky waste disposal is available within communities and acceptable to communities.
Explore the possibility of private sector interest in running and maintaining public toilets	Director of infrastructure in liaison with relevant Community Councils.	As and when closures are agreed	Maintaining public toilets where possible
Consider how more productive partnership working between Community Councils and the Council could be achieved.	Governance and Law	Summer 2013.	Increased community benefits achieved through active partnership working.

Appendix 1

Children's Services	
Youth work – junior youth clubs	
Breakfast clubs and after school clubs	
Campsites	
Infrastructure	

Public Toilets	
Esplanade toilets	
Rural street cleansing	
Bulky waste	
Grass cutting e.g. grave yards	
Lerwick bus station	
Bus shelters	
Development	
Community minibus services	
Dial-a-ride	
Community Care	
Lunch clubs	
Day services	
Meals on wheels	
Corporate Services	
ASCC	
Admin support for Community Councils	