



Supporting Communities - Phase 5

Supporting place-based approaches in Moray

Interim Report – 3/5/19

Background

Scottish Community Development Centre, as part of its Supporting Communities Phase 5 Programme' is working to support the implementation of place-based approaches in community-led regeneration.

The term 'place-based' ... is currently used to describe a range of approaches, from “**grant-making in a specific area to long-term, multi-faceted, collaborative partnerships aimed at achieving significant change**” ... (Lankelly Chase)

Over the past couple of years Scottish Government has developed the 'Place Principle' which emphasises the need for a more **collaborative** and **participative** approach to how services, assets and resources are directed and used in places (as defined by the people who live there). The application of the 'Place Principle' in Moray is explored in more detail later in this report.



After initial exploratory discussion SCDC agreed to progress with Moray as one of the 'place-based' sites in this year's Supporting Communities programme.

The work in Moray has focused on supporting the locality plan pilots as follows:

- Buckie Central East Locality Plan Pilot
- New Elgin East Locality Plan Pilot

Agreed Outcomes from SCDC Support:

- Participants and partners have a shared understanding of the community engagement process in developing the locality plan pilots and have learned about enablers and barriers to this process.
- There is improved/enhanced community capacity in both pilot areas.
- There is increased capacity across community planning partners to implement the locality plans, and roll-out locality planning across Moray.
- There is common agreement and commitment from community planning partners on how best to use the experience to progress locality plans at the end of the pilots.

Detailed Programme Support:

In order to achieve the above outcomes SCDC is delivering a programme of work which includes the following key elements:

Action learning with each of the locality 'teams' (workers and community reps) to enable them to:

- Reflect on community engagement so far, learn from experience and share practice.
- Identify (and take) practical actions to further develop community participation in the locality planning process.
- Reflect on these actions, share learning and develop further actions through a co-inquiry process.

Training/Capacity Development:

Training for officers and community reps involved in the locality plan development. Training areas to be identified but may include community action planning, community engagement and community capacity building. Specific areas and timings to be identified by CSU staff.

Strategic Development:

Inputs on the national programme and local programme development have been provided to the LOIP Oversight Group and CPOG.

Other Support:

In addition, SCDC is providing some info/comms support, and shared learning opportunities both online and with other Supporting Communities sites across the country.

Outputs/Activities to date (May 2019):

Direct support:

Direct support to and involvement in the locality working groups: 4 sessions in New Elgin from 4/9/18 through to 13/3/19; 3 sessions in Buckie from 5/12/18 through to 13/3/19. The direct support has included direct participation, co-facilitation, provision of information about the national programme and access to materials.



Issue prioritisation in New Elgin

Team reflection and support:

The support has included sessions with the locality teams to reflect on the engagement process and help them to plan next steps. Face to face sessions took place on 5/9/18 and 6/12/18. Informal support has also been provided by phone, email and face to face.

Review and Learning:

An Interim Review session was held with the Locality Teams on 14/3/19. This session focused on the experience of the engagement process so far and used the National Standards for Community Engagement to generate key learning points.

Other Support:

SCDC has provided some info/comms support to the New Elgin group including info graphics and early report design. Information has been provided to both Working Groups on other useful materials and resources as well as detailed information on the Community Action Planning Toolkit developed for Argyll & Bute.

Learning from the Programme so far

There are some important themes which have emerged across both areas as follows:

- The continuity of involvement of the participants in the process is important. This drives ownership at a community level and so buy-in and on-going resourcing from CP partners is needed.
- There is a need for consistency of communication with all participants and at a range of levels.
- There needs to be sufficient time and resources to support inclusion and to conduct robust engagement. It is important to note that robust engagement processes cannot be rushed and are highly dependent on relationship building.
- Flexibility of approach is fundamental to supporting an inclusive engagement process. It is important to be able to adapt methods, change venues, and adjust meeting times to suit the participants.

In addition to these themes we need to ensure that there is a strong connection between what's happening at the locality level and decision-making at management/strategic level within the CPP (and the individual partner agencies). There is little current evidence of this and it is an area that needs to be addressed.

The other key area that needs attention as the action planning process moves forward is the community capacity building role, and support for this. It is vital that community capacity building support aims to develop local ownership of the process as well as the finalised plans. This is a discrete element of the support and should be recognised as such in the planning and review activities, as well as in any planned roll-out of locality planning in Moray.

The Place Principle and its application in Moray Locality Planning

In this section the key elements of the 'Place Principle' are outlined along with an interim assessment of the position in Moray and particularly in the implementation of the locality planning pilots (this is in *italics*).

- **Place Principle Element - There is a shared understanding and agreement of the boundaries of the 'place' and how these are defined. There must be an agreed common bond and boundaries must make sense to the collaboration.**

Application in Moray Locality Planning has been a challenge for the locality teams. Neither of the 2 areas selected for the locality planning pilots make much sense as community areas although New Elgin East has more of a common identity. The difficulty is largely down to statistics - the areas are based on 'intermediate data zones' which are decided centrally in Government to allow areas to be comparable –

but they don't tend to correspond to natural communities. This also causes some difficulty in achieving community buy-in and makes it more difficult to gain community engagement in the process. The locality teams have managed to achieve good levels of community engagement to date but this has tended to be despite the boundaries rather than because of them.

- **Place Principle Element - There is desire for change in the collaboration and some urgency or energy to make this change happen.**

Application in Moray Locality Planning has been mixed. There has been a clear initial drive for change coming from the CPP and some of the partners. There is also a desire for change evident amongst the community reps and agencies at an operational level who are involved in the process. However, this is not widespread at all levels within the partnership, or across all sections of the local communities. It is clear that more work needs to be done but there some early signs of progress.

- **Place Principle Element - There are multiple partners in the collaboration – e.g. community, 3rd sector, public sector, private sector – involved on an 'equal' and shared basis in terms of power/influence, vision, understanding.**

Application in Moray Locality Planning shows that there are clearly multiple partners in the collaboration in both localities. There has been lower involvement of the private sector in the early stages of the process although this is likely to increase as actions are identified which require the involvement of private sector interests (e.g. Stagecoach – changing bus times). The development of collaboration on an equal and shared basis is still in its infancy. Locality team staff have been focusing on the production of the action plan and community engagement in this to date. The main focus for the next stages of the process will be on building community capacity to take much more of an active and leading role in taking the locality plan forward.

- **Place Principle Element - Effective collective decision-making takes place in the collaboration – this is based on trust, openness and mature relationships between partners.**

In Moray it is perhaps a bit too early to demonstrate effective collective decision-making but it is clear that the development of mature, open and trusting relationships is progressing well in both localities. The action planning sessions are developing as a collaborative model which can be built on as the plans take shape and move towards implementation.

- **Place Principle Element - There is a collective strategy for change with agreed outcomes, goals and measures.**

Both localities in Moray are now at the stage of drafting their action plans. The key aspects of these plans will be agreed outcomes, goals and measures.

- **Place Principle Element - Resources are in place or are being sought to support the collaboration over time (at least 2-3 years with a vision for longer-term change)**

In Moray, resources have been put in place to support the collaboration through to completed production of the locality plans. It is also recognised that successful implementation of the plans will require on-going support for the community representatives to continue to be actively involved. There is also a clear desire from Moray CPP to roll-out the model to other locality areas in Moray over the coming years. There are some concerns about rolling out to the other areas too quickly before evaluation and reflection has taken place, so it is important to ensure that learning is gathered and fed into the planning process in other localities.

Overview

There are clear areas of progress in the development of Locality Planning in Moray. The breadth (and depth) of community engagement in the early stages of the plan development has been particularly noteworthy. The attention to inclusion, and the flexibility of approach employed by the locality teams led to genuine community engagement and in some cases the involvement of people who have not previously been involved in community activity.

There are still challenges, however, particularly in looking at how the locality planning context connects to and informs both the strategic planning processes of the Moray CPP and the operational planning of the main Community Planning partners. There are also key challenges in the next stage of the process in continuing to develop the capacity of community reps to continue and deepen their involvement, and to ensure that this is sustained over a longer period of time. It is essential that the community capacity building resource deployed through the Community Support Unit and Health Improvement Team is maintained and used to continue the important work that they have started over the past 18 months.

David Allan - SCDC

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