

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

6th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6)

Tuesday 28 February 2023

Evidence session on Community Planning: Post-legislative scrutiny of Part 2 of the Community Empowerment Act

Introduction

1. This paper provides background information to inform the first evidence session on the Committee's post-legislative scrutiny of Part 2 of the Community Empowerment Act. Part 2 of the Act relates to community planning.
2. The Committee will hear evidence from two panels of witnesses, with Panel 1 focusing on the national context, and Panel 2 on how inequalities are being addressed.
3. Subsequent evidence sessions will include Community Planning Partnerships, national statutory community planning partners, local partners (health and education), community groups, the Community Planning Improvement Board, the academic perspective, and the Scottish Government.

Panel 1

- Tim McKay, Deputy Chair, Accounts Commission
- Carole Calder, Audit Scotland
- Cllr Steven Heddle, Vice President, Cosla
- Stuart Graham, Community Planning Network

Panel 2

- David Allan, Deputy Director, Scottish Community Development Centre
- Kirsty McNeill, Policy and Research Officer, Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights
- Peter Kelly, Director Poverty Alliance
- Ruth Whatling, Head of Policy and Equality, Homeless Network

4. It is expected that the Committee's consideration will focus on some key themes:
 - The challenges faced by communities, and whether Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) are improving inequalities
 - Community empowerment and participation with community planning, and CPPs' engagement with the third sector
 - The impact of Locality Plans and Local Outcome Improvement Plans

- Measuring the impact of community planning
- Partnership working across CPP members
- The leadership role of local and national government

Background

5. This inquiry is looking at the impact of the Community Empowerment Act 2015 ('the Act') on community planning and how Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) respond to significant events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis.
6. It continues the Committee's scrutiny of the Act begun by its predecessor Committee. Previous inquiries have examined different parts of the Act, including provisions relating to community asset transfers, allotments, and participation requests.
7. Community planning is about public bodies working together with local communities to design and deliver services – it is **not** about spatial planning, NPF4, planning permission or council planning departments.
8. In recent years, the focus of community planning partnerships (CPPs) has been on tackling inequalities, introducing more preventative policies and supporting partnership working between public bodies at the local level.
9. There are 32 CPPs, one per local authority area. Each CPP has a Board and various policy-themed strategic forums, which bring together representatives from local authorities, the NHS, police, fire services, the third sector, business, education, and community bodies. At the local level, there are also Neighbourhood Partnerships or Local Area Forums for stakeholder deliberation and community participation.
10. Part 2 of the Act changed how community planning is delivered by CPPs. CPPs have to develop Local Outcomes Improvement Plans ('LOIPs') and also more targeted 'locality plans' for smaller areas which need more support. Statutory partners (identified in the Act) also have to work with communities to involve them in community planning.
11. Read the Scottish Government's guidance on [Part 2 of the Community Empowerment Act](#)

Inquiry engagement

12. In November 2022 the Committee issued a call for views which sought the views of community planning partners. It also launched a survey for other organisations, individuals and communities about their experience of community planning. Both were live until 13th January 2023. The published responses can be viewed at [Community Planning inquiry - Scottish Parliament - Citizen Space](#) and a summary will be made available at [Community Planning Inquiry | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

13. On 30th January 2023, Committee members joined an online engagement event with third sector and community organisations, where they heard about their experience of community planning. A summary of the discussions will be made available on the Inquiry webpage at [Community Planning Inquiry | Scottish Parliament Website](#)
14. Committee members have also visited Paisley to meet with representatives from Engage Renfrewshire and partner organisations based in Ferguslie Park, where they heard about the benefits of community planning in supportive partnership work.

Committee Clerks

February 2023