

MORAY COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP FAIRER SCOTLAND FUND: IMPROVING LIVES, REGENERATING COMMUNITIES PROPOSAL

The Moray Community Planning Partnership (CPP) agreed at its meeting in March 2008 that the Fairer Scotland Fund proposal should be linked with the overall Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) prepared by Moray Council and agreed by the Partnership. It is the aim of the Partnership to ensure that the work carried out under Fairer Scotland Fund (FSF) will be fully integrated with the SOA by 2009.

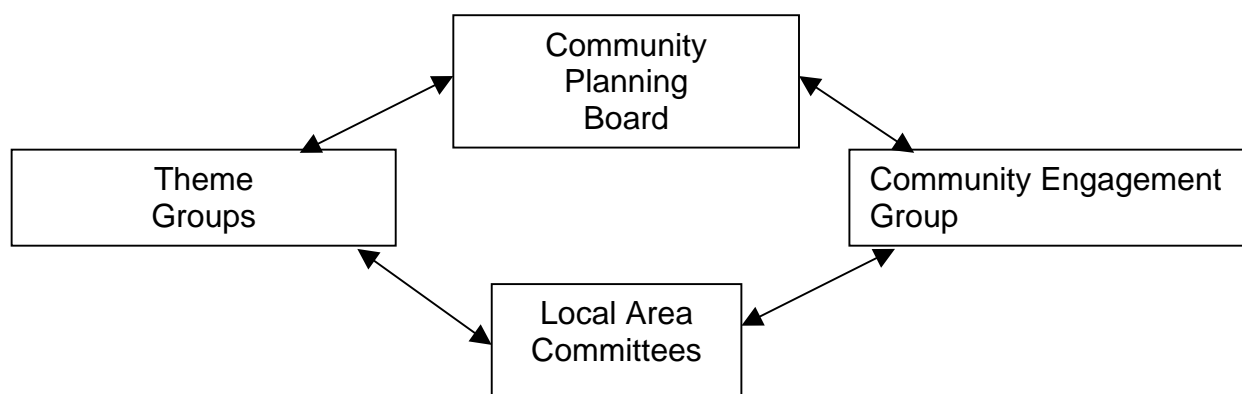
This was underlined when the new Board of the Partnership at their first meeting on 29 May 2008 supported the outline proposal and agreed that the final submission to the FSF should be based on the outline proposal submitted to the Scottish Government in March 2008.

Many of the structural causes of poverty and disadvantage will be addressed within the SOA and where possible the use of the FSF will complement the existing outcomes and actions outlined in the SOA. As with the SOA agreed with the government, directional targets have been identified in the attached templates.

This document will outline Partnership priorities and approach to the use of the FSF in tackling poverty and deprivation in Moray. It will address how we will use the fund to assist in regenerating our most disadvantaged communities, improving the life chances of individuals and groups experiencing poverty and disadvantage and for improving employability particularly for young people and other hard to reach groups. It is intended to use the fund as a catalyst to influence service planning and delivery and direct mainstream resources to best effect in tackling poverty and disadvantage.

Partnership

Community Planning structures has been revised in Moray in order to ensure that elected members are appropriately represented at each level within the partnership and to ensure that there is clear political and democratic leadership within the community planning process. The structures can be represented as follows: -



The Community Planning Board provides leadership to the partnership and comprises representatives of all the partners in the community planning partnership and senior Councillors.

The Community Engagement Group ensures that all sectors of the community have an opportunity to influence the delivery of public services in Moray. This group has representation from all Theme Group Chairs, partners agencies, community and voluntary

sector representation. This group will have an essential role in the development of the SOA and the Fairer Scotland Outcomes but its main role will be in developing community engagement.

The five Theme Groups address the five strategic objectives of the Government and bring on board professional expertise and the voluntary sector to review issues and policies in specific areas. Each theme group can create co-ordinating and operational groups that can develop the strategic decisions agreed by theme groups.

Eight Area Committees are now being established as a first step in the decentralisation of some elements of Council business. The aim is to strengthen local members' influence over the planning and delivery of local services giving them a key role to play in community leadership and overseeing community planning at the local level.

Moray currently has eight Area Forums, which provide community input to the Community Planning Process. There is a consultation underway to consider the relationship of local structures for engagement such as Area Forums and Community Councils, to the proposed Area Committees.

Governance

The Community Planning Board will have overall responsibility for the FSF.

The Community Engagement Group will be responsible for strengthening the relationship with the community, Theme Groups, and the partners.

The Safer and Stronger Theme group which has a remit for social inclusion will have a specific responsibility for managing the Fairer Scotland programme on behalf of the Partnership.

Transitional Arrangements

In Moray there has been experience of the development of a Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA). In Moray this was based on a thematic approach, the theme was Young People and Moray Youthstart was the vehicle for the ROA. This has been given interim funding through the FSF as a part of a managed transition. The experience of the ROA, the More Choices More Chances Strategy and the experience gained by the partners in a range of initiatives will influence the ongoing development of the FSF.

The Partnership has requested that projects funded through the constituent funding streams are continued until September 2008 and evaluations presented to the Partnership in August 2008. This includes funding for:

- ***Moray Youthstart (projects funded by Youthstart will be evaluated)***
- ***Moray Mobile Information Bus***
- ***Youth Justice***
- ***More Choices More Chances Strategy***

Some element of funding may have to be retained to continue elements of these projects if the Partnership agrees that they can make a contribution to the overall FSF programme.

Staffing Proposals

The Community Planning Partners agreed at their meeting in May 2008 that they would wish to appoint the following posts funded by the FSF:

Fairer Scotland Co-ordinator

Fairer Scotland Administrator

Community Analyst

These posts will provide assistance to the Partnership in establishing and developing the FSF proposals.

REGENERATING THE MOST DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES.

In Moray we have just 2 data zones in the 20% most deprived areas, both of which are in Elgin. This represents just 1.7% of Moray's data zones. Practically all areas which are most deprived are found in the larger towns, with concentrations in the centre of Elgin, the north of Forres and the east of Buckie. However in Moray we also need to consider the needs of specific groups who experience exclusion or deprivation including those in the more rural areas of Moray. To do that we need to have a clear understanding of deprivation and poverty across Moray and we would look to carry out research into this while developing more relevant local indicators to base the future investment of the FSF. The engagement of those people experiencing poverty and disadvantage in the process of tackling issues is essential and the participation of the community in the development of the FSF is central to its success.

Intelligence gathering

In order to regenerate Morays most disadvantaged communities we need to develop a clear understanding of the extent and nature of depravation in Moray through co-ordinated intelligence and a high quality of community engagement. We need to have a strategic perspective from the partners and from those people who are experiencing poverty and disadvantage to allow us to monitor and evaluate impact. We will use the transitional period to allow us to create a clearer picture of the Poverty and disadvantage in Moray and to allow us to set and establish clear targets. The appointment of the Community Analyst by the Partnership will give the capacity to gather and analyse existing intelligence and research from across the partnership into deprivation. This will allow effective targeting and allow us to undertake new research to assist us identify the levels and nature of rural deprivation in Moray and develop a set of deprivation indicators for rural Moray. This is considered a key step in the development of a Partnership approach to tackling poverty and disadvantage and will be a resource that will influence the future development of the SOA and thereby the use of mainstream service provision and resource.

Community Engagement

Moray has a good network of community engagement with Community Councils, Tenant's associations, a citizen's panel, active Community Halls and Associations. Moray also has an active youth participation framework. There has been limited support in the past to ensure that those who live in more disadvantaged communities are participating in community planning.

The Moray CPP has established a Local Community Planning Framework. This framework includes 8 Area Forums made up of a range of community interests and The Moray Council is establishing 8 Area Committees with elected members who will develop local area plans and ensure community engagement participation in the Community Planning process. This is currently the subject of a consultation exercise with the wider community. There will be additional Council resources allocated to support the Area Committees and the development of community engagement through Area Forums and Community Councils.

Community Learning and Development have targeted capacity building support in areas identified as areas of multiple deprivation.

Apart from developing work in those areas identified in the SIMD as most deprived, there are a number of communities of interest e.g. young people, migrant workers, travellers,

people with disability and older people. The CPP is establishing a Moray Equality Forum to begin the process of engagement. The group has held its first meeting and will provide a forum for a wide range of minority ethnic groups, migrant workers, people experiencing disability, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transsexual groups, women and people experiencing learning difficulties.

The work of the Youth Inclusion project and other consultation work carried out by Moray Youthstart and others indicate that young people clearly want a voice in influencing services but for those more vulnerable young people this means more intensive support. To ensure effective participation requires a longer-term approach in supporting and building the capacity to fully engage. There is not currently enough capacity to ensure that the process is fully inclusive, and that the more disadvantaged communities are well represented in the process of community planning. The Partnership intend to develop the capacity to support and develop community engagement within geographic communities and communities of need through ensuring capacity building support to local communities and providing resources to tackle issues that they have identified. Financial support will be targeted to those most disadvantaged communities to allow them to do so. Consideration will be given to providing a specific fund to support Area Committees develop community engagement.

The partnership will consider over the transitional period how best to provide that support to disadvantaged communities'. The establishment of Area Committees will allow the partnership to decide on effective mechanisms to provide resources.

Moray CPP has also formed a Local Action Group who have submitted a bid for LEADER programme funding. The bid will focus on the LEADER priorities of "Revitalising Rural Communities" and a "Progressive Rural Economy" these will complement the activities of the FSF in that the actions funded will include making the best use of community capacity, strengthening community facilities and improving social participation by young people.

IMPROVING THE LIFE CHANCES OF INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS EXPERIENCING POVERTY AND DISADVANTAGE

In Moray the Community Planning Partners are already trying to address a range of factors such as fuel poverty, a low wage economy, long term unemployment, low attainment, substance misuse and disability that contribute to poverty. Moray has a number of developments currently underway which are targeted at improving the life chances of individuals and groups experiencing poverty and disadvantage. We will build to enhance that provision and to identify clear gaps in provision before establishing new initiatives. We have identified that there is a need for more co-ordinated and integrated working between partners. There needs to be a clear mechanism for sharing information and developing a clear understanding between partner agencies about respective roles and opportunities for collaboration.

Networking

The current More Choices More Chances strategy for Moray and the work of The Moray Youthstart initiative have both identified that in work with young people there is a need for more co-ordinated and integrated working between partners. There needs to be a clear mechanism for sharing information and to allow a clear understanding between partner agencies about their respective roles and opportunities for collaboration. The facilitation of networking, co-ordination and sharing of information was a key element of the previous ROA and there is a need to sustain and develop this function across all the areas of the FSF and not simply for young people. The Community Planning Partnership has agreed

to appoint a co-ordinator whose job will be to manage the development of the FSF, to provide a clear focus for the sharing of information and integrated working across the Partnership and to develop a framework for effective networking. The post will be a senior post and will be accountable to the Partnership at a strategic level. The post holder will also have responsibility for ensuring that effective networking across the relevant agencies and sectors around poverty takes place. We will further invest in the capacity to develop and facilitate networking, co-ordination and information and to expand that work beyond that of young people to include all those working with disadvantaged communities and individuals.

Information and Advice

There is also a need to look at the process of information and advice provision to those experiencing poverty and disadvantage. This includes advice and information on health, employment, financial matters, training and youth specific information. Existing work with Welfare Benefits staff and money advice shows that there are clear economic and social benefits in ensuring the uptake of financial benefits and support in dealing with debt both for the community and the individuals. There are capacity issues around the provision of welfare benefits advice in Moray and although there are good examples of integration in the provision of not only money advice but advice and information generally. We will invest in building the capacity of the Partnership to provide welfare benefits' advice and improved information to those people experiencing poverty and disadvantage.

The Fairer Scotland Co-ordinator will be given the job of bringing together the wide variety of information and advice providers and to develop an integrated information and advice Strategy and consideration will be given to how this can be resourced.

Development Projects

There are a number of issues specific to Moray that cause or contribute to poverty in Moray; the low wage economy, fuel poverty, poor housing and homelessness, substance misuse debt, low attainment, a lack of qualifications, short term employment, literacy and numeracy issues and offending behaviour. The FSF will contribute to tackling these issues through some of the measures discussed earlier in this submission. The Partnership will identify and assist develop projects that clearly contribute to tackling the root causes of poverty and disadvantage, and that can contribute to achieving the outcomes outlined in the SOA. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate a high level of community and user control of the project.

The Moray LEADER bid if successful will also provide project funds in rural Moray to assist strengthen local services and in improving economic participation by young and older people.

IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY

The partnership believes that work is for many people an effective route out of poverty. It wants to increase the opportunities for sustained employment for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in order to lift them permanently out of poverty. There are a number of actions contained in the SOA aimed at improving the overall employability of people in Moray and addressing the structural issues to encourage economic growth and increase opportunities for employment including the development of social enterprise. Work will be carried out to ensure that the vulnerable and disadvantaged in Moray can benefit from any increase in opportunities and are supported into employment.

More Choices More Chances

The Partnership has established it's More Choices More Chances strategy and is working to develop the action plan to reduce the numbers of young people not in employment,

education or training, however the SOA has identified that more needs to be done to increase opportunities for vulnerable people. The More Choices More Chances strategy is working to establish early intervention strategies, develop and enhance partnership-working looking specifically at the key worker role. It sets out to ensure strategic planning and integrated working - linking to current plans and to establish comprehensive shared systems for the tracking of young people who are in need of more choices and more chances and those young people who could potentially join that group. The partnership will provide support to allow the More Choices More Chances strategy to continue through the appointment of an Employability Co-ordinator and provide financial support to ensure the implementation of the Strategy.

Workforce plus

The current workforce plus partnership needs to be revitalised and consideration has been given to how best that can be achieved. It has been agreed that the Moray Lifestyle and Working Partnership (responsible for Work Force Plus) and More Choices More Chances Strategy group will merge and form a Moray Employability group.

The Employability group will take forward the Moray Workforce Plus programme and will also consider mechanisms to support people on benefit back into training and employment.

The Partnership's Youth Strategy recognised the need to create more opportunities for young people. The partners are working to increase those opportunities such as the apprenticeship scheme being developed by The Moray Council but there is a need to provide flexible support for the more vulnerable to take up these opportunities. The Partnership will explore using the FSF to ensure that there will be supported employment programme for young people who are identified as being in the group of young people in need of more choices and more chances in order to take advantage of these opportunities.

The Partnership is also applying for ESF funding through the Highlands and Islands Scotland Programmes to develop programmes that will support young people in the Forres and West Speyside.

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