

Reimagining Community Planning in Scotland: A Vision from the Third Sector

Written by Oliver Escobar on behalf of
members of Third Sector Interfaces and
Voluntary Action Scotland

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For information on **TSIs** please see: <http://www.vascotland.org/tsis/what-is-a-tsi>

What Works Scotland www.whatworksscotland.ac.uk

What Works Scotland aims to improve the way local areas in Scotland use evidence to make decisions about public service development and reform.

What Works Scotland is working with Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) and stakeholder partners to achieve its aims, namely to:

- Identify and better understand what is working and not working in public service delivery in Scotland, and how we can translate knowledge from setting to setting
- Contribute to the development of a Scottish model of service delivery that brings about transformational change for people living in different places across Scotland

What Works Scotland (2014-2017) is a collaborative between The Scottish Government, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow.

This Working Paper is one of a series of papers that What Works Scotland is publishing to share evidence, learning and ideas about public service reform.

Authorship

This report represents the views of the participants in the TSIs Forum *Reimagining Community Planning in Scotland*.

The author's job was to facilitate the Forum and collate the outputs developed and agreed by the participants.

Contents

1. Summary	2
2. The process behind the Vision	3
3. Background: Community Planning and TSIs.....	5
4. Starting from ideas, principles and values	8
5. Mapping problems and barriers	9
6. A Vision for action.....	12
7. Conclusions: Towards Democratic Community Planning.....	21
Annex 1– Forum Delegates.....	23

Acronyms

VAS – Voluntary Action Scotland
TSI – Third Sector Interface
CP – Community Planning
CPP – Community Planning Partnership
SOA – Single Outcome Agreement
COSLA – Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

Please note that 'inverted commas' indicate words and sentences taken **verbatim** from forum participants.

1. Summary

In December 2014, TSI representatives gathered for a two-day Forum to review evidence and deliberate on the future of Community Planning (CP). They started by outlining broad ideas, values and principles to guide their deliberations, and agreed that the overarching aim is to achieve 'better outcomes, better lives', with particular focus on tackling inequalities. Forum participants then mapped problems and barriers that stand in the way.

On the basis of that work, they then generated 17 Vision Statements around 4 themes:

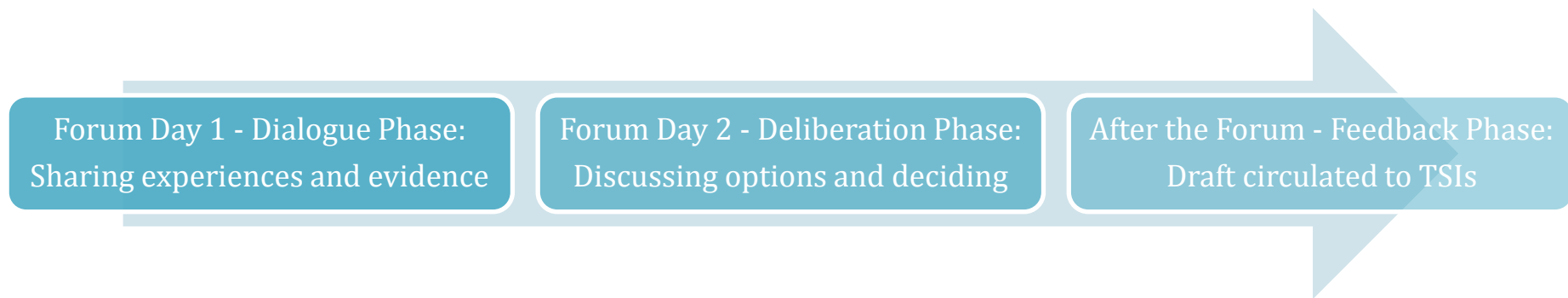
- Developing a new role for CP in local democracy
- Turning CP into a space for collaborative and participative decision-making
- Improving how CP works
- Developing a new role for the third sector in CP

The Vision outlined in this document offers a bold approach for reimagining CP as an empowered space capable of developing better services and solving local problems through policy innovation. This is a collective Vision for 'Democratic Community Planning'.

2. The process behind the Vision

In December 2014, TSI representatives gathered at the University of Edinburgh for a two-day Forum convened by VAS and facilitated by the author of this report. The purpose was to reimagine Community Planning in Scotland in the light of evidence and from a Third Sector perspective.

The forum was designed to be a deliberative process. Day 1 was dedicated to sharing experiences and evidence¹ on Community Planning, as well as outlining broad values and ideas during a 'future visioning' exercise. Day 2 was focussed on deliberating on practical steps towards the vision, and agreeing a set of proposals.



There were different views and perspectives articulated at the Forum, but this document demonstrates the considerable work that participants put in finding and building substantial common ground.

To be clear, the Vision is not intended to represent the aspirations of everyone in the third sector. In such a diverse sector the expectation that it may 'speak with one voice' seems not only unrealistic but also potentially detrimental. Arguably, it is precisely that diversity which keeps the sector vibrant and evolving.

¹ The evidence presented included international scholarly research on collaborative governance and partnerships, as well as studies of Community Planning in Scotland (e.g. reports by Audit Scotland).

The TSI representatives who took part in the Forum (see Annex 1) kindly gave their time to work intensively over two days to develop this Vision. The draft was then circulated to all TSIs for feedback and discussion. The result, therefore, is not intended to be 'the Vision' but 'a Vision' to stimulate deliberation about the future of Community Planning and the role that TSIs and the third sector might play.

The structure of this document is as follows:

- Section 2 provides some background on CP and TSIs.
- Section 3 summarises the principles and values that Forum participants considered crucial for rethinking CP.
- Section 4 outlines some of the challenges of CP mapped out by Forum participants.
- Section 5 presents the 17 Vision Statements resulting from this process, including actions for implementation.
- Section 6 offers some concluding reflections about next steps.

3. Background: Community Planning and TSIs

This year is the twentieth anniversary of Community Planning policy in Scotland². Over the years, CP has evolved on the basis of various reviews, national policy frameworks and local developments (see Box 1 for a timeline).

Recently, the 2011 *Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services* has brought new focus around 4 themes that had been gaining momentum for some time:

- Participation – “Reforms must aim to empower individuals and communities receiving public services by involving them in the design and delivery of the services they use”.
- Partnership – “Public service providers must be required to work much more closely in partnership to integrate service provision and thus improve the outcomes they achieve”.
- Prevention – “We must prioritise expenditure on public services which prevent negative outcomes from arising”
- Performance – “Our whole system of public services –public, third and private sectors- must become more efficient by reducing duplication and sharing services whenever possible”.

Community Planning Partnerships are increasingly seen as key vehicles for public service reform following the Christie Commission, and the themes above are often mentioned as key drivers behind SOAs and other CP work.

Nonetheless, successive evaluations and reviews (see Box 1) have been critical of the limited achievements of CP, particularly regarding the integration of services, the role of partnership work in solving problems and achieving outcomes, the shift towards preventative approaches, and the involvement of communities in policy making and public service delivery.

² See Escobar, O. (2015) *Twenty years of Community Planning in Scotland: An overview*, What Works Scotland.

Box 1. Milestones in the evolution of Community Planning policy

- Community Planning pilots (1995-1999)
- Community Planning Task Force (2001)
- Local Government in Scotland Act (2003)
- Statutory guidance on Community Planning (2004)
- Audit Scotland Report (2006)
- Concordat and Single Outcome Agreements (2007)
- Development of Third Sector Interfaces
- Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services (2011)
- Audit Scotland Report (2011)
- Review of Community Planning (2012), Statement of Ambition –Scottish Government and COSLA (2012)
- National Community Planning Group (2012)
- Strategic guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development (2012)
- Audit Scotland Reports on CP (2013, 2014)
- Voluntary Action Scotland reports (2012, 2014)
- Parliamentary Local Government Committee (2013, 2014)
- COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy (2014)
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015)

Over time, the third sector has gained a prominent presence in CP, particularly since the development of the Third Sector Interfaces as key intermediaries. The 2012 and 2014 reports by Voluntary Action Scotland highlight some of the achievements:

- TSIs are substantially involved at all levels of CP
- TSIs are developing multiple 'bridges' and relationships via CPPs
- CP strategies and plans now better reflect third sector priorities

- Some TSIs are directly involved in contributing to SOA outcomes

But they also highlighted some problems:

- There are issues around 'joint working', 'some felt the third sector was not treated as an equal partner'
- There are problems regarding capacity –i.e. multiplicity of forums and meetings; level of input required

The 2014 report by Audit Scotland points to a similar range of achievements and challenges:

- TSIs are represented on all 32 CPPs, but there can be a lack of understanding among CP partners about their role
- In working with CPPs, TSIs may be involved in coordinating engagement with the third sector, sharing knowledge of local resources (e.g. community groups and volunteers), and reporting on their views and knowledge for the third sector locally
- However, they are not a substitute for consulting and working with individual voluntary bodies or engaging with local communities

Despite progress, TSIs face two interrelated problems that were broadly recognised at the Forum:

- Representation – TSIs often struggle to engage with a cross-section of their sector in order to appropriately represent them in CPPs.
- Influence – TSIs struggle to function as equal players, and have a similar level of influence to other partners, in CPPs. This challenge is accentuated by the previous, as exerting more influence may partly depend on being able to claim some level of representativeness of the third sector.

Summing up, CPPs have evolved considerably in the last decade, but much of their potential remains unfulfilled³. In this context, the role of the third sector in CP remains ambiguous and problematic. Against this backdrop, this TSIs' Forum sought to create an ambitious Vision to develop CP as a more meaningful space in local governance, including a more substantial role for the third sector.

Participants developed the Vision after discussing their local experiences in light of national and international evidence (e.g. studies of partnerships and local governance; CP evaluations; TSIs evaluations) and in connection to current policy frameworks (see Box 1) and other relevant initiatives (e.g. Christie Commission; COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy).

³ See Escobar, O. (2015) *Twenty years of Community Planning in Scotland: An overview*, What Works Scotland.

4. Starting from ideas, principles and values

The first step at the Forum was to outline the broad ideas, principles and values that participants argued should guide CP. These were grouped in 5 themes agreed by consensus:

- **People and communities should be actively involved in decision-making.** Key ideas in this theme revolved around communities leading on CP, particularly in terms of setting the agenda and making decisions.
- **Developing structures that enable a more vibrant local democracy.** Participants stressed the idea of placing CP in the broader context of local democracy and the institutionalisation of new forms of participation (i.e. ‘citizens’ parliaments’, ‘participatory budgeting’). Another key idea here was that local authorities might focus more on providing statutory services while local services could be decided through local community forums.
- **Developing values, behaviours and practices that foster a CP culture.** Key ideas here revolved around collaborative working becoming the core ‘professional value’ across public services, and ensuring that power is distributed equitably amongst CP partners particularly in terms of decision making.
- **Effective resourcing through a collaborative approach.** Participants stressed that the focus should be on what works for communities, rather than for service providers. They discussed numerous ideas including: pooling budgets and sharing resources across public and third sectors for agreed outcomes, co-location of some CP partners to encourage new ways of working, more service delivery by community owned businesses and social enterprises, and using participatory budgeting to allocate core budgets.
- **Better lives, better outcomes.** Participants prioritised the reduction of health and social inequalities, and the need to evidence how CP is achieving outcomes for individuals and communities. They saw this as the overarching theme that should guide all the above.

5. Mapping problems and barriers

After outlining broad ideas and principles, and before developing actionable Vision Statements, the Forum dedicated time to map out various problems and barriers that may stand in the way. These points⁴ were not agreed by consensus, and thus reflect a range of experiences that were not necessarily shared by all Forum participants. Indeed, many noted that some issues were exclusive to certain CPPs. During the Forum participants could vote to indicate priority problems, and therefore the first 4 points under each question were the ones with most votes.

What prevents CPPs from achieving better outcomes?

- CP is not focal in decision-making – it is a secondary arena
- Facilitating equality between CP partners
- ‘Doing to’ instead of ‘doing with’ communities and partners
- Vested interests –i.e. how to pull apart the party political from decision-making so that decisions are made on the basis of community needs and not short term party-political priorities (this short-termism may also apply to the third sector)
- Problems of accountability and transparency –i.e. need more information and consultation, and less backroom dealing (e.g. funding)
- Criteria for budget spending –i.e. if third sector overspends, then it doesn’t get more; if public sector does, it may get more
- Lack of sharing information across CPP and with communities. But also danger of information overload (e.g. inappropriate info)
- Lack of high quality local data
- Lack of dialogue on outcomes > fit for purpose (i.e. difficult to quantify soft outcomes but just as important) and easy to understand by everyone
- Who is involved in determining the outcomes? i.e. if Scottish Government predetermines nationally, then local priorities may be compromised. This may apply to indicators too (i.e. HEAT indicators)
- How to know outcomes are achieved? Measurable or not? How do we know we have achieved change?
- Attribution > demonstrating impact is difficult if our work gets muddled with everyone else’s

⁴ The points are outlined verbatim with minor editing.

Are there any barriers preventing collaboration between CP Partners?

- Professional inertia – ‘we work in a certain way’
- Lack of understanding of CPP + Partners > lack of shared purpose
- Focus on bottom line rather than Social Return on Investment –ideological clash
- Other structures, multiple bureaucracies – tensions created elsewhere
- Lack of space in budgeting for trying new approaches
- Having the right people in the room in terms of attitude and level of responsibility
- Lack of agreement on values and behaviours
- Professional arrogance and autocratic leadership
- Initiatives determined by where the money comes from, rather than by where it is needed
- Distribution of resources
- Unhealthy competitiveness
- Keeping up with change
- Disproportionate representation of Local Authority in CPPs
- National directives can clash with local priorities

Are there any barriers preventing the third sector from contributing to Community Planning?

- Capacity and resources of the third sector –high demands of CP
- Role definition for the third sector – leadership, representation and mandate (or lack of)
- Language and understanding in CP
- Poor communication and feedback in CPP
- Power balance in CPP

- Co-option and legitimation –i.e. avoiding biting the hands that feed you prevents challenge and scrutiny by third sector representatives within CPPs
- Mutual accountability in CPP
- How central are CPPs in actual decision making
- People –personalities, culture
- Lack of negotiation and influencing skills by third sector representatives
- Duplicity and unhelpful competition within the third sector

6. A Vision for action

Having considered broad guiding principles, as well as problems and barriers, the Forum generated, discussed and agreed a total of 17 Vision Statements.

A Vision aims to be aspirational, rather than operational. Therefore, the detail about its implementation is left open for the debate that this report seeks to stimulate. Nevertheless, the Forum proposed potential actions and who may be able to undertake them.

Participants worked through areas of disagreement until finding a formulation of the statements that everyone at the Forum could support. The statements are presented below under 4 themes:

- Developing a new role for CP in local democracy
- Turning CP into a space for collaborative decision-making
- Improving how CP works
- Developing a new role for the third sector in CP

A new role for Community Planning in local democracy

The Forum concluded that CPPs are currently ‘secondary arenas’ when it comes to making decisions on policies and public services. In other words, participants argued that the ‘real decisions’ are made elsewhere. They saw this as limiting the CPPs capacity to work collaboratively on achieving outcomes and finding innovative solutions to pressing local problems.

On this basis, they concluded that if CP is to become a key driver in public service integration and local policy innovation, then there should be reforms to give CPPs a more central role in decision making. Nonetheless, they recognised that CPPs will not always be the appropriate decision making structures, and therefore any new responsibilities must be developed within the overall framework of national and local governance. By the same token, they insisted that CP also follows the principle of subsidiarity so that decisions are taken at the most appropriate level of the CPP (e.g. board, thematic forums, local forums).

	Vision Statement	Actions	Who can take action
1.	Community Planning (CP) should be a central hub for decision making , where the Partners hold each other mutually accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing a strategic plan including clear stages towards this goal - Consider changes to governance arrangements of statutory bodies - Build alliances to advocate for making CP focal in decision making - Adapt the vision of the COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy to guide the reform of CP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Community Planning Group - Scottish Government - VAS, TSIs, CP champions from statutory sector - Political parties
2.	<p>Co-production of plans and budgets should be at the core of CP work. This may require that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPP is the single budget recipient • The CPP allocates resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a step-by-step process towards sharing totality of resources and enabling co-production - Identify quick wins, i.e. neighbourhood budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CPPs - CPPs

Vision Statement	Actions	Who can take action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The totality of resources matches the remit required by the SOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Government to review and reduce national requirements in order to allow local co-production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Government
3. Decisions should be made at appropriate levels, with subsidiarity as the guiding principle for CP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping of local structures Defining roles and 'layers' of powers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPPs

Community Planning as a new space for collaborative decision-making

In the context of CP becoming a central space in local democracy, the Forum envisioned CPPs as spaces for collaborative and participative decision making. Their Vision Statements outline key dimensions and implications regarding roles, capacity, leadership, structures and approaches. The Forum also discussed what language should be used to refer to 'who participates' – i.e. 'citizens', 'communities'. They decided to use 'people' to include both, thus recognising that participation should directly involve citizens as well as intermediaries (e.g. community representatives and activists).

Vision Statement	Actions	Who can take action
<p>4. There should be co-decision making between statutory sector, third sector, elected representatives and people. This requires that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP Partners are regarded as equal • Capacity to participate in CP is equitably and proportionately resourced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and, if necessary, amend legislation to make co-decision the norm in CPPs - Shared and rotating responsibility in CPPs (including TSIs) - Capacity building and resourcing to enable equality of partners facilitating CP - Clarify how representative and participatory democracy can work together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament - All partners - Scottish Government and all partners - Voluntary Action Scotland and What Works Scotland
<p>5. Participants have autonomy to make decisions – role clarity and people know why they are there – mutual respect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role descriptions, clarity regarding responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CP Manager to co-ordinate, with partner input.
<p>6. All partners should play a leadership role</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a leadership framework, including skills audit - Take opportunity to be a leader – recognise that this requires skills and confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All CP partners

	Vision Statement	Actions	Who can take action
7.	There should be appropriate structures that enable people to participate in decision-making, including all stages of a policy development process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop national toolkit showcasing alternative structures and examples - Design structures that are both participative and deliberative - Involve communities in developing those structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scottish Government - CPPs and local communities
8.	<p>CPPs should proactively engage with people through a wide range of methods and channels on an ongoing basis. It is crucial that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community development is integral to this approach • Participation is inclusive • Evidence plays a central role in informing engagement • Engagement is co-ordinated across each CPP • Engagement is independently facilitated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare toolkit for participative approaches - Develop mechanisms to ensure strategic coordination across each CPP - Share good practice and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All CP Partners
9.	CPPs must demonstrate, and feed back, the impact of community involvement in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SOA must demonstrate community involvement and Audit Scotland should audit this - Community Audit, independently resourced, also built into the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit Scotland - CPPs and TSIs

Improving how Community Planning works

After examining evidence and sharing experiences about how CP works, the Forum proposed Vision Statements and practical actions for improvement. Participants acknowledged that some CPPs already do well in many of these dimensions, and indeed many proposals are based on current examples of good practice across the country.

	Vision Statement	Actions	Who can take action
10.	<p>Bureaucracy should be enabling rather than restrictive, so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A less risk averse approach is adopted • The risk of inaction is understood, and the focus shifts to prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and, if necessary, change of risk planning and management approaches and procedures - Develop training that supports and enables this approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scottish Government - COSLA and Improvement Service
11.	<p>CP partners must recognise that culture change is a long process and needs a plan. Partners should champion CP, encourage active participation and celebrate success – creating and sustaining a culture to achieve these things</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CPP group statement on culture – baseline and future vision - Case studies - Named ‘champions’ - Event celebration of success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All partners - All partners - One ‘champion’ per partner organisation - All partners
12.	<p>To foster culture change, it is important to ‘get in early’ to influence the training of all professionals involved in CP.</p> <p>Partnership agreements, induction processes and other frameworks could include new schemes for shadowing, seconding and learning from each other.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of ‘core’ CPP competencies to be shared - Development of an induction/understanding of CPP programme - Sharing of existing resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scottish Government - All partners - All partners, TSI network

Vision Statement		Actions	Who can take action
		- Secondment / shadowing programme	- All partners
13.	Recognise the value of tests of change / smaller community activities, and read across silos and make connections	- Identify 'great' existing tests of change, develop new ones, and share them	- All partners, TSIs, across the 32 CPPs
14.	CP is accessible in language, equality and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared language developed - Greater transparency of how CPP operates - Clearer branding and independence of CP (positive marketing of CP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CPPs - Scottish Government

A new role for the third sector in Community Planning

The final set of statements turns the focus onto the third sector's role in advancing this Vision for CP. The Forum recognised that TSIs have different ways of working and, as a participant put it: 'we still have a journey to go to ensure we (as a collective) are part of the solution'. There was much reflection about 'learning to be made within TSIs' and the need to create 'synergy in the way we operate in CPPs'. They concluded that TSIs 'need some culture change to achieve this too'.

A key area that was highly contested at the Forum was the sharing of resources within the third sector. Participants acknowledged that not all third sector organisations may be prepared to share budgets or assets. However, they argued that this Vision for CP entails expecting CP partners to share resources, and thus the same logic should apply within the third sector. Furthermore, they noted that this is already happening in some places and that the third sector is well placed to test new models and lead by example in the context of CP. The Forum concluded that TSIs should work to become exemplars of change in this direction.

In addition, the Forum discussed the need for further support for third sector organisations to be able to meaningfully contribute to CP. Participating in CP is time-consuming, and can be disheartening if the impact of participation is not clear. This was seen as connected to earlier points made about CPPs being 'secondary arenas' in terms of decision making. If CP were to become a more empowered space, TSIs would need to develop capacity to enable participation of the diversity of voices across the third sector.

Vision Statement		Actions	Who can take action
15.	TSIs should make a bold statement about their unique position and approach to support and lead culture change	- Make the potential 'bold' statement based on what each TSI can commit to	- Each TSI
16.	Third sector organisations need to be willing to see their budgets, resources & assets as part of a whole (e.g. training programmes)	- Start exploration of the impact and value of shared resources – case studies - Develop a framework to practically share finances (financial vehicle required)	- TSIs - TSIs

Vision Statement	Actions	Who can take action
<p>17. The third sector should be supported to develop capacity and resources to be able to play a meaningful role in CP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linkage role for each TSI in maximising capacity of sector –i.e. build on existing networks and training which support sector to participate in CPP - Develop new training programme for TSI network to build capacity - Networks across communities to build capacity - Disbursement mechanism for resources to support the third sector role in CP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TSIs - VAS - TSIs / third sector - All partners

7. Conclusions: Towards Democratic Community Planning

The TSIs' representatives involved in creating this Vision did not only focus on the role of the third sector. Instead, they chose to take a broader perspective to stimulate debate on the future of CP in the context of local governance in Scotland. Their ideas and proposals stem from a third sector perspective, but are clearly connected to current strategic thinking for reform across public services.

Accordingly, the Vision Statements echo, and build on, key recommendations and policy frameworks from various sources, including the Christie Commission, the Community Empowerment Bill, the Early Years Collaborative, the Public Bodies (Joint Working) Act, the Scottish Government and COSLA's Statement of Ambition, reports from Audit Scotland, and the COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy.

This Vision is, therefore, broadly in line with the direction of travel currently supported by a broad range of policy actors in Scotland. However, it offers a bolder approach to invigorating CP by **transforming it into a space for collaborative and participative policy making**.

The Forum was clear that the overarching aim should be to achieve 'better outcomes, better lives', and that tackling inequalities should be central to this agenda. Consequently, participants argued that CPPs 'must become true decision making bodies' capable of 'demonstrating impact', instead of being 'secondary arenas' with limited capacity to make a difference. The Forum put it this way: 'If CPPs can demonstrate that they are where power and resource sit, and shows that involvement influences real decision making, then it encourages community engagement and participation'.

Nonetheless, it was recognised that reimagining CPPs as integral to local democracy presents clear challenges: 'How do we balance representative democracy and community-led decision making?' It will be necessary to further develop the role of local elected representatives in CP, and work out transparent and accountable mechanisms to connect different decision making roles and structures.

The Forum insisted that CP must be 'community focussed and enabling', and that 'service design and delivery must be driven by communities'. This means that 'public bodies should share budgets based on what works for communities'. There was a recognition that 'in some areas there is already a move towards sharing resources organically', but also that 'this doesn't happen everywhere, and this is where legislation is important to force change where it's becoming stuck'. Participants also highlighted that third sector organisations can lead by example by exploring new ways of sharing resources for the benefit of communities.

Therefore, the Forum reflected on the work that the third sector must do to play a prominent role in this new CP. Participants were self-critical about the need for TSIs' development in order to be both: participative (capable of engaging the diversity of voices within the third sector) and influential (capable of representing the third sector on the basis of that participation). They clearly recognised that for TSIs to play a more legitimate role in CP, they must get a clearer mandate from their sector –and this would require TSIs to also become spaces for participation for

the sector. This does not mean that the TSIs are a substitute for effective community participation, which must collectively characterise the new approach to CP proposed.

All in all, implementing this Vision would entail substantial reform of CP, local government and public services. This represents an ambitious agenda that deserves considered deliberation. There are numerous financial and administrative implications to this direction of travel, but inaction will also have its costs. The Forum thus called for radical reform, but following a cautious approach: 'All of these actions should be proportionate, and bureaucracy should not block the flow of action'.

Arguably, this level of ambition is well justified if CP is to play a central role in developing better policies and services, tackling inequalities and solving local problems. This Vision offers a way of rethinking CPPs that goes beyond managerial approaches to public services, and seeks to put forward the notion of 'Democratic Community Planning'. The Forum delegates hope that these initial ideas can stimulate debate about what CP may achieve by becoming a catalyser for a more vibrant local democracy.

Annex 1– Forum Delegates

Bill Clements	CVS Inverclyde
Gilbert Grieve	East Dunbartonshire VA
Alan McNiven	Engage Renfrewshire
Rebecca McKinney	SEA Midlothian
Alasdair Tollemache	Stirlingshire VE
Eliot Stark	STRiVE (East Lothian)
Barbara Hastings	The Ayrshire Community Trust
Craig Russell	Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire
Jean Michaels	VSG West Lothian
Calum Irving	Voluntary Action Scotland
Allan Johnstone	Voluntary Action Scotland
Niall Sommerville	Voluntary Action Scotland