Glasgow Community Councils'
Development session
17 September 2016
Summary report

Introduction
This half day development session was organised on behalf of the Community Council Discussion Forum and Glasgow City Council. Community Councillors from across the city agreed issues to address and they were heavily involved in the planning of the overall programme.

Seventy two people attended, representing 42 different Community Councils. Key partnership staff from Police Scotland, Community Safety Glasgow, Fire & Rescue, Land and Environmental Services, Glasgow City Council Licensing and Democratic Services were also present to provide information and answer specific questions.

The session was well received. 63 % of those who returned an Evaluation Form rated the session Good or Very Good. A full evaluation summary is included within this report.

Materials from the session
A *Development Session* page has been created on the Community Council pages on the Glasgow City Council website. It contains:

- This short report on the event;
- Presentations from the workshops;
- A paper from the Democratic Society which matches suggested participation methods with the community topics raised on the day;
- Suggested actions and contacts for *The Journey* activity – designed to make it clear what can be done about a range of community issues; and
- The new film which was launched on the day, *Community Councils improving local areas and lives.*

Paper copies of this report are also available on request.

The reports and materials are available for all Community Council members. The intention is that those who could not attend, can still be informed, and participants will have access to materials from all of the workshops, irrespective of which they attended.

Aims
The following three aims provided the framework for the session to explore how:

➢ Community Councils and partners could network more effectively;
➢ Partner agencies and organisations could communicate more effectively the work that they do; and
➢ Community Councillors could most effectively represent their communities' issues and influence service provision.

Outline programme

Welcome + introductions
Councillor Soryia Siddique (Executive Member for Citizens and Communities) + Steve Brown, facilitator

Setting the Scene
A short promotional film highlighting what Community Councils can achieve

How can Community Councils use public participation?
Alistair Stoddart, The Democratic Society

Setting out on a journey
A visual representation of daily life in Glasgow showing common issues faced by
Community Councillors
Introduced by Tam Coyle, Merchant City & Trongate Community Council

Development workshops

Plenary reflection and next stages

Networking lunch

Context
Councillor Siddique welcomed everyone and thanked the Community Council Discussion Forum for making the session a reality.

She reminded Community Councillors that the session was focused on sharing best practice, information, experiences, and opinions. Therefore she encouraged everyone to participate as fully as possible.

She re-iterated that Community Councils play an important role in serving to bridge the gap between Glasgow City Council and communities, and have a key responsibility in helping to express the views and articulate the needs of many local areas.

The Community Empowerment Act is an opportunity for Community Councils and all community groups to have an increased influence over decision making. Councillor Siddique stated that it was important that Glasgow City Council supported communities who may wish to use the powers in the Act – communities may require capacity building.

Steve Brown, facilitator suggested some tips for getting the most out of the session:

- ✓ Spend time speaking to people you don't know;
- ✓ Think about what might work back at your Community Council;
- ✓ What new ideas can you share?
- ✓ Pat yourselves on the back if you're already doing some of what's suggested;
- ✓ Today isn't about assuming you're not doing a good job – rather it's about strengthening your role further; and
- ✓ Let's be positive, forward looking and enthusiastic.

A twitter hashtag *#ccouncilsmakeglasgow* was used and promoted during the session and participants were encouraged to post comments.

Film: *Community Councils improving local areas and lives*

A new film was launched and shown. It can be accessed using this link: https://youtu.be/1pyCTUKw1pQ

The film was produced to compliment the session. It was then to become available on the City Council's website for participants to use if they felt the need to answer people who ask why they are a community councillor or what the Community Council is about.

The three Community Councillors who appear in the film were congratulated and thanked. They are June Mitchell – Scotstoun, Natalie Jejer – Bridgeton & Dalmarnock and Evelyn Silber – Langside, Battlefield & Camphill.

Some of the themes, such as building partnerships with other organisations, being able to move forward with issues and advocating for your community, also ran across the whole session.

Reactions to the film from the other Community Councillors were very positive. Many people commented how useful the film would be and that they intended to use it in their own communities.

Public Participation

Alistair Stoddart from The Democratic Society presented various ways Community Councils could use public participation to help them represent a full cross-section of the community and encourage the involvement of people in the decisions that affect their local area.

The full group identified seven issues which they would like to work on with local people:
1. *Student accommodation*
2. *Speed enforcement*
3. *Lack of youth activities*
4. *Closure of local hospital*
5. *Parking*
6. *Recycling bins*
7. *Public transport*

Smaller informal groups were encouraged to articulate the purposes of any such community participation and to suggest methods they could use to include people – based on Alistair's presentation.

During the plenary session it was noted that extra funding for Charettes could be available from Area Partnership funds as well as The Big Lottery's Awards For All programme.

Alistair's full presentation and a paper suggesting possible methodologies for these issues are available separately.

Setting out on a journey: *a visual representation of daily life in Glasgow showing common issues faced by community councillors*

This part of the programme was developed from an original idea by Community Councillors Marie Gray (Broomhill) and Nancy Loftus (South Cardonald & Crookston). Community Councillors split into smaller groups and participated in an activity based around
Three visual representations of life in Glasgow with lots of challenges.

For each of the three images, participants were asked to:

1. *Identify the 'issues' presented;*

2. *Spot the difference! Look at the second image with issues circled – did you see them all?*

3. *Discuss how best to solve each problem;*

4. *Who else needs to be involved?*

5. *What could you do as an individual Community Councillor and with your Community Council?*

The focus was on sharing ideas about how to improve their communities.

The fully illustrated materials from this activity are available separately.

Workshops
The aim of each workshop was to inspire Community Councillors to take action by considering different approaches to strengthen their work. With the exception of Workshop 7, *Engaging Minority Ethnic Communities,* all of the workshops were led by Community Councillors.

In addition to the presentations and materials used in the workshops (available separately) the following were identified as summaries of key points from the participants:

1   **How to Run a Campaign**   *June Mitchell, Scotstoun*

- ✓ Choosing the appropriate issue to campaign

- ✓ Knowledge of procedures

- ✓ Managing limited resources

2   **How to apply for funding**   *Bill Fraser, Pollokshields*

- ✓ Be clear in your objectives before seeking funds

- ✓ Consult Area Partnership officers for advice

- ✓ Funding is rarely 100% - where will you find the balance for a project?

- ✓ Ensure you have a credible accounts control system to monitor. Post-funding evaluation will be required by donors

- ✓ Check regularly publicly available lists of funding sources – e.g. GCVS First Funding Stop and weekly Community Council Friday Briefing

3   **Teamwork & problem solving**   *Gillian Morgan, Whiteinch*

- ✓ A base for Community Councils is needed

- ✓ Need a central resource for support and information

- ✓ Need training for new Councillors: how to be on a committee, public meetings, planning etc.

- ✓ How to contact other community councils

- ✓ Need more than Area Partnership structures

4   **Planning representation**   *Stephanie Simpson, Lambhill & District*

- ✓ Difference between material concerns that are relevant to a planning response

- ✓ Longer timeframe to respond properly to a development application

- ✓ Appeal system needs to be better and include Community Councils

- ✓ Better / simplified interpretation of legal jargon / legislation

✓ Earlier interaction with community / relationship with developer / influence on developments

✓ Compliance with planning system

5   Website & Social Media & Online tools   *Chris Carus, Mount Florida*

✓ Complementary to face-to-face – does not replace

✓ Google Forms – free! Large reach, evidence based data

✓ Email forms – Mailchimp – templates – professional – build lists of networks

✓ Social Media – twitter: networking / professional facebook: boost posts

✓ Sceptical about how to use tools – fear of negativity – need more support and guidance for people to be users

✓ Depends on tone and working as a team to mobilise – people tend to be positive

6   Promotion & Community Events   *Jeff Stewart, Hutchesontown*

✓ No easy way to involve / make people want to join their Community Council

✓ Can be difficult to find out what interests people in the long term

✓ How do we advertise in a cost effective way?

✓ Why is the council not doing more to make us aware of available funding?

7   Engaging Minority Ethnic Communities   *Judith Hunter, GCC Democratic Services*

✓ Take time to build meaningful relationships with locally based organisations

✓ Be open to learning about what people need

✓ Target specific groups or sections of the community in various ways rather than attempting to reach everyone at once

✓ Website of Glasgow's Equalities Third Sector – weekly Bulletins are an excellent source of info: www.equalityupdates.org.uk/

Closing comments

In the final plenary session, three issues emerged as being of particular importance to the Community Councillors present:

- The short timescales used in the Planning process make decision making, and having meaningful influence, very challenging;
- The demise of the Community Planning Partnership's Safe Thematic Groups has left a gap for more detailed discussions around safety issues;
- Understanding needs to be developed about how the Community Empowerment Bill could be utilised.

Councillor Siddique thanked everyone for their valuable inputs which had made the session a success, and she thanked all Community Councillors for volunteering their time.

She hoped that everyone felt they had increased confidence, strength, means and commitment to improve their own lives and those of their neighbours in their community to really make a difference.

Councillor Siddique also stated that future capacity building opportunities would be considered by Glasgow City Council, and she looked forward to further working with the Community Councils in this regard.

Evaluation Form Results

- Total attendance: 72
- Evaluation sheets returned: 48 (67% return)

Figures below are based on percentages of evaluation sheets returned:

1. **How would you rate the venue used for the Development Session?**

   Very Good   21%   Good   33%   Okay   30%   Poor   8%   Very Poor   4%

2. **How would you rate the Film as a tool to promote Community Councils?**

   Very Good   31%   Good   31%   Okay   30%   Poor   4%   Very Poor   0%

3. **How would you rate the Democratic Society's presentation 'Participation and Engagement Techniques'?**

   Very Good   27%   Good   46%   Okay   17%   Poor   6%   Very Poor   0%

4. **How would you rate the exercise 'Setting out on a Journey'?**

   Very Good   23%   Good   21%   Okay   30%   Poor   15%   Very Poor   4%

5. **How would you rate your Development Workshop (please tick your Workshop)?**

   • *How to run a campaign (NB % based upon return of 6 attendee evaluation sheets)*
   Very Good   50%   Good   33%   Okay   17%   Poor   0%   Very Poor   0%

   • *How to apply for funding (NB % based upon return of 11 attendee evaluation sheets)*
   Very Good   64%   Good   18%   Okay   9%   Poor   9%   Very Poor   0%

   • *Teamwork and problem solving (NB % based upon return of 8 attendee evaluation sheets)*
   Very Good   0%   Good   75%   Okay   25%   Poor   0%   Very Poor   0%

   • *Planning representation (NB % based upon return of 3 attendee evaluation sheets)*
   Very Good   0%   Good   100%   Okay   0%   Poor   0%   Very Poor   0%

   • *Using online tools in projects (NB % based upon return of 6 attendee evaluation sheets)*
   Very Good   83%   Good   17%   Okay   0%   Poor   0%   Very Poor   0%

   • *Promotion and community events (NB % based upon return of 8 attendee evaluation sheets)*
   Very Good   25%   Good   50%   Okay   12.5%   Poor   12.5%   Very Poor   0%

   • *Engaging with diverse communities (NB % based upon return of 5 attendee evaluation sheets)*
   Very Good   60%   Good   40%   Okay   0%   Poor   0%   Very Poor   0%

6. **How would you rate the Development Session overall?**

   Very Good   23%   Good   40%   Okay   23%   Poor   2%   Very Poor   0%

Community Council representation

North West	North East	South
Blairdardie & Old Drumchapel	Auchenshuggle	Arden, Carnwadric, Kennishead & Old Darnley
Claythorn	Bridgeton & Dalmarnock	Castlemilk
Dowanhill, Hyndland & Kelvinside	Gartcraig	Craigton
Drumchapel	Gartloch	Cranhill
Garnethill	Molendinar	Crosshill & Govanhill
High Knightswood & Anniesland	Parkhead	Drumoyne
Hillhead	Sandyhills	Dumbreck
Lambhill & District	Springburn	Govan
Maryhill & Summerston	Wallacewell	Hillington, North Cardonald & Penilee
Merchant City & Trongate	Wellhouse & Queenslie	Hutchesontown
Milton		Ibrox & Cessnock
Partick		Kings Park
Scotstoun		Kinning Park
Thornwood		Langside, Battlefield & Camphill
Whiteinch		Levern & District
Yoker		Newlands & Auldhouse
Yorkhill & Kelvingrove		Pollokshaws & Eastwood
		Pollokshields
		Shawlands & Strathbungo
		Toryglen
17	**10**	**20**
Total no. CCs active: 82		
Total no. CCs represented: 47		
Total % CCs represented: 57%		