Making a Difference – Community Planning A Year On

Report of the Community Planning Implementation Group

June 2004

Preface

We have come a long way over the past 12 months. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 came into force in April 2003, introducing a statutory duty on key public sector agencies to participate in the Community Planning process. Getting that process right is essential in delivering improved public services, better targeted at the needs of individuals and communities. By working together effectively, sustainable solutions can be found to some of the difficult issues and improve the quality of life of communities.

Over the past year, the Community Planning process has brought benefits across Scotland as people build on their previous experiences of partnership working. We have seen some very good examples of the process in practice, delivering real differences to people's lives. We have seen community engagement lead to services that people want to use. We have seen examples of services which are delivered in a more joined up and accessible way. And we have seen examples where small changes to working practices have improved the services people receive. We need to get better at sharing those examples of good practice so that people across Scotland can enjoy the better services they deserve. There are lessons for all of us here in what works and in what does not.

As I have travelled round Scotland, in my role as Chair of the Implementation Group, I continue to be impressed by people's commitment to making the process work. But we all need to recognise that it requires long-term commitment. Getting used to a different way of working is not easy and can not be achieved overnight. It requires a change in culture and attitude. I think people just need to look at some of the benefits to see that Community Planning is bringing worthwhile improvements.

We need to move away from the idea that Community Planning is an additional task. It should not be. It should be an integral part of the way in which we all work. We need to be ready to develop and support people in building their skills. Key partners and stakeholders need to be prepared to come together to agree a strategy and to have those, sometimes difficult, discussions about how that strategy will be delivered and how resources can be used most effectively.

Our report provides a brief overview of the work we have undertaken in the past year to meet our own objectives to support the Community Planning process. It reflects on how the recommendations of our predecessor group, the Community Planning Task Force, have been taken forward. Finally, we look to the future and how the process can most effectively be supported. There are challenges here for all of us to ensure high-level engagement continues, to have champions taking the process forward and to support practitioners involved day to day.

The Community Planning process is delivering better services. But we want to see it deliver even more. We have laid down our challenges. It is now time for local leaders and practitioners to rise to those challenges and make sure Community Planning delivers.

Willie Rae

Chair, Community Planning Implementation Group

Implementation Group

Introduction

The Community Planning Implementation Group was established in April 2003 for 12 months to take forward the main recommendations of the Community Planning Task Force (CPTF). It had 11 members drawn from a selection of key agencies involved in the Community Planning process, including those with experience in the Task Force and members of CPPs. Although the members were appointed by Scottish Executive Ministers, the Group was independent of Ministers. Reflecting that independence, the Group was supported by a joint secretariat drawn from CoSLA and the Scottish Executive, including staff seconded from the NHS and Scottish Enterprise.

The Implementation Group focused its efforts around five key areas of work:

- maintaining progress in implementing Community Planning;
- raising the profile of the Community Planning process;
- providing guidance on Community Planning;
- promoting good practice in Community Planning; and
- providing an independent focus to the Community Planning process.

This report reflects on some of the Implementation Group's main achievements over the past 12 months, provides an update on national Community Planning and some of the more general achievements of the Community Planning process, gives an update on the recommendations of the Task Force, and lays down some challenges for how the process should be supported in the future.

The Community Planning Implementation Group's work over the last year

i) Maintaining Progress

The Implementation Group worked hard at supporting progress in the implementation and development of Community Planning. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 set out the legislative framework for Community Planning and established a statutory duty for various public sector agencies. The Group has been involved in examining key issues like data sharing, regeneration and engaging young people. It was pleased to see the progress being made by the Dialogue Youth initiative in engaging young people. It has looked at the role of the private sector, the role of volunteers and the voluntary sector and the role of trade unions in the Community Planning process. Members have continued to scrutinise the Scottish Executive in its commitment to supporting the Community Planning process. Audit Scotland, CoSLA and the Scottish Executive are continuing to work with other key agencies to develop a performance management framework for Community Planning building on what is already in place locally.

ii) Raising the Profile

The Implementation Group recognised the need to champion Community Planning and raise its profile. All members of the group have been involved in speaking at a range of events and conferences. Ensuring that Community Planning was kept on the national and local political agenda was also important to the Group. Members met with the First Minister and other Scottish Executive Ministers to keep them up to date with developments. The Group made a presentation to the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Transport Committee in January. Members of the Group also met with Councillors from a variety of local authorities across Scotland, as well as with Board Members of other organisations involved in the process. They have been involved in maintaining contact with Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) across Scotland.

iii) Providing Guidance

The Implementation Group has been involved in developing statutory guidance and advice notes about Community Planning, accompanying the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. These were published in April 2004 and can be found at:

Statutory Guidance – http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/localgov/cpsg-00.asp

Advice Notes – http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/localgov/cpan-00.asp

It identified areas where further guidance would be helpful, for example on the role of the voluntary sector both as service provider and as a force for engaging communities. The Group supported those preparing guidance. The Group felt that providing practical advice targeted at practitioners was particularly important. It has worked with Communities Scotland to support and publish a web-based "How To Guide to Partnership Working" that aims to support those involved in partnership working. The Implementation Group has also taken forward research. It has encouraged the Scottish Executive to take forward research and look at areas of particular concern, for example the statutory requirements to produce plans and reports placed on local authorities and their Community Planning partners. Other areas of research have included: looking at partnership rationalisation; and how older people are engaged in Community Planning. This information can be found at:

http://www.communityplanning.org.uk/documents/FinalPartnershipRationalisation20july03webversion.pdf and **http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/older-people**.

iv) Promoting Good Practice

The Implementation Group has been active in seeking out and sharing good practice. It has seen a range of good practice, which is delivering improved services, being taken forward by partners locally. The Group sponsored two regional seminars bringing together practitioners to exchange experiences and a seminar to look at small business engagement. The Group has supported the Scottish Executive's distribution of resources to support building the capacity of organisations to develop partnership working skills and would be keen for examples of good practice to be shared. It has also forged links with CPPs through speaking and attending various events and engagements. The Group has continued to promote good practice and information sharing through its website **www.communityplanning.org.uk**.

v) Independent Focus

The Implementation Group has maintained an independent focus to the Community Planning process. The Group has been able to work in ways that has given it direct access to and support from the Scottish Executive, CoSLA and other key decision makers. However, it has also exercised the freedom and independence to express its own views. That has been important in allowing the Group to challenge and support the range of agencies involved in the Community Planning process and in allowing it to come to a balanced conclusion on the issues. It has allowed the group to watch the progress of and commitment to Community Planning.

The Community Planning Implementation Group's update on recommendations of the Community Planning Task Force

Background

The Community Planning Task Force made 11 main recommendations in its final report (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/planning/frcp-00.asp). These were aimed at the wide range of organisations involved in the Community Planning process – from the Executive, local authorities and those public sector agencies with a statutory duty to participate in Community Planning as well as a wider range of interests, such as unions and the private sector. Across Scotland, those organisations have been instrumental in taking forward the recommendations that were addressed to them. The role of the Implementation Group has been in supporting organisations in this role and in looking at progress being made against those recommendations.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 1

"Community Planning Partnerships should commit themselves to all or most of the key priorities of the Scottish Executive, which should, in turn give the partnerships adequate space in which to address local needs and priorities. The commitment of the Scottish Executive to Community Planning should extend to other parts of central government and non-departmental public bodies whose work impacts on Community Planning."

CPIG UPDATE

A Partnership for a better Scotland (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/government/pfbs-00.asp) sets out the Executive's vision for government. There are four main themes: Growing Scotland's economy; Delivering Excellent Public Services; Supporting Stronger Safer Communities; and Developing a Confident, Democratic Scotland. While that is helpful in setting out the Executive's key aims, the Group is concerned that there are still too many priorities and targets and the Executive needs to set these out more clearly. There is also a need for CPPs to see these as priorities that they share and that there is room for them to address these priorities differently, in a way which reflects local needs.

The Group was pleased that a broad range of organisations were becoming involved in the Community Planning process. Wider involvement will lead to reduced confusion and overlap and more joined up service provision to the benefit of all communities.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 2

"Approaches to building up the capacity of communities to be engaged in community processes should be developed by Community Planning Partnerships – with the support of the Scottish Executive, CoSLA and Communities Scotland – on a well co-ordinated, resourced and sustainable basis and at levels that communities can readily relate to."

CPIG UPDATE

Genuine community engagement is a key part of the Community Planning process. It is clear that CPPs across Scotland and local authorities are finding this a challenging part of the process but that they are developing techniques to secure engagement.

The Group is pleased that Communities Scotland is taking forward national initiatives to improve community engagement, particularly in disadvantaged areas. The voluntary Draft National Standards for Community Engagement which Communities Scotland are piloting should help to support good practice on engagement. The Community Empowerment Fund has helped to enable community representatives in Social Inclusion Partnerships to play a full and equal part in partnership working. The Group was interested in the other pieces of work being taken forward by the Executive through Communities Scotland, eg the Network Support Fund providing independent support to allow communities to become involved in the process and the support for national voluntary sector intermediary organisations to work with their client groups to become engaged at local level. Communities Scotland has contributed to this through drawing up and publishing a "How to Guide to Community Engagement" which aims to give practical support to those working with communities. It has also put in place the "Seeing is Believing" and "New Ideas Funds" which aim to support community and voluntary organisations to learn about good practice in community regeneration from elsewhere and to develop new ways of working. These can be of great benefit in supporting communities to work and interact with CPPs. More information about this work can be found on the Communities Scotland website: **http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk**.

Community Learning and Development Partnerships, which are an integral part of the Community Planning process, also have an important role in building community capacity. Recently issued guidance on community learning and development gives strong emphasis to the role of community learning and development in building community capacity and supporting communities engagement with Community Planning. The guidance, entitled "Working and Learning Together to Build Strong Communities", can be found at **http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/web/files/walt.pdf**. Communities Scotland is running a programme of support for the implementation of the guidance.

The Group is interested in work being taken forward by various organisations to look at involvement in the process, for example the survey the Association of Scottish Community Councils is doing to analyse the involvement of community councils in the process.

Building the skills of Scotland's communities and supporting the civic leaders of the future is essential for the process to be successful. Community engagement does take time to get right. However, through developing the right cultures and working practices supported by the right structures, including at neighbourhood level, engagement can be achieved and will bring benefits to the process.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 3

"Community Planning advice should be developed to cover issues that go beyond the boundaries of Community Planning Partnerships."

CPIG UPDATE

The Group was pleased that the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 set the legislative framework and policy context for Community Planning and in doing so recognised that there are issues which might best be dealt with across local authority areas. It has seen good examples of where Community Planning partners are co-operating across area boundaries and would encourage that sort of joint working. Work taken forward to develop the Cities Visions was a good example of cross border working and the Group is pleased that co-operation is continuing. It has seen other examples of joint sector working from the South of Scotland Alliance to the Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire Joint Public Sector Group. The power to advance well being will be a valuable tool for local authorities to consider using to achieve cross boundary working and guidance on the power was published in April 2004: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/localgov/pawbg-00.asp-Power.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 4

"With the support of CoSLA and the Scottish Executive, Community Planning Partnerships should commit themselves to a continuing programme of support for capacity building for Community Planning, drawing on the capacity building study, partnership toolkits and other sources of advice, information and experience as appropriate."

CPIG UPDATE

The Group welcomed the capacity building resources the Executive made available. CPPs have made good use of those resources, funding a variety of additional projects including training courses and improving communications. The Group would be keen to see experience from the use of those resources widely shared. The Group supports the development of sharing information through its own website. It was pleased to be able to fund partially the "How to Guide to Partnership working" and welcomes work by Communities Scotland to take this forward and expand it. The Scottish Centre for Regeneration is taking forward the development of a skills and competencies framework for community regeneration. Skills development in the NHS is supported by, for example, the Centre for Change and Innovation. There is scope for greater joint training across the public sector. The new Improvement Service and the Scottish Academy for Health Policy and Management could have a role in supporting the development of joint training based on common competences for delivering in public services. Organisations involved in the process also have a responsibility to develop their own capacity.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 5

"The Scottish Executive and Community Planning Partnerships should commit themselves to driving forward the process of partnership rationalisation at national and localised or neighbourhood levels, as well as at the council-wide level."

CPIG UPDATE

The Group thinks this is a key area for further work. One of the aims of Community Planning is to help rationalise a cluttered landscape. It is a very difficult process for those involved in partnerships to take forward and the Group thinks that further guidance from the Executive would be helpful. The Group published its report on partnership rationalisation and it would like to see the Executive take that forward. Those involved in CPPs have experience of the issues that need to be considered which should be more widely shared. The Joint Future Agenda has made good progress and it will be important to explore how that experience can be effectively disseminated. There are some good examples of developing a co-ordinated approach to partnership activities, for example the integration of Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPS) into CPPs to ensure a more strategic focus on regeneration issues. The pilots being taken forward looking at integrated children's services should also provide some helpful lessons. CPPs should be looking at how neighbourhood level structures, such as integrated community schools and health promoting schools, fit into the strategic structures of the CPP. The ongoing development of Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) and of Anti-Social Behaviour Strategies will also take place within the context of the Community Planning structure.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 6

"CoSLA, Scottish Executive and Community Planning Partnerships should initiate training and other development to support elected and board members in their Community Planning roles."

CPIG UPDATE

It is clear that councillors and board members have a key role in making the Community Planning process a success through giving leadership to the process. The Group noted that some CPPs used the Executive's capacity building funding to develop training materials for elected members. The Scottish Centre for Regeneration work on the skills and competencies framework will help to support engagement. The Shadow Board of the Improvement Service has prioritised strategic training support for elected members and officers.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 7

"Community Planning Partnerships should develop links with the business community to draw on the expertise, energy and other support that businesses can bring to Community Planning."

CPIG UPDATE

Many of the good practice techniques to ensure that the private sector can engage, for example ensuring meetings are held in accessible places at accessible times with accessible documentation, will be applicable to many other parts of the community. The Group ran a successful seminar with the Federation of Small Businesses to explore the range of involvement that small businesses have in the Community Planning process. The role of the Local Economic Forums has been important in ensuring the private sector can be engaged in the process and they are often seen as delivering the economic arm of the Community Plan. The Group was pleased to see the development of Local Economic Development Strategies with clear links into the Community Planning process. There are good examples of the private sector engaging in SIPS through the activities of local business support groups. Integration with CPPs should lead to the development of these initiatives and provide the context for a more strategic approach.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 8

"Professional bodies and Trade Unions should be expected to demonstrate their commitment to Community Planning at an early stage."

CPIG UPDATE

The Group is pleased that unions are recognising the benefits of the Community Planning process and are keen to explore how they can play an effective role in the process. It met with the STUC to discuss Community Planning and supporting the unions' engagement in the process. The need to engage with and influence professional bodies is important.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 9

"Community Planning Partnerships should recognise information sharing to support Community Planning as a key priority, and with the support of the Scottish Executive and other agencies to take all reasonable and practicable steps to remove the barriers to successful information sharing."

CPIG UPDATE

If Community Planning is to be successful, then partners need to get better at sharing information. The Group supports the work of the Scottish Data Sharing Working Group. It welcomes the production of legal guidance in the near future. The Scottish Strategic Data Sharing Framework will be helpful and the Group welcomes work being taken forward to produce guidance for practitioners, including looking at data sharing protocols and identifying barriers. The Scottish Executive website provides useful information on data sharing at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/about/FCSD/21stCG/00018836/page2138712433.aspx.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 10

"Community Planning Partnerships should maintain their commitment to sharing their early successes and learning from one another's practices through seminars, networking and websites."

CPIG UPDATE

The Implementation Group has seen some good examples of good practice and experience sharing. It is pleased that CPPs are developing effective mechanisms to do this. It would like to see this continue and would be keen to see networks develop to support this. CoSLA currently supports the network of Community Planning Co-ordinators and this is a platform for sharing information, experience and practice. Other sectors have developed similar networks to share good practice. Knowledge management will also be a priority for the Improvement Service and will include sharing of practice, benchmarking and supporting communication. The work that the Scottish Centre for Regeneration is doing to facilitate the exchange of information and good practice is also helpful.

CPTF RECOMMENDATION 11

"Audit Scotland, CoSLA and the Scottish Executive should work with other key agencies (eg in health, enterprise and the environment) to develop a performance management framework for Community Planning that focuses on a limited number of key priorities, strikes a proper balance between national and local priorities and streamlines audit and inspection processes."

CPIG UPDATE

The Group thinks that a framework to demonstrate that the Community Planning process is improving service delivery is important, building on the work that is being done locally to evaluate the process. Audit Scotland is taking work forward with CPPs to develop a framework that builds on what exists, picking up on the key priorities in Community Plans and making use of existing targets and indicators as far as possible. The framework will rest on a range of information sources – community planning indicators, the Audit of Best Value and, in the early years, targeted work focusing on key community planning processes. The effects of community planning will be apparent over the medium term, and this framework will provide valuable information and assurance about how partnership working is being addressed across Scotland and the difference that the process is making. It is important that the framework links with the work of other audit and inspection regimes. For example, work being taken forward on Joint Health Improvement Plans (JHIPs) and on Regeneration Outcome Agreements, a key part of the SIP integration process, should also inform this evaluation.

What's next for Community Planning? – CPIG's challenges

The Group, and the Task Force before it, have done much to champion the development of Community Planning and its implementation. There is no doubt that considerable work still needs to be done to make sure the Community Planning process delivers the improvements to public services that it was intended to do. However, the time is right to move away from a small, high level group promoting the process to structures which ensure that the process is owned and progressed by local leaders and practitioners.

i) High-level political and board-level commitment – "A Community Planning Summit"

Community Planning is leading to a profound change in the way in which public services are delivered. Any change process needs committed leadership to make it work. Community Planning can only lead to improved public services, if politicians (both nationally and locally) and the Board Members of public sector organisations are prepared to provide leadership to support the process.

In the Group's opinion, the level of engagement has varied across Scotland, ranging from areas where leaders are fully engaged to areas where they remain to be convinced of the benefits of the process or where they feel threatened by the process.

To ensure that high level engagement in the process continues and develops, the Group would like to see a high-profile annual event – a Community Planning Summit – which engages "political" interests – Councillors, Board Members and national politicians. This event would help leaders to demonstrate their commitment to working together more effectively, enable them to set agendas and discuss challenges as well as demonstrating their commitment to the process.

An annual event should not become a set piece event but should be an opportunity for key issues to be explored. The agenda for the summit should be informed by the work of the champions network (see second recommendation) and the work of the practitioners (see third recommendation) so that it is linked to people's experiences. Those key champions have an important role in identifying the issues that need to be addressed at the highest level.

CPIG's Challenge: For local and national leaders to commit to a successful annual event, with a challenging agenda, properly resourced. To ensure momentum, the Group would expect to see the first event take place in Summer 2005.

ii) Sectoral and geographic champions

A key role that members of the Group have been carrying out has been to act as advocates of the process within their own spheres of influence. This is a role that needs to be continued. However, it is important that there is a broader range of people prepared to act as advocates or champions of Community Planning.

In the future, the Group thinks there should be a network of champions developed, people prepared to act as an advocate of the Community Planning process within their own sectors or within their own geographic areas who have been involved in the process and are prepared to share their commitment and lessons learned from their involvement. To ensure appropriate experience and support across Scotland, the Group feels that there should be a mixture of sectoral and geographic champions.

To ensure that champions are credible, each sector should nominate their own champions. They must be sufficiently senior to be able to shape and influence opinion. At the very least, there should be champions across each of the public sector agencies with statutory duties in the Community Planning process (local authorities, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Police, Fire, NHS and Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority). But other sectors – like the voluntary sector and the private sector – should also consider how they can champion the process. For geographic champions, groups of CPPs should nominate someone to take on that role.

Given the principles of equal opportunities that run through the Community Planning legislation, champions must also be representative. To ensure a network is manageable, the group suggests up to 30 champions are identified – perhaps 20 to represent particular sectoral interests and 10 to represent geographic interests.

The Group thinks that it is important that the key roles that champions would be expected to take on are made explicit. Champions chosen should give careful thought to their role. For example, key areas of work should include providing leadership for the process, demonstrating commitment, sharing good practice, providing guidance, helping others address problems and generally shaping the agenda.

Working practices for such a network of champions will evolve. Champions should look at how they can most effectively deliver on their challenge, making best use of technology and existing opportunities for the exchange of information and good practice. The champions might want to come together from time to time to share their experiences and look at issues that are causing concern or that are being addressed particularly well. A key part of their role would be to link into their existing networks, providing a vital channel of communication. The champions would want to make links with other events, improving the cross cutting linkages, so that lessons learned about partnership working in one area can be readily transferred.

CPIG's Challenge: For each sector to identify appropriate champions to take on an advocacy role for Community Planning. To ensure momentum, sectors should do this by Autumn 2004. Each sector must then support their champions in taking forward their role. By Spring 2005 champions should have agreed roles and an active network allowing them to shape the first annual event in Summer 2005.

iii) A network for practitioners

The Group recognises that there are already many sectoral networks that look at issues linked to the Community Planning process in a subject or organisational based way. These are very important and allow people to consider issues from the perspective of their own sectors and allow them to develop appropriate ways for that sector to address certain issues.

The Group feels, however, that there would be value in having a network that allows sectors to come together to explore generic Community Planning issues. The Group recommends that this network should be particularly aimed at people representing CPPs. That would allow people involved in delivering improved public services to come together to discuss approaches to their key challenges and to share experiences about successes and how they have overcome barriers. There is much to be learnt from others' experiences and there will be similarities in solutions and skills needed.

In that way, it should not be another series of meetings but be a network that adds value. It will be important to ensure that a network for practitioners links with the champions network and feeds into the annual summit. Practitioners must feel it adds value and provides the opportunity for discussion and information exchange that they want in a way that they want it.

The network must be supported by good technology to facilitate the sharing of experience and information. Members of the network might want to come together from time to time to discuss issues. Members would then be responsible for disseminating information more widely through their partnerships and into other networks. The Group considers that there would be scope for regional events building on contacts that it knows are already happening or events looking at specific themes.

Those involved in current networks should be encouraged to build two-way links to ensure an exchange of experience and information.

Clearly, for such a network to add value it will need to be resourced. The Group challenges those involved (including the Scottish Executive, CoSLA, CPPs, the police, the fire service, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the NHS and Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority) to consider how that might be best achieved.

The Group's experience of a joint secretariat has been a good one and one that could be built on. However, to be successful, a network needs to belong to those involved in the process.

The Group challenges the Improvement Service and Communities Scotland through the Scottish Centre for Regeneration to consider the roles they can play in supporting this network as part of its work to support partnership working.

> CPIG's Challenge: For CPPs to identify representatives to come together as a network. Other representative bodies to consider how their networks can link in. Representative bodies to come together to identify resources and how networks can best be supported. Network to decide where the value is. Develop workplan and topics for discussion.

Rising to these challenges

These challenges clearly do not fall to any one organisation to respond to and address. Community Planning is a statutory duty for many. However, it would be wrong for the challenges to be ignored because the process is jointly owned. The Group's final challenge is for each agency to take responsibility for its own contribution to taking the Community Planning process forward. The Scottish Executive, with its own duty to promote and encourage Community Planning, should be prepared to stimulate progress. It provided a joint Secretariat with CoSLA for the Group and it should be prepared to facilitate initial arrangements to ensure that the challenges are being addressed. As a next step, the Executive should prepare an action plan together with the key players in the Community Planning process to ensure progress is made.

Members of the Community Planning Implementation Group

- Willie Rae, Chair, Chief Constable, Strathclyde Police
- Stuart Black, Chief Executive, Inverness and Nairn Enterprise
- Alison Cameron, CVS Fife (from September 2003)
- Bill Craw, Chair, Hamilton District CVS/South Lanarkshire CPP (until June 2003)
- Derek Crichton, Area Manager, Dumfries & Galloway Community Planning Partnership
- Tom Divers, Chief Executive, NHS Greater Glasgow
- Leslie Evans, Head of Local Government Constitution and Governance Division, Scottish Executive (until November 2003)
- Caroline Gardner, Deputy Auditor General, Audit Scotland
- Michael Graham, Steering Group Member, Cambusbarron Community Futures/Chair Cambusbarron Community Council
- Jon Harris, Strategic Director, CoSLA
- Heather Koronka, Head of Performance and Improvement Division, Scottish Executive (from November 2003 – previously representing Communities Scotland)
- Ian Mitchell, Director of Regeneration, Communities Scotland (from November 2003)
- Douglas Paterson, Chief Executive, Aberdeen City Council