

Community Empowerment Group
 Thursday 30 Nov 2023, 2-4 pm

Member	Present
Michelle Crombie, Aberdeen City Council (Chair)	Yes
Maggie Hepburn, ACVO (Vice Chair)	Yes
Claire Smith, Police Scotland	No
Dave Black, SHMU	Yes
Susan Thoms, ACC	No
Colin Wright, ACC	Apologies
Martin Wyllie, ACC	Yes
Elaine McConnachie, NHSG	Yes
Iain Robertson, ACHSCP	Yes
Margaret Stewart, ACC	Apologies
Anne McAteer, ACC	Apologies
Jade Leyden, ACC	Apologies
Murray Dawson, SHMU	Apologies
Allison Swanson, ACC	Yes
Carol Hannaford, ACC	Apologies
Maria Jose Pavez, GREC	Yes
Bea Dawkins, HDRC	Yes

Item	Title	Lead	Notes/ Actions	Responsibility
1.	Welcome & Apologies	All	Welcome to Bea Dawkins from Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaborative joining us as a new standing member.	
2.	Actions from meeting on 31 Aug 23	All	<p>Actions from the last meeting were marked as complete or will be considered on today's agenda with the exception of the following:</p> <p>Action from the previous meeting for Maggie to discuss with Sandy Mathers setting up a page online with information for communities on asset transfer. Maggie confirmed Sandy happy to do this and we can link the pages into our toolkit. MH will ask Sandy to have something set up for the beginning of the year.</p> <p>Michelle and Allison to follow up with Jonathan on funding and civic forum. Michelle has been unable to</p>	MH

Item	Title	Lead	Notes/ Actions	Responsibility
			<p>reach Jonathan through usual email addresses but will contact Karen Rennie to find out if she has a different email address we can contact him on.</p> <p>Susan raised the PB activity of Fairer Aberdeen and the opportunity to build on the momentum of these events and continue the conversation with communities - Jade and Susan to discuss. Action carried forward to the next meeting as Jade and Susan on leave.</p> <p>Community Event Calendar. Agreed to promote the ACVO Events Calendar. Very helpful to remove duplication but doesn't support forward planning. Events calendar wont include consultations. Could it signpost to consultations? Maggie has concerns about the events calendar being overtaken with consultations which the public may not be interested in. Bea advised that 144 consultations were carried out by the Council alone over the last year and work is being carried out by HDRC to understand how coordination of these could be smarter and more joined up. Bea to provide an update on this work at the next meeting. Maggie agreed to consider if something similar to the events calendar could be set up to promote consultations but would like to trial with some key people first. Might need some criteria for what we promote – for example consultations relevant to the LOIP. Bea agreed to help identify some key groups to test with.</p>	<p>MC</p> <p>JL/ST</p> <p>BD/ MH</p>
3.	S016 Project Exceptions	MC	<p>Given focus on refresh project exceptions were provided.</p> <p>CE16.1 – Dave updated that there has been partial success in engaging schools to encourage recruitment. Some schools sharing with senior pupils - St Mcchar, Northfield, Lochside and Harlaw.</p> <p>CE16.5 – A paper from Maggie was circulated with a draft revised aim statement for this project '10% increase in amount of funding distributed by local funders across Aberdeen City using non-traditional methods by 2026'. . Maggie explained that the change in aim is to focus on working with funders to offer a portion of funding for communities to decide themselves how to use it. This would be considered a non-traditional funding arrangement. Research shows much higher buy in from communities for non-traditional. The proposal is that the project shifts from being about supporting more funding into communities to increasing community control of funding available. This aligns with SHMU testing new ways of working to shift the paradigm– Michelle and Dave to discuss.</p> <p>CE16.6 – Dave has taken over from Murray Dawson as project lead for this project and put forward a proposal to revise this project aim to 'Celebrate and increase visibility of community led projects across the City, increasing by 20% the proportion of policy and decision makers who feel they have a good</p>	MC/DB

Item	Title	Lead	Notes/ Actions	Responsibility
			<p>awareness of community-led initiatives in the City by 2025'. Dave advised a survey is being carried out to measure current awareness and capture a baseline. It was discussed that the project will need to develop a definition of community led. Bea advised this work aligns with what HDRC want to do. Dave to consider if the aim could be more concise.</p> <p>CE16.7 Dave, Elaine and Maggie are doing a session next week with community members on toolkit and a further session is being held with the Grampian Engagement Network in January. Dave and Elaine looking at baseline data. Next week session – looking at different types of scenario E.g. community group looking at funding. Where would communities start. Michelle asked if Elaine could add all Community Empowerment Group members to the GEN mailing list to ensure they receive invitations to future GEN meetings.</p> <p>Project updates continue to be required by all project managers. Allison to consider the template and guidance for updates post LOIP and Locality Plan refresh. Detail on activity should be under changes being tested rather than are our changes resulting in improvement. Format needs to be looked at to encourage this. Typo in the Community Empowerment project update title – what changes are being 'testing'.</p>	<p>DB</p> <p>EM</p> <p>AS</p>
4.	LOIP Refresh: Feedback from Community Engagement and SO16 Final Proposals	MC	<p>A paper was circulated to the group with feedback from the place standard community engagement. The Community Empowerment Group is required to consider the feedback and confirm final proposals for the LOIP before going out for further consultation next year.</p> <p>Allison reminded the group of the engagement process and talked through the summary results. Influence and sense of control – lowest ranking across the 14 place standard themes both city wide and localities. Awareness of opportunities to get involved in decision making and feedback for ALL – potential gap.</p> <p>The group discussed the findings which were not surprising considering the public's reaction to recent events such as library closures and consultation taking place after the decision was already made. Martin described the major health benefits of involving people in decisions and increasing their feeling of influence of and sense of control and why community empowerment is a major driver in our approach to prevention and early intervention. Elaine stated that the results are very reflective of what we heard at the community gathering event earlier this year. Trust and honesty essential. E.g. communities only getting to hear part of the budget.</p>	

Item	Title	Lead	Notes/ Actions	Responsibility
			<p>Bea noted that communities say they don't have enough opportunities to share their views but we do hundreds of consultations. It is not about increasing the amount of consultations but the ways we do them. People don't want to fill their time with focus groups and surveys. Conceptualise them in a different way. Get creative. Elaine observed that if we have different relationships with communities we won't need to do 144 consultations a year. People can be aware of consultations but if they don't have trust and belief that by participating it will make a difference then there is very little point. Culture change required. Elaine gave an update on work Luan Grugeon is doing for NHSG over the next six months to review the effectiveness of their community engagement mechanisms.</p> <p>Dave highlighted the need for more accountability for better community engagement as we can't afford poor engagement. Maria agreed that there needs to be more effort to do good community engagement. The number of people engaging in the process is a key indicator which decision makers want to see but participation levels don't always tell the full story about how effective the engagement process has been. Decision makers need to be accountable for quality and quantity.</p>	
5.	CLD Plan Update	MS/CW	Not discussed as MS and CW not in attendance.	
6.	My Place Awards: Celebrating placemaking efforts in Scotland	All	<p>Following discussion at a previous meeting of the value of celebrating communities by making nominations to national awards, Michelle made a recent email request for nominations for community groups to the My Place Awards. In particular, Michelle had asked to hear from Susan re. FAF project groups, Allison on community organisations contributing to the LOIP, Iain/Jade on community groups highlighted within the Locality Annual Reports, Margaret/Colin re. community groups contributing to objectives in our CLD plan.</p> <p>Thanks to Allison, Dave, Carol and Bea for their responses and suggested nominations. Can colleagues go ahead and submit nominations on behalf of Community Aberdeen. Dave to consider how such an approach might feature in resetting the improvement project on celebrating communities.</p>	
7	Community Gathering Event Outcomes Report Follow Up	DB/EM	<p>Ran out of time for this agenda item but Dave took the opportunity to remind the group of the four recommendations from the workshops on the day:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A good practice checklist for use by the Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) Management Group and Board, to hold officers accountable for community engagement activity, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that community engagement opportunities are meaningful and offer a genuine opportunity to influence. A similar approach to be adopted by key CPA partners. 	

Item	Title	Lead	Notes/ Actions	Responsibility
			<p>2. A review of the digital inclusion policies of key CPA partners, and the development of a plan or strategy of how digitally excluded people will be included as part of CPA engagement initiatives.</p> <p>3. The creation or review of a communications plan on community engagement opportunities for CPA and key partners. This should include exploring the feasibility of a leadership role for a neutral partner to be a central point of contact, as well as looking at developing a centralised resource with up to date community engagement opportunities (and associated support).</p> <p>4. A review of funding from CPA and key partners that goes into supporting community engagement and empowerment activity.</p> <p>Recommendations 1, 3 and 4 to be considered further and how they can be picked up as part of SO16 Improvement Projects. Michelle asked Martin to look into recommendation 2 – a review of digital exclusion policies.</p>	MW
8	Rescheduling of CEG Development Sessions/ CE Network Meetings	All	<p>Agreed to keep development sessions as part of the regular Community Empowerment Group meetings but extend the meetings by 30 mins.</p> <p>Session – Community Paradigm - Jan Session – The transformative potential of participatory budgeting - TBC Session – Power mapping – March/ April</p> <p>Also discussed arranging another Community Empowerment Network meeting. Suggested that use new Toolkit as the focus – something tangible for all community groups to buy into. Maggie happy to lead and liaise with Dave and Elaine on timing.</p>	MC MH/DB/ EM
9.	Date of next meeting	All	25 January 2024	