

The National Policy Context for Community Learning and Development (CLD) Planning November 2017

Accompanying document for Revised Guidance Note on Community Learning and Development Planning 2018-21

1. Introduction

This is an accompanying document for the [Revised Guidance Note on Community Learning and Development Planning 2018-21](#). It sets out the current national policy context that Education Scotland expects Local Authorities and their partners to take into account when developing Community Learning and Development Plans for 2018-21. CLD approaches contribute to many national policy agendas so this is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Instead it sets out specific CLD policies and provides links to key policy agendas where CLD makes a crucial contribution. There have been significant developments in some of these policy areas in recent years and CLD partnerships are advised to continue to take account of further developments over the lifetime of their CLD plans.

2. National Community Learning and Development Policy

The Revised Guidance Note on Community Learning and Development Planning 2018-21 relates to [The Requirements for Community Learning and Development \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#). The CLD Regulations are one part of a clear national policy framework for CLD in Scotland.

The [Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development](#) (2012) continues to underpin national CLD policy in Scotland.

The Guidance sets out a clear definition of CLD as: *'a coherent and distinctive set of practices, defined by clearly identified competences; delivered in diverse settings and sectors by practitioners with a wide variety of job titles, working with people of all ages.'* CLD is *'a distinctive process of engagement and support, with a learning content that is negotiated with learners.'* *'Community learning and development (CLD) plays a central part in ensuring individuals, families and communities across Scotland reach their potential through lifelong learning, mutual self-help and community organisation - and that the available support and opportunities are community-led, built around people's aspirations.'*

The target of CLD is to support *'primarily disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and communities.'*

The Guidance also sets out the core contribution of CLD to the following national outcomes:

1. Improved life chances for people of all ages, including young people in particular, through learning, personal development and active citizenship
2. Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities'

The following strategies relate to specific elements of CLD and contribute to the overall national outcomes:

['Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland' National Youth Work Strategy 2014-19](#) is integral to the Scottish Government's mission to deliver equity and excellence across Scotland's education system. The intention of the Strategy is that 'all

young people, in every part of Scotland, should have access to high quality and effective youth work practice.'

The ambitions of the strategy are to:

- (a) Ensure Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in
- (b) Put young people at the heart of policy
- (c) Recognise the value of youth work
- (d) Build workforce capacity in the youth work sector
- (e) Ensure that youth work providers measure the impacts of youth work

Current priorities are summarised in [National Youth Work Strategy Priorities Summary Model 2017-19](#).

[The Adult Learning Statement of Ambition for Scotland 2014-19](#)

sets out the Scottish Government's belief in the key role that effective adult learning plays at the core of a Scottish knowledge-based society. The National Strategic Forum for Adult Learning in consultation with the wider sector, agreed five Strategic Outcomes:

- Adults access, recognise and participate in learning opportunities throughout all stages, changes and circumstances in their lives
- Adults co-design their learning experiences.
- Adults transform their lives and communities through learning choices in personal, work, family and community settings.
- Adults effectively influence strategy and policy at local and national levels.
- Adults are effectively supported in their learning journeys.

The Statement of Ambition underpins:

- [Adult Literacies in Scotland 2020](#) (ALIS 2020) aims to promote equal access to and participation in literacies learning for all adults.
- [Scotland's Adult Literacies Curriculum Framework Guidelines \(2016\)](#) reaffirms the Scottish philosophy and approach to adult literacies.
- [Welcoming Our Learners: Scotland's ESOL \(English for Speakers of Other Languages\) Strategy 2015-2020](#) sets out the importance and context of ESOL learning in Scotland.

Inspection and review of CLD

Evidence of planning, delivery and the impact of CLD is available through [Community Learning and development Inspections](#). Inspections are based on the quality improvement framework, [How Good is the Learning and Development in our Community?](#)

In 2016, Education Scotland changed its approaches to inspection of CLD to take account of the CLD Regulations and to include a focus both on strategic leadership of CLD in a local authority area as well as a place based inspection. The intention is to inspect every local authority area by 2019. Inspection reports are available [here](#). Education Scotland will continue to look at the implementation of the CLD Regulations and look to disseminate our findings to Ministers, policy makers, local authorities and the wider CLD sector in Scotland.

How will your CLD plan be informed by and contribute to the ambitions and aims in national CLD policies?

3. CLD and Targeting Poverty, Inequalities and Disadvantage

3.1 National Policy

The Scottish Government is committed to building a fairer Scotland and tackling inequalities. [The Fairer Scotland Action Plan](#) (2016) outlines 50 actions to help tackle poverty, reduce inequality and build a fairer and more inclusive Scotland. The Action Plan is built on five high-level ambitions:

- A fairer Scotland for all
- Ending child poverty
- A strong start for all young people
- Fairer working lives
- A thriving third age

The [Equality Act \(2010\)](#) brought together existing equality legislation in Scotland and focused on people with the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, sex, sexual orientation and religion and belief. Since then there has been ongoing work by Government across a range of issues to build [equality and rights](#).

The Scottish Government's [Regeneration Strategy](#) (2011) gives the framework for local action to tackle area inequality, create opportunities and improve communities. The importance of a coherent approach to addressing social needs, and strengthening communities are also evident in other policy areas including the [Self-Directed Support Act](#) (2013) and the [Social Enterprise Strategy](#) (2016).

In 2017, Scotland will become the first part of the UK to introduce a [socio-economic duty](#) which will ask public authorities to do more to tackle the inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. In particular, the duty aims to make sure that strategic decisions about the most important issues are carefully thought through so that they are as effective as they can be in tackling socio-economic disadvantage and reducing inequalities of outcome.

3.2 The contribution of community learning and development

National policy sets clear guidelines that the focus of CLD should be targeting poverty and disadvantage.

- The [Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development](#) (2012) sets out the target of CLD is to support: *'primarily disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and communities.'*
- The Scottish Attainment Challenge clearly sets out the role of CLD to help to address the role that poverty and inequality plays in our education system and in our communities and help to close the poverty related attainment gap.
- [The guidance to community planning partnerships on the Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) makes it clear that *'Community planning partners should seek to maximise the impact of community learning and development by focusing activity on the most disadvantaged communities.'*

How will your CLD plan support those living in poverty or experiencing inequality or disadvantage ?
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4. CLD and Public Service Reform

The process of reforming public services that has been taking place in Scotland over recent years has reflected the ambitions set out by the [Christie Commission](#) (2011). At the same time, there have been substantial constraints on public finances which has influenced levels of public sector provision and public investment in the third sector.

The Christie Commission aims, which remain relevant, are to develop public services which are:

1. Built around people and communities, their needs, aspirations, capacities and skills, and work to build up their autonomy and resilience;
2. Working together effectively to achieve outcomes;
3. Prioritising prevention, reducing inequalities and promoting equality; and
4. Constantly seek to improve performance and reduce costs, and are open, transparent and accountable.

The Scottish Government has consistently recognised the contribution that community learning and development activity - with its strong focus on early intervention, prevention and tackling inequalities - makes to Scotland's communities, its education system and its economy.

How will your CLD plan contribute to public sector reform in your area?
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5. CLD and Education Reform

There have been significant developments across all sectors of Scottish education in recent years. [Getting it Right for Every Child](#) (GIRFEC) and [Curriculum for Excellence](#) (CfE) have become well established as major drivers for reform.

The Scottish Government has set out its vision for all children and young people in [The National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education \(NIF\)](#) (2015) which is:

- **Excellence through raising attainment:** ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed; and
- **Achieving equity:** ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

[The Scottish Attainment Challenge](#) (2015) has a particular focus on closing that persistent 'gap' that exists between the attainment of young people from the most advantaged social backgrounds compared to the attainment of young people living in more disadvantaged circumstances. It recognises three primary levers for change:

- Leadership
- Learning and Teaching
- Families and Communities

Schools cannot deliver these ambitions for excellence and equity on their own and CLD providers in the public and third sectors have important contributions to make, such as:

- Supporting young peoples' attainment, wider achievement and transition into the world of work.
- Engaging families through adult and family learning
- Connecting schools and wider learning in the community

Strengthening partnerships between schools and CLD providers is a high priority of education policy:

- The NIF emphasises the value of community learning and development in addressing its priorities, either in direct partnership with schools or in other community settings: *'We want to continue to improve (outcomes for children and young people) so that more children experience very good and excellent education services, delivered by self-improving, empowered schools and key partners such as community learning and development professionals.'*
- The Attainment Challenge and the [Pupil Equity Fund](#) (PEF) are providing schools across the country with new opportunities to develop stronger partnerships with other services and organisations to address the wider needs of young people. The [National Operating Guidance](#) for the PEF highlights family learning and youth work organisations as some of the key partners for schools that wish to ensure that young people experience very good and excellent education services: *'In many contexts schools may be able to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people by working with a range of bodies such as parent groups; parent councils; other local authority and public sector services; third sector organisations (including youth work, family learning organisations); other educational sectors; and/or centres of expertise.'*
- The advice given to schools on [School Improvement Planning 2017/18](#) emphasises the need for schools to be working in partnership with CLD partners: *'Well-developed local Community Learning and Development (CLD) partnerships provide strong support for schools' self-evaluation and improvement planning, helping to make connections to the local authority CLD plan and to priorities which are based on the needs of local communities.'*

[Developing the Young Workforce](#) (2014) is Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy. CLD plays a significant role in Developing the Young Workforce by developing skills recognised as important by employers, further and higher education. In particular, it provides support and early intervention strategies to those at risk of disengaging from education.

[The Post-16 reforms](#) have led to a period of major structural change in Scotland's college sector. A series of mergers have taken place since 2013 creating new colleges of scale and reducing the number of publicly funded colleges to 25, most of which now operate within 13 college regions, with funding distributed by the Scottish Funding Council on the basis of the demographic and economic need.

The CLD sector has a key role to play in engaging disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages in STEM-related learning. This role is emphasised in the [Scottish Government's STEM Education and Training Strategy for Scotland \(2017\)](#). For example there is an action which requires science centres and festivals to work with the CLD sector to develop Community STEM Plans from 2018-19.

The [Education Governance Review Next Steps \(2017\)](#) sets out the Scottish Government's conclusions from their consultation on governance arrangements in Scottish education. It includes plans to put schools in charge of the key decisions about a child's education and to ensure that the whole system is focussed on supporting them in that aim. It will do this by:

- empowering and supporting head teachers as the leaders of learning in their schools;
- delivering improved career opportunities for our teachers and future leaders;
- enhancing the support to schools across Scotland, through new Regional Improvement Collaboratives and a refocusing of our national agencies; and
- strengthening the voice of parents and communities

The role of [Regional Improvement Collaboratives](#) is still evolving at time of writing but the national joint steering group report in September 2017 stated that:

- Activity should not be restricted to schools alone, but encompass the range of learning environments that are experienced by children and young people.
- Collaboratives should also consider educational improvement within the context of local Children's Services and the range of work led by multi-agency partners to improve outcomes for children, including Community Planning Partnerships, Social Work, Community Learning and Development and the Third Sector.

An Education Bill in 2018 will take forward the legislative elements of the reform agenda set out in *Education Governance: Next Steps*. The Scottish Government launched a [consultation exercise](#) around the forthcoming Bill in late 2017. It will focus on the following areas:

- A new Headteachers' Charter
- Parental and Community Engagement
- Pupil Participation
- Regional Improvement Collaboratives
- A new Education Workforce Council for Scotland (which will involve the CLD Standards Council for Scotland)

What opportunities and challenges are there for your CLD plan to contribute to the education reform agenda in your area?

6. CLD, Community Empowerment and Democratic Renewal

Community empowerment and democratic renewal have been at the heart of Scottish Government policy in recent years. [The Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act \(2015\)](#) has been a significant step towards decentralising decisions and giving people a stronger voice in their communities. It has placed enhanced duties on all public sector partners to promote community empowerment as its various provisions have come into force.

The Act requires Community Planning Partnerships to:

- 'Prepare and publish a local outcomes improvement plan (LOIP) – by October 2017 - which sets out the local outcomes which the CPP will prioritise for improvement
- Identify smaller areas within the local authority area which experience the poorest outcomes, and prepare and publish locality plans to improve outcomes on agreed priorities for these communities
- Review and report publicly on progress towards their LOIP and locality plans, and keep the continued suitability of these plans under review.'

The Act has also created new duties on [Community asset transfer](#) and [Participation Requests](#).

The Government has been investing in hundreds of community-based organisations and supporting thousands of people through the Empowering Communities Fund - as well as supporting the development of [Participatory Budgeting](#) as a way of sharing power with communities.

There are communities who have always been able to take action to develop their influence and mobilise their assets. One of the aims of the Government's empowerment programme is that all communities should have equal access to these opportunities.

Community learning and development has an important contribution to make to work with communities to build capacity and develop their priorities. Many communities, particularly those facing high levels of disadvantage, look for community development and capacity building support to build the skills, confidence, networks and resources they require to becoming more empowered.

[The Guidance To Community Planning Partnerships On The Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) emphasises that: *'Community capacity building is especially important to secure the participation of those sections of the community which are otherwise less engaged than other sections in community planning. This includes in particular community bodies which represent the interests of persons who experience inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic or other disadvantage.'*

As stated in section 3 above the guidance emphasises that *'Community planning partners should seek to maximise the impact of community learning and development by focusing activity on the most disadvantaged communities.'*

The Guidance to Community Planning Partnerships also highlights the value of the [revised National Standards for Community Engagement](#) (2016) and the [Place Standard](#) in engaging with communities.

The Scottish Community Development Centre has identified some of the [statements within the 2017-18 programme for Government that stand out in relation to community development](#), including priorities around participatory budgeting, local democracy and funding for community empowerment.

The [New Scots Integration Strategy](#) is another important driver and practical manifestation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act's duties in relation to communities of interest and also broader equalities and human rights expectations. CLD has important contributions to make to the New Scots agenda – through community-based ESOL learning and community development support which helps to build social capital in communities, promotes equality and fosters community cohesion and good race relations. For example, CLD practitioners in the public and third sectors are involved in supporting the Syrian refugee resettlement programme in many parts of Scotland. The Scottish Government is consulting with agencies and communities on the second iteration of the New Scots Integration Strategy which will lead to a new strategy early in 2018.

Learning for Democracy

There is much more to our democracy than what happens at elections or in Parliament. Democracy is also about the decisions made every day in our communities and about the discussions and debates that we all have about the kind of country we want to live in. Participation in a democracy is a vital part of empowering people to become active and responsible citizens.

The last few years have seen real political changes in Scotland and the UK. Scotland has led the way in the UK in [giving 16 and 17 year olds the vote](#) in Scottish and local government elections. Young people's participation is set within the context of the [United Nations](#)

[Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) and putting young people at the heart of policy under the [Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#) approach.

The Scottish Government announced plans in 2017 to launch a comprehensive review of local governance ahead of a **Local Democracy Bill** later in this Parliament.

CLD has always had a strong focus on fostering citizenship and democratic participation. There are many ways in which CLD practitioners do this including:

- Developing learning opportunities with young people, adult learners and community groups to make politics easier to understand or more accessible (sometimes known as political literacy)
- Create opportunities for people of any age which will help them be informed, form opinions on important issues, use their voice to speak out, and work together with others to take action in their communities.
- Community development and capacity building work which helps to create and support connections and networks within and between communities.

Q: How will your CLD plan support community development and community capacity building, particularly with communities those facing high levels of disadvantage?

Q: How will your CLD plan support learning opportunities that contribute to democratic renewal?