



Review

April 2018

What Works in Local Decision-Making

A Review for Perth & Kinross Community Planning Partnership

Linda Christie and Claire Bynner



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

We are working with Community Planning Partnerships involved in the design and delivery of public services (Aberdeenshire, Fife, Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire) to:

- learn what is and what isn't working in their local area
- encourage collaborative learning with a range of local authority, business, public sector and community partners
- better understand what effective policy interventions and services look like
- promote the use of evidence in planning and service delivery
- help organisations get the skills and knowledge they need to use and interpret evidence
- create case studies for wider sharing and sustainability.

A further nine areas are working with us to enhance learning, comparison and sharing. We will also link with international partners to effectively compare how public services are delivered here in Scotland and elsewhere. During the programme, we will scale up and share more widely with all local authority areas across Scotland.

What Works Scotland brings together the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, other academics across Scotland, with partners from a range of local authorities and:

- Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- Improvement Service
- Inspiring Scotland
- IRISS (Institution for Research and Innovation in Social Services)
- NHS Education for Scotland
- NHS Health Scotland
- NHS Health Improvement for Scotland
- Scottish Community Development Centre
- SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations)

This is one of a series of papers published by What Works Scotland to share evidence, learning and ideas about public service reform.

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Summary

Local decision-making, broadly defined, relates to the increasing decentralisation of power and resources to local communities, changing the relationship between public services and the communities they serve. The aim of this study was to review the current progress of P&K Community Planning Partnership's (PKCPP) approach to local decision-making through the use of action partnerships (APs), in line with ambitions set out in the Community Empowerment Act and the PK Community Plan¹, and informed by the evidence from What Works Scotland.

Local Decision-Making in Perth and Kinross: Main Messages

Action partnerships (APs) are a form of local community planning partnership, similar to forums that can be found in other areas of Scotland. They seek to provide spaces for engaging communities in decisions on local priorities and services. The geography of these local partnerships means that they are closer to local communities and are therefore often regarded as important sites for community participation.

Action partnerships are '*in their infancy*' and yet they have already taken significant steps towards achieving outcomes for community empowerment. Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership (PKCPP) has demonstrated a high level of support for local decision making with the agreement to pool financial resources, the involvement of CP partners in APs and joint working at a local level to deliver participatory budgeting (PB) events. The function of APs in steering the PB process has been widely regarded as a success.

Efforts to engage a wider cross section of the population in APs have included: awareness-raising through local meetings; 'soft touch' engagement of local residents attending PB events; and attempts to involve young people through local schools. Decision-making within APs has been strengthened by deliberation on issues such as the design of the PB process and the nature of inequalities, building on the learning from the Fairness Commission. Priority issues arising from APs such as rural transport have been fed into council and CPP structures and to the relevant officers. A significant proportion of councillors who engaged in this study recognised their role as one of encouragement, including promoting the work of APs and supporting culture change. There is a process of transition underway as community members take on new leadership roles.

¹ See: Christie, C (chair) (2011) and Scottish Government (2015).

If Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership is to continue to strengthen local decision-making, it must focus on improving understanding of AP governance structures; enabling more inclusive community participation; developing facilitative styles of leadership; and strengthening the commitment to action partnerships and participatory budgeting over the longer-term.

Key success factors include:

- *Local and national context:* APs are still in their infancy, characterised by new political membership, competing perspectives on community empowerment and a wider context of austerity. It is important to engage with this context and create a long-term platform for APs to succeed, for example, by seeking cross-party support so that APs can become an accepted and established space for governance in Perth and Kinross.
- *Culture and mindsets:* arrange events for AP members to learn about the new era of collaborative decision-making and the need for facilitative styles of leadership²
- *Budget distribution:* Consider a review of the approach to budget allocation across APs. A policy of equal distribution of resources across a landscape of inequalities is potentially regressive, especially in the context of participatory budgeting³.
- *Long-term planning:* the participatory budgeting process could be planned as an annual cycle to allow APs more time to prepare in advance for the different stages.
- *Incentives and support mechanisms:* improve incentives to public participation in local decision making by continuing to develop and strengthen participatory budgeting⁴ and trialling other democratic innovations such as mini-publics⁵, online participation and digital dialogue⁶.

² Facilitative Leadership “emerges from the activity of working with others to achieve results everyone can agree to: it is about serving rather than steering” (Bissu & Bartels 2013:3) see also WWS blog <http://whatworksscotland.blogspot.co.uk/2017/05/facilitative-leadership-involving-citizens-and-communities-in-local-decision-making.html>

³ See Harkins, C., Moore, K., & Escobar, O. (2016). Review of 1st generation Participatory Budgeting in Scotland. What Works Scotland Evidence Review. p.22

⁴ See resources on Participatory Budgeting produced by What Works Scotland including blogs on PB in Paris <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/category/participatory-budgeting/>

⁵ A mini-public is “an assembly of citizens, demographically representative of the larger population, brought together to learn and deliberate on a topic in order to inform public opinion and decision-making” (Escobar & Elstub 2017; p.1). Mini-publics are made up of randomly selected citizens. The principle is that everyone affected by the topic in question has an equal chance of being selected and this underpins the legitimacy of the process. For examples see <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/topics/mini-publics/>

⁶ For example Perth Action Partnership are exploring a mini public to engage young people

Continue to draw on best practice from national and international sources⁷. Lower barriers to participation by providing help with financial costs, digital access, childcare and transport

- *Governance and delivery structures:* increase the inclusion and influence of community members in partnership meetings through careful and skilled facilitation. Support elected members with a clear definition of their roles and their responsibilities in these spaces. Specify more clearly the roles of CP partners supporting this process. Clarify that APs have the autonomy to work flexibly in more localised forums within their own contexts and according to the needs of each locality.
- *Facilitative leadership:* APs would be better served by a model that includes both a chairperson, with a formal role, and an impartial facilitator, responsible for the process of meetings. Experienced facilitators can help to change the style of the meeting by designing sessions that are dynamic and engaging, drawing on a range of facilitation techniques.
- *Improve links with local structures:* There is a recognised need for reform and improved support for community councils across Scotland⁸⁹. In addition, Perth and Kinross Council has initiated a review of community councils. Given this wider context of reform, it is important to clarify the relationship of APs to other democratic structures and community organisations, including community councils, community partnerships and development trusts, and to clearly articulate the distinct role of APs within this landscape.
- *Learning and Skills:* Promote a culture of inquiry and learning to support the development of new approaches to local decision-making. Stimulate passion and excitement for the transformative potential of action partnerships and participatory budgeting.

⁷ Good practice examples can be found in the international crowdsourced database Participedia <https://participedia.net/>

⁸ See report on the perspective of Community Councils : Escobar, O. (2014). Strengthening local democracy in Scotland: The Community Councils perspective. Edinburgh: Academy of Government and COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy.

⁹ WWS and the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) are currently undertaking a review of community councils in Scotland

What Works Scotland Research Approach

The key aim of this report is to share insights and lessons about ‘what works’ in the Perth and Kinross local decision-making approach. This involves consideration of the changing relationship between action partnerships, the communities being served, and the wider context of public service reform – both national and local policy priorities and objectives. They include the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act, findings from the P&K Fairness Commission, and the PKCPP Community Plan.

The research was based on three components:

- First, the approach draws upon previous What Works Scotland research and evidence from national and international sources on collaborative governance, community engagement and leadership.
- Second, policy documentation from PKCPP was used to understand the background and context to the review.
- Third, the research involved undertaking focus groups; semi-structured interviews and non-participant observation within the study area, to reflect on past lessons, current practice and future challenges.

Past Lessons, Current Practice and Future Challenges

Action partnerships are still at an early stage of development in Perth and Kinross. It is therefore too soon to measure the achievement of outcomes for community empowerment. However, this research found promising signs of activities, processes and practices that if strengthened and supported could contribute to improved outcomes over the longer term. Table 1 provides an indication of current and future challenges for the PKCPP approach to local decision-making.

Table 1: PKCPP Local Decision-Making: Key Characteristics

Local Decision-Making in Perth and Kinross		
What is Working	Current Challenges	Future Challenges
<p>Resources have been shared between partners to achieve outcomes. Budgets come from three main sources, Community Choices Fund (Scottish Government), Council and Health and Social Care Partnership.</p> <p>Significant CP partner support for APs and PB. Joint work through the Stronger Communities team has helped to deliver successful PB processes and events.</p> <p>The function of APs in steering the PB process is widely regarded as successful.</p> <p>Some APs have split the geography of their locality themselves in line with the practicalities of running the PB process.</p> <p>A significant number of councillors recognise their role as one of encouragement, including raising awareness and supporting culture change within the council and CPP.</p> <p>Participation in the Fairness Commission has deepened understanding of the complex nature of hidden deprivation and inequalities.</p> <p>Deliberations within AP meetings (i.e. how to facilitate inclusive PB processes and reduce inequalities) are encouraging practices that can contribute to a more participatory and deliberative approach to decision making.</p>	<p>AP members seek a better understanding of processes and rules of governance especially in relation to responsibilities for the allocation of public funds¹⁰.</p> <p>APs have the autonomy to work flexibly and in some areas they may decide to develop more localised forums in response to the needs of their locality. APs should seek to operate at a scale that balances administrative practicalities with geographies that 'make sense' to AP members.</p> <p>A community participation model is needed that can reach a wider cross section of the local population. This could be achieved through democratic innovations such as PB, mini publics and digital dialogue and methods that will increase involvement of citizens whose voices are seldom heard.</p> <p>Barriers to involvement in PB and in APs include: distance to travel; volunteer fatigue; apathy, lack of awareness or clarity of purpose; expectations of 'action'; level of interest in administrative processes; negative previous experiences of consultations; and processes that are too rushed.</p> <p>Greater clarity is needed on the roles, responsibilities and accountability of AP members.</p> <p>The purpose and added value of PB and APs needs to be communicated more clearly to local community groups.¹¹.</p>	<p>A policy of equal distribution of resources across a landscape of inequalities is potentially regressive. Consider a review of the approach to budget allocation across APs.</p> <p>The requirement for councils to allocate at least 1% of their budgets via PB will require 'a step change in the ability and robustness of the AP structures'.</p> <p>An increase in staff resources may be needed to support the facilitation and administration of APs.</p> <p>AP members need a clearer understanding of the processes and responsibilities for feeding in and progressing actions within the council and CPP.</p> <p>A greater awareness of the broader community empowerment agenda is needed, beyond landownership and asset transfer, towards increased public participation in decision-making.</p> <p>AP members would benefit from opportunities to exchange learning on local democracy and community participation across the CPP.</p>

¹⁰ Governance guidance has been issued to all APs including guidance on governance of their funds.

¹¹ This issue is currently being addressed. Officers have been drafting a communications plan with help from a community representative on one of the APs.

Introduction

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 research is shaped by the post-Christie Commission context for public service reform, which emphasises the need for greater efficiency, partnership working, participation and preventative spending. Over the past four years, What Works Scotland has been working with community planning partnerships (CPPs) and stakeholder partners to understand and develop different aspects of public service reform, including the implementation of community empowerment policies.

The impetus for this study came from a keynote presentation on Strengthening Local Democracy in Scotland, given by Dr Claire Bynner, at Stronger Communities: Perth and Kinross Community Planning Conference, in November 2017. The presentation aimed to challenge the current thinking and practice of community empowerment in Scotland. The keynote led to an invitation from Perth and Kinross CPP for What Works Scotland to review a new approach to local decision-making in Perth and Kinross through action partnerships. The review was to be undertaken between January-March 2018. What Works Scotland agreed to undertake the research on the basis that this provided an opportunity to apply key research findings from the What Works Scotland programme. This report discusses the themes for which we have the strongest evidence, based on the data gathered for this review.

Methods

The main components of the research approach included examination of documentation, observations, interviews and focus groups. Documentary evidence (i.e. policy documents council reports, minutes of meetings) provided insight into the outcomes and processes associated with local CPP arrangements in PKC. The fieldwork observation allowed close insight of APs in context, and consultation with those individuals with expert and practical knowledge of the AP approach.

The fieldwork research, undertaken January – March 2018, is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Fieldwork

Data Source	Summary
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 29th February: Focus Group 1: Elected members X 8• 29th February: Focus Group 2: Elected members X 6• 8th February: Community members (across Perth and Kinross X 6)
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council officer x 3• Elected member x 3• Community member x 2
Non-participant observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 22nd January: Perth City APs (Urban)• 23rd January: Kinross-shire, Almond and Earn APs (Urban/Rural)

The fieldwork (i.e. focus groups, interviews and observations), provided access to small groups of individuals to allow us to examine perceptions of APs. A limitation of the research approach was the short timescale, restricting the ability to observe all five of P&K APs. The AP sites selected for observation provided a sufficient spread of demographic, geographic (i.e. rural and urban) and social contexts.

Key themes from the focus groups were analysed using the WWS analytical framework (see annex B). Interview notes and transcripts were used to plug gaps in the data and deepen the analysis.

The recruitment of participants for both focus groups and interviews was aimed at providing a sufficient spread and type of research participant, primarily involving individuals participating in, or familiar with, local APs (i.e. community members, CP partners and elected members). The focus groups included both councillors and community representatives familiar with, or directly involved in working with APs. Semi-structured interviews involved CP partners, community representatives and elected members.

The three main elements of the research provided data that was analysed using standard qualitative methodology¹² comparing interview data (i.e. consultees' interpretation of the operational process of local decision-making), with non-participant observation data (i.e. the researchers' interpretation of the operational process), and documentary evidence. Thus, more than one method of data was collected to help capture the different dimensions of the research questions and validate the research findings.

Objectives and Research Questions

The main objectives of this study are to:

1. Assess the effectiveness of current local community planning arrangements in the form of action partnerships.
2. Make recommendations to strengthen current practice, consistent with the provisions stated in the Community Empowerment Act to ensure effective local decision-making.

This report provides insights into a range of perspectives on local decision-making in Perth and Kinross (P&K), including, political, community and third sector. The research also includes insights from academic, policy and documentary evidence, to explore two key research questions:

¹² Silverman, D., (2013).

- How do APs function in terms of their purpose, configuration and management?
- How effective are APs as mechanisms for local decision making?

The research explores PKC's local decision-making approach in practice and within its specific geographical and institutional context, to investigate:

- APs members' understanding of what constitutes local decision-making and community empowerment.
- Key factors underpinning the rationale and development of APs.
- Policy and funding mechanisms and approaches supporting the process.
- The role and extent of community participation, partnership working and community leadership, reach and involvement.
- Key factors characterising success and failure in practice.
- Barriers or enablers underpinning the process.

Importantly, this report contributes to wider understanding of the changing national policy and local political and community planning context and how these changes are being experienced in practice.

The full report is organised into five sections:

Section 1 of the report starts with a brief overview of the policy context, followed by a discussion of the purpose, meaning and rationale of approaches to local decision-making.

Section 2 outlines an understanding of P&K context and approach to local decision-making.

Section 3 outlines the analytical approach to what works in participatory governance and local decision-making in the case study area, using illustrated examples drawn from the different perspectives of individuals taking part in the fieldwork interviews and focus groups.

Section 4 asks what the evidence means for the future of local decision-making policy and practice in P&K.

Section 5 draws together key conclusions.

These sections are followed by three annexes: a diagram of PKCPP community planning structures; the What Works Scotland analytical framework; and the data report with results from the thematic analysis. Annexes are followed by a Glossary of Terms and References.

Section 1: Approaches to Local Decision-Making: Action Partnerships in Context

National Policy Context: Increasing Local Democracy Agenda

Within the wider context of austerity in the UK, there is an agenda of increasing devolution of powers to local government and localism. At the Scottish level, there exists a complexity of devolved policy structures across various sectors. Hence, an understanding of local decision-making in Scotland must be placed within the context of a complex policy environment of differing policy levels and powers.

The Christie Commission¹³ and its report highlighted the challenge facing local government in a rapidly changing social environment and with a real terms budget constraint that made the tackling of inequality increasingly difficult under existing models of service delivery. The Commission's recommendations were that public services had to make better use of the resources available by collaborative working with a greater focus on the individual, the family and the community.

The COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy concluded that there is a convincing link between the absence of strong local democracy and the prevalence of inequalities. The COSLA Commission also noted that, from a democratic perspective, it is communities that empower governments and not the other way around¹⁴. As such, recent policy emphasis in Scotland highlights the need to 'empower communities' based on the idea that democratic power should be built from the bottom up.

The context for local decision-making in Scotland is the aspiration for a more participatory form of local governance, embodied in the Community Empowerment Act (2015). Key policies emphasising this agenda in Scotland include:

- The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015): encourages community empowerment and participation by creating new rights for community bodies and placing new duties on public authorities to strengthen community planning with a focus on tackling inequality. The act places greater emphasis on citizen participation in the planning, delivery and scrutiny of local public services, and new opportunities for communities to lead local services and projects where they can do so more effectively and responsively than public agencies.

¹³Christie (2011) Commission On The Future Delivery of Public Services

¹⁴ COSLA (2014) p.8

- The Programme for Government (2015): further consolidates the focus on tackling inequality by encouraging participation by all citizens in the decisions that affect them.

Community planning partnerships (CPPs) are key delivery vehicles for increasing the quality of participation in Scotland. Within each of the 32 CPPs operating at a local level, there are a range of methods, approaches and innovations currently being developed to translate the Community Empowerment Act into practice.

Local community planning partnerships are a form of democratic innovation. They seek to provide public forums and community spaces for engaging representatives of community groups and members of the public in decisions on local priorities and services. The size of these local forums means that they are closer to local communities and therefore are often regarded as important sites for community participation and collaborative decision-making. In Perth and Kinross, local community planning partnerships are known as action partnerships.

Section 2: Perth and Kinross CPP Area Description

Background - Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership (PKCPP):

The Perth and Kinross local authority area has a population of approximately 147,000. Perth City has a population of about 47,000 and is the administrative centre for Perth and Kinross. Perth City also has a greater percentage of younger adults (those below 20) than the rest of Perth and Kinross and a smaller percentage of its population is over 65, although that number is predicted to rise over the coming years. Socio-economic indicators show that Perth City has higher rates of child poverty, alcohol and substance mis-use, out of work benefit claimants and youth unemployment than Perth and Kinross as a whole.¹⁵

In October 2013, PKCPP agreed key recommendations to achieve community planning outcomes:

- a new governance framework including the establishment of Outcome Delivery Groups to achieve the outcomes and priority actions contained within the Community Plan
- establishment of the Community Empowerment Working Group to provide guidance on best practice as it developed
- the establishment of a set of key principles to ensure locality working was equitable and consistent across the local authority area
- a programme to strengthen community engagement with elected members.

This programme had to be amended with the passing of the Community Empowerment Act. The Act strengthened citizen rights to participate in local democracy by formalising rights to plan, deliver and scrutinise local public services, and importantly to deliver those services, and where practicable to lead them, should communities be able to do so more effectively than public bodies. The Act also created a new duty on CPPs to design, publish and implement Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) as well as Locality Plans. The latter should detail how CPPs plan to tackle long-standing inequalities in the most disadvantaged localities.

In 2015, Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) and the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) responded to the Scottish Government's national policy focus on improving participation and tackling inequalities, by introducing new structures to support community planning over a five-year period, including:

¹⁵Perth City Locality Action Plan

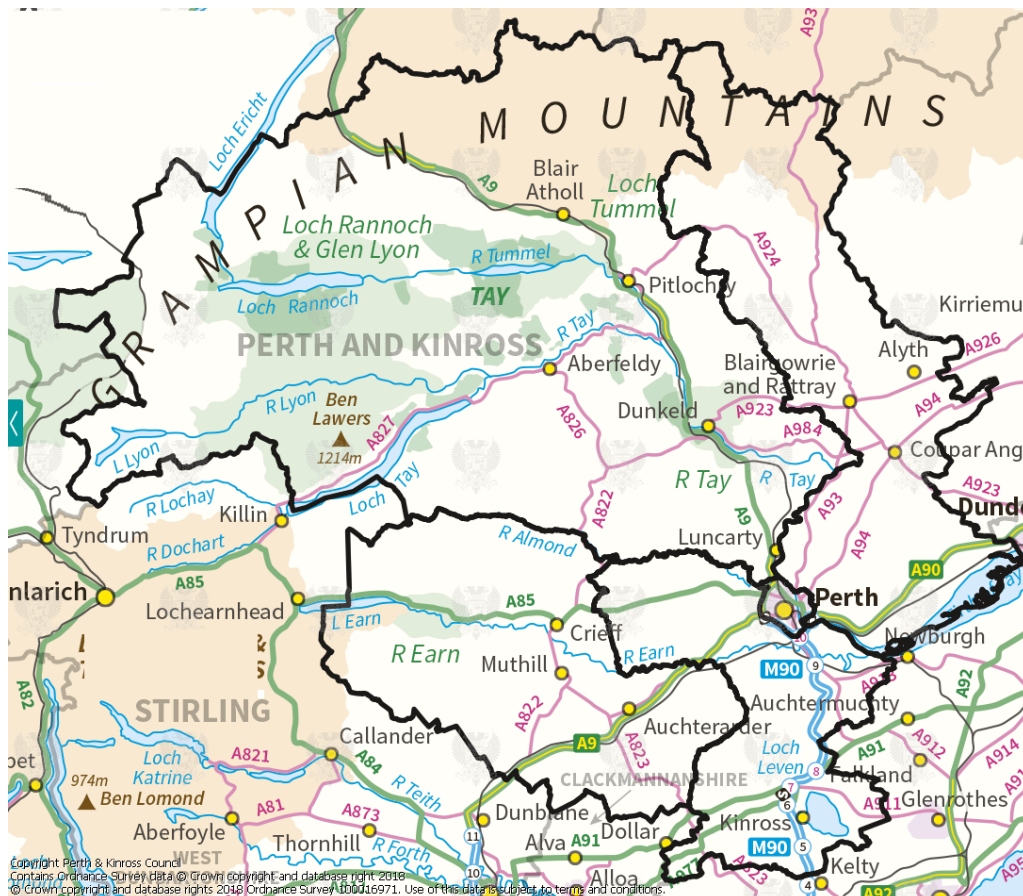
- the establishment of new arrangements for the local Community Planning Partnership (CPP) in spring/summer 2016 supporting the delivery of the P&K Community Plan (2013-23)
- developing Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIP), setting out how CPP will tackle inequality; <http://pk-storyboard.org.uk/cp/>
- the CPP and Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) were replaced by the LOIP.

Changes to the PKCPP governance structure led to a new approach to local decision-making and locality working with the establishment of APs (see Annex A).

Action Partnerships (APs) – Development and Timeline

Perth and Kinross has five APs each representing one of the area's localities (see figure 1). APs are made up of representatives from a diverse range of public services, the local community and councillors from the area. Their purpose is to '*tackle local inequalities by setting priorities to work for and with the community*'. Each area has developed a local action plan that is focused on tackling inequalities and specific communities of interest such as young people, carers, or people facing social isolation. Other than Perth City, all the APs are primarily rural.

Figure 1



Action partnerships have followed a phased process of development:

Table 3

Sept / Oct 2016	1st round of meetings – group members getting to know each other, purpose of APs, what is it like to live here? Who else should be involved?
Oct 2016 – Jan 2017	Planning for PB events in localities.
Feb / March 2017	8 PB events in P+K, £103K distributed to 96 community groups.
May 2017	Cross AP review and discussion of rural transport issues and possible solutions facilitated by the CPP Team and Public Transport Unit.
April – Aug 2017	Focus on Fairness Commission findings, Stories of Place, producing the new community plan, Tayside Children's Plan, local priorities identified from 2017 PB events. This culminated in the production of each of the five Local Action Plans.
Sept – Dec 2017	Digging into specific issues with input from invited service reps. Planning for PB, with the APs taking a lead in designing delivery of PB in their localities and a strong emphasis on increasing participation and raising awareness of the AP in the wider community.
Jan – March 2018	Final planning and delivery of PB, with increased participation from community groups submitting applications and people participating in the voting process.

Throughout this timeline there have been discussions regarding the role of community councils, communication, size of the locality and other issues raised in this research.

A report to the P&K CPP¹⁶ noted that since the introduction of APs a key factor in determining their success is to acknowledge that there is no 'one size fits all' structure that will best achieve desired outcomes. Instead, there are a range of factors that feed success:

- planning and delivery at an appropriate scale

¹⁶ Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership Board (2015) 'Community Planning: The Journey Over The Next 5 Years'.

- involving communities with public service delivery so that service delivery is informed by local knowledge and priorities
- encouraging a positive and flexible attitude and delegating responsibility for problem solving to front-line staff
- encouraging joint resourcing so that in this period of straightened budgets, pooling of public finances and resources promotes a solution best placed to meet local needs and priorities.

Section 3: Impact of Perth & Kinross CPP Action Partnership Approach

This section provides a fuller discussion of the approach to local decision-making in Perth and Kinross, through closer consideration of the rationale and understanding of participatory governance and through thematic analysis. It begins with an overview of academic evidence before reflecting on the insights from the fieldwork data and responses from officers, communities and elected members.

Academic Evidence: Local Decision-Making

Local decision-making, broadly defined, relates to the increasing decentralisation of power and resources to local communities, changing the relationship between public services and the communities they serve. Participatory governance approaches to regeneration in Scotland have been positioned as an approach to redressing inequalities and improving local outcomes, based on the argument that when people are engaged in a healthy democracy and community life they experience improved health and life outcomes (PB Scotland).

International academic evidence suggests that three inter-related factors are key to motivating people to participate (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: What works in public participation:



1. **Multi-channel:** Develop a variety of channels for participation, including online, face to face, and combined; and allowing for light-touch vs. intensive forms of engagement as well as digital crowdsourcing mechanisms that can feed into policy and decision making.
2. **Inclusive and deliberative:**
 - Inclusion and diversity are crucial for meaningful, legitimate and effective participation. Consider the diversity of demographics and

perspectives and lowering barriers to participation such as financial incentives and help with childcare and transport¹⁷

- Deliberative engagement is about assessing evidence; hearing and scrutinising different views; and then making informed decisions. Examples include ‘mini-publics’. A mini-public is “an assembly of citizens, demographically representative of the larger population, brought together to learn and deliberate on a topic in order to inform public opinion and decision-making”¹⁸.

3. **Empowered and consequential:** participation thrives when important issues and resources are at a stake, and citizens feel their contribution can actually make a difference.

There is also evidence to suggest that not all participation is good. Indeed, in the last few decades participation has increased alongside increasing inequalities¹⁹. The evidence suggests that unless corrective measures are taken ‘*participation of all varieties will be skewed in favour of those with higher socioeconomic status and formal education*’.²⁰ Therefore reducing inequalities will require a positive and proactive stance on inclusion in forums such as action partnerships, reaching out to those who are ‘seldom heard’²¹.

What Works Scotland Analytical Framework

The What Works Scotland analytical framework translates key research findings from What Works Scotland into an analytical tool to understand key aspects of public service reform – participation in local decision-making and participatory governance (see annex B). The framework provides an outcomes-based approach, focused on programme level outcomes – changes resulting from specific programmes and interventions (such as APs), rather than changes for individuals or changes at the

The first part of this section of the report (part a) considers how APs function relative to their *purpose, configuration and management*.

The second part (part b) follows with a fuller analysis of how effective APs are as *mechanisms for local decision-making*, relative to the perceptions of those working closely with and directly involved in APs.

¹⁷ See ‘Hard to reach’ or ‘easy to ignore’? Promoting equality in community engagement – Evidence review <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/publications/hard-to-reach-or-easy-to-ignore-promoting-equality-in-community-engagement-evidence-review/>

¹⁸ Escobar & Elstub (2017)

¹⁹ Walker, McQuarrie & Lee (2015)

²⁰ Ryfe & Stalsburg (2012)

²¹ Lightbody et al (2017)

a) Purpose, Configuration and Management:

Table 4 summarises the purpose, configuration and management of the APs taken from the fieldwork data. It is apparent that the perception and interpretation of the AP process among those individuals closely involved, differs from that stated in PKCPP policy documentation, suggesting the need for greater clarity on the purpose of APs.

Table 4: The Action Partnership Process

PURPOSE: The role and remit of APs	CONFIGURATION: How APs are structured (e.g. methods of engagement; governance; resources)	MANAGEMENT: How APs and members are managed, interact and function (e.g. leadership; knowledge & skills; network practices)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public resource allocation Community engagement in the participatory budgeting process Local action plans to tackle inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 APs across Perth and Kinross Each AP has a budget allocation including PB funding All meetings have a level of formal, non-hierarchical decision-making Chaired meetings Self-regulating collaborative arrangements with membership fluctuating Community membership at meetings, outweighed by CP partners and elected members. Some degree of formalisation/standardisation (i.e. guidance on membership). Leadership varies across each AP, with some chaired by CP partners and one by a community member, with a process of transition towards all APs being chaired by community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each AP has an Action Plan and documentation on their governance structures. However, not all members had copies or had viewed these documents. AP members knowledge of the purpose of AP varied. Some emphasised the role of APs in reducing inequalities. Others focused on the AP role in the PB process. The skills and knowledge of individual members were sufficiently aligned with the role of the AP, although members expressed the need for more support for knowledge sharing across APs. There appeared a sufficient level of trust among most members, although there was a level of skepticism from some elected members on accountability and the role that communities and AP members should have in allocating public funds. Balancing clear accountability and robust voting with increasing participation and awareness has been an active discussion within APs. There is a need for greater visibility and wider understanding of the role of APs The level of influence of community members within the AP was potentially undermined in some groups by the presence of elected members, although some members strongly supported greater influence from community members The level of conflict between members appeared relatively low. Power relations within the APs were

		<p>relatively balanced, albeit with a high proportion of elected members compared to other members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall perceived competence of APs was mixed, suggesting that APs have potential to make a significant impact but are still at an early stage in their development
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b) Effective Participatory Governance and Local Decision

Making:

The main findings from the fieldwork are summarised below. Please note that the findings recorded here are indicative, limited by the availability of data and the scope of the study.

Fuller details are presented in Annex C.

Inputs/Resources

Research participants believed there was adequate budget available for running the APs, including resources being shared between community planning partners to support the delivery of outcomes. There was a similar level of budget for each AP area; however, across a landscape of inequalities, this is a policy that is potentially regressive.

Greater use of digital technology and video conferencing were suggested as a key consideration for future meetings to provide opportunities for those who cannot travel to meetings to participate.

There were sufficient senior management support structures in place, including staff with relevant skills and experience in partnership working and community engagement to support the process. However, the capacity of existing support staff for APs is under increasing pressure and there is a need for additional resourcing to support the operation of APs.

“the conversation is evolving and I think pretty much every APs has had the same conversation of subdivision. So I think it’s happening organically... [But] we have not quite bottomed out how we might support a federal state of APs”

(officer, interview)

Activity

As would be expected at this stage in the development of APs, some members found it difficult to articulate the overall purpose of APs, although participatory budgeting and reducing inequality were suggested as key areas of current focus. There was uncertainty regarding the responsibilities of elected members, community members and CP partners, and the process of collaborating as equals with shared accountability. Most participants felt the need for greater clarity on the template or approach that APs were following.

“it just seemed a sort of strange parcel to me... their lack of a constitution or a constitutional framework that was coherent and understandable”

(community member, focus group)

In general, members recognised the need to increase community membership, although concerns were raised regarding the legitimacy and credibility of community members to take decisions if they are non-elected. This suggests the need for a broader discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of different recruitment strategies (including self-selection, random selection, targeted selection and election) and their implications for increasing inclusion and the diversity of participation.

As a result of the local elections in May 2017, new elected members became involved in APs resulting in an element of ‘learning’ and a ‘bedding-in’ process. CP partners, as members of the APs, were valued for their support, administrative role and professional knowledge and expertise.

Engagement, Involvement and Reach

The APs role in participatory budgeting was thought to provide an opportunity for inclusive community engagement, particularly the opportunity to talk to people informally at PB events. There was recognition of the need for greater consistency and continuity in membership as a priority. In relation to existing community structures, the findings revealed strong and conflicting views on the inclusivity and reach of community councils (CCs). In particular, the concern that APs may attract a particular demographic and lack an element of ‘*cultural diversity and age diversity*’. The style of meetings was a challenge. Meetings could be ‘*dull*’, ‘*tedious*’ and ‘*boring*’, and unattractive to more diverse membership such as young people. There were different views on attendance at meetings by members of the public and if this was desirable. Furthermore, the geographies associated with the five APs were

perceived as too large to be fully effective in some instances, with significant differences between rural communities and urban communities, requiring an element of local restructure.

“we have got to sit in the same meeting and listen to each other on totally different demographics and different issues, different agendas ... it may suit officers in a sense...but as far as the AP goes, the benefit I think of splitting would be huge and then fellow councillors could... start looking at ways within their area to engage people.”

(councillor, focus group)

Reactions and Awareness

Perth and Kinross was described by CP partners as having a rich and vibrant landscape of community and voluntary organisations, albeit a need for greater attention to the interface between APs and existing community groups. There was a need for better communication with local community groups and residents, to increase levels of awareness of the benefits of APs, and overcome the negative reaction from some community councils.

“we need community councillors, resident associations to understand that what the APs is doing is not sitting against what they are doing, but rather enhancing it”

(community member, interview)

“it’s about trying to get that balance of not stepping on the lawn of well established, self-sustaining community groups that are doing a fantastic job”

(officer, interview)

Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes

The AP chairs require the ability to convey a clear sense of direction and ensure all voices are heard equally. CP partners recognised the need for transition from leadership by senior officers to community members and more support and training for community members to take on leadership roles.

“I think if you're going to have a community member as a chair, you should give them governance training”

(community member, interview)

“communities are more likely to get involved when it is a community person leading.”

(officer, interview)

Practices and Behaviours

While there is a clear link between APs and CPP priorities through the locality plans which fed into the community plan, the link between the CPP outcome delivery groups and APs was regarded as tenuous. There is therefore a need to clarify the processes through which APs feed into CPP structures.

In AP meetings, the process of deciding which applications could go forward for PB and the approach to running events involved discussion and deliberation over options, alternatives and the most suitable approach. Fieldwork observations revealed that councillors tended to dominate meetings. There was a learning process in how to perform the scrutiny function of the AP.

“we scrutinise everything and actually some of the things that got thrown out caused quite a bit of controversy ...after the event about what should and shouldn't qualify”

(councillor, focus group)

Although deliberation was at times uncomfortable and controversial, this form of communication was a positive sign of APs developing their function as decision-making forums and undergoing a process of learning. In the future, greater attention is needed to the inclusion of community members within meetings in processes of deliberation.

Final Outcomes

There were different interpretations of the meaning of community empowerment amongst members of the AP. In particular, the value of public participation in decision-making on budget allocations was not recognised by some elected members. Others were keen to open up this conversation and ‘push the boundaries’ of community involvement.

“I think we have got to keep pushing the boundaries of what community empowerment means and what it can deliver for communities ... I'd like to see more decisions getting taken by [the] community and [for the] community feel more empowered and more involved”.

(councillor, focus group)

Section Summary

Effectiveness of APs at Present:

Overall, the relationship between the individuals within the APs appears relatively stable, in that the meetings are fairly well attended with apparent positive relations. However, the diversity of community backgrounds in membership remains an issue. As a result, the strength of ties between the community and elected members could be interpreted as weak, and requires a better balance to be achieved.

It was apparent that the shared meaning of APs between its members varies significantly. The elected members appear more focused on concerns of accountability for funding decisions, whereas the limited number of community representatives concentrated on the potential of participatory budgeting and the Aps' role in tackling inequalities, and the need to strengthen the reach and inclusion and engagement of local communities.

Finally, the analysis of the APs functioning results in a number of key areas suggested for improvement by research participants.

Key Areas for Improvement:

- improved clarity of purpose and roles and responsibilities of AP members
- improve decision-making processes within APs by involving an impartial skilled facilitator, responsible for ensuring an inclusive and robust process
- reduce barriers to community participation (e.g. support with transport costs, digital access, childcare)²²
- improve stability of membership
- clarify APs relationship with CCs and other community structures building on the guidance that has been developed for CCs²³
- clarify that each AP has the autonomy to operate at a level that is suitable for the local context and geography
- increase understanding on the use of the AP budget
- increase the diversity of community participation by using different approaches to recruitment and consider innovative methods such as mini-publics and digital forms of engagement
- reinforce and strengthen the link between APs and CPP priorities and structures, through governance structures (see <http://pk-storyboard.org.uk/cp/how-we-work/community-planning/governance/>)

²² Guidance has been developed on travel costs. Perth City AP is looking at crèche facilities and Highland AP is using Skype

²³ For guidance see http://www.pkc.gov.uk/media/41194/Action-Partnerships-Community-Councils-FAQ/pdf/Action_Partnerships_-_Community_Councils_FAQ_

Section 4: Identifying What Works

The purpose of Section 4 is to summarise what the evidence means for the future of local decision-making policy and practice for PKCPP, and how to improve the role of APs in local decision-making and participatory governance.

What Works in the Case Study Area?

An in-depth analysis of the PKCPP approach to local decision-making involves consideration of the changing relationship between action partnerships, the communities being served, and the wider context of public service reform – both national and local policy priorities and objectives. These include the Community Empowerment Act, findings from the P&K Fairness Commission and the PKCPP Community Plan.

is therefore too soon to measure the achievement of outcomes for community empowerment. However, this research found promising signs of activities, processes and practices that if strengthened and supported could contribute to improved outcomes over the longer term. Table 5 provides an indication of current and future challenges for the PKCPP approach to local decision-making.

Table 5: PKCPP Local Decision-Making: Key Characteristics

Local Decision-Making in Perth and Kinross		
What is Working	Current Challenges	Future Challenges
<p>Resources have been shared between partners to achieve outcomes. Budgets come from three main sources, Community Choices Fund (Scottish Government), Council and Health and Social Care Partnership</p> <p>Significant CP partner support for APs and PB. Joint work through the Stronger Communities team has helped to deliver successful PB processes and events.</p> <p>The function of APs in steering the PB process is widely regarded as successful.</p> <p>Some APs have split the geography of their locality themselves in line with the practicalities of running the PB process.</p> <p>A significant number of councillors recognise their role as one of encouragement, including raising awareness and supporting culture change within the council and CPP.</p> <p>Participation in the Fairness Commission has deepened understanding of the complex nature of hidden deprivation and inequalities.</p> <p>Deliberations within AP meetings (i.e. how to facilitate inclusive PB processes and reduce inequalities) are encouraging practices that can contribute to a more participatory and deliberative approach to decision making.</p>	<p>AP members seek a better understanding of processes and rules of governance especially in relation to responsibilities for the allocation of public funds²⁴.</p> <p>APs have the autonomy to work flexibly and in some areas they may decide to develop more localised forums in response to the needs of their locality. APs should seek to operate at a scale that balances administrative practicalities with geographies that 'make sense' to AP members.</p> <p>A community participation model is needed that can reach a wider cross section of the local population. This could be achieved through democratic innovations such as PB, mini publics and digital dialogue and methods that will increase involvement of citizens whose voices are seldom heard.</p> <p>Barriers to involvement in PB and in APs include: distance to travel; volunteer fatigue; apathy, lack of awareness or clarity of purpose; expectations of 'action'; level of interest in administrative processes; negative previous experiences of consultations; and processes that are too rushed.</p> <p>Greater clarity is needed on the roles, responsibilities and accountability of AP members.</p> <p>The purpose and added value of PB and APs needs to be communicated more clearly to local community groups.²⁵.</p>	<p>A policy of equal distribution of resources across a landscape of inequalities is potentially regressive. Consider a review of the approach to budget allocation across APs.</p> <p>The requirement for councils to allocate at least 1% of their budgets via PB will require 'a step change in the ability and robustness of the AP structures'.</p> <p>An increase in staff resources may be needed to support the facilitation and administration of APs.</p> <p>AP members need a clearer understanding of the processes and responsibilities for feeding in and progressing actions within the council and CPP</p> <p>A greater awareness of the broader community empowerment agenda is needed, beyond landownership and asset transfer, towards increased public participation in decision-making</p> <p>AP members would benefit from opportunities to exchange learning on local democracy and community participation across the CPP.</p>

²⁴ Governance guidance has been issued to all APs including guidance on governance of their funds.

²⁵ This issue is currently being addressed. Officers have been drafting a communications plan with help from a community representative on one of the APs.

What actions have been most effective in bringing improved change in the area?

- The role of APs in steering the PB process is widely regarded as successful.
- High level of support and agreement to pool resources across community planning partners.
- Awareness raising through meetings with a diverse range of local community groups.
- Attempts to involve new community members through 'soft touch' engagement at PB events.
- Deliberation within meetings on the process of managing PB including voting methods, scrutiny and feedback on applications, and reducing inequalities.
- Priority issues arising from APs (e.g. rural transport) have been fed into council and CPP structures and to the relevant officers.

What actions have been most ineffective in bringing improved change in the area?

- Lack of clarity on the need for equal participation, influence, and accountability across all AP members, with some members being confused about their role and level of participation.
- Over-reliance on a model of participation in APs involving community representatives with limited opportunities for involving residents who may not be involved in local community groups.
- 'Fire-fighting' and lack of time for 'forward planning' which has limited the ability to develop communications strategy and raise awareness of PB and APs.

Future of Local Decision-Making: Role of APs:

APs have already made considerable progress in developing an understanding of their remit in relation to inequalities and participatory budgeting. They are developing confidence and momentum as decision making bodies, although in some areas a stumbling block has been their scale of operation

The size of localities for Action Partnerships (APs):

Most participants in this study raised the issue of geography and scale of operation as a significant issue for the future development of APs, although there was no consensus on the ideal size and scale for all APs. There is an inherent challenge in agreeing standard geographies that 'make sense' to local communities and that, at

the same time, are practical for CP partners to administer and support . There was strong support from research participants for dividing into smaller geographies, but also recognition of the potential staffing difficulties.

This leads to the conclusion that there is no ‘one size fits all’ and each AP may wish to operate differently to take account of local circumstances. APs are themselves best placed to find the appropriate balance between identifiable communities and a practical scale of operation in dialogue with CP partners. For local decision-making to be effective, each AP will to develop its own pragmatic and approach that works for its locality.

Strengthening the relationship between the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board and Action Partnerships (APs):

- Increasing devolved responsibilities to APs will require more robust governance mechanisms to be in place so that their members have the accountability structures, legitimacy and credibility to undertake increased responsibility concerning policy decisions. APs are currently well placed to influence policy decisions by feeding into CPP structures and council committees. Councillors have a key role to play in pursuing issues and priorities raised by APs within the council to help achieve policy and spending outcomes.
- Any increase in responsibilities (e.g. particularly concerning resources and funding) needs to be in conjunction with a robust governance and accountable process. At the moment, the quorum for each AP differs across each group. This would require clear guidelines on membership and a clear process, that is not cumbersome²⁶.

Improving Area Partnership’s (APs) Involvement in Policy Decisions and Service Redesign

We recommend that the CPP applies standards of accountability to APs that are suitable for community participation. Accountability in participatory governance is shared between community representatives and elected members. Community representatives (whether they are representing a community of place, practice or interest) are accountable to their communities. They should be able to demonstrate ongoing engagement and consent from their communities when making representations at APs. This may be done through a variety of methods that allow local residents to participate both online and face-to-face; for example, community forums, mini-publics, digital crowdsourcing, etc.

²⁶ Guidelines on governance (“draft constitution”) for APs have been issued to the partnerships

In turn, councillors are accountable as elected representatives to their constituencies, and should also be able to demonstrate that they are engaging with a cross-section of the community in order to reflect and respond to local priorities. Both community representatives and elected members should also abide by standards of 'deliberative accountability'. This means that they must publicly justify the decisions that come from shared decision-making at the AP and be transparent about the deliberations that led to those decisions. Deliberative accountability is strengthened by the role of skilled and experienced facilitators working alongside the chair to ensure high standards of deliberation during meetings.

Section 5: Conclusions

Local decision-making, broadly defined, relates to the increasing decentralisation of power and resources to local communities and the changing relationship between the delivery of public services and the communities they serve.

Different approaches to local decision-making in Scotland have been proposed as a vehicle to tackle inequalities, based largely on an understanding of the relationship between the absence of a strong local democracy and the prevalence of inequalities²⁷.

This report by What Works Scotland (What Works Scotland) has sought to share insights for future learning regarding the Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership's (PKCPP) approach to local decision-making, to help achieve increasing community empowerment and the focus on tackling inequality.

Main Messages

Action partnerships are 'in their infancy' and yet they have already taken significant steps towards achieving outcomes for community empowerment. Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership (PKCPP) has demonstrated a high level of support for local decision making with the agreement to pool financial resources, the involvement of CP partners in APs and joint working at a local level to deliver participatory budgeting (PB) events. The function of APs in steering the PB process has been widely regarded as a success.

Efforts to engage a wider cross section of the population in APs have included awareness-raising through local meetings; 'soft touch' engagement of local residents attending PB events; and attempts to involve young people through local schools. Decision-making within APs has been strengthened by deliberation on issues such as the design of the PB process and the nature of inequalities, building on the learning from the Fairness Commission.

Priority issues arising from APs such as rural transport have been fed into council and CPP structures and to the relevant officers. A significant proportion of councillors who engaged in this study recognised their role as one of encouragement, including promoting the work of APs and supporting culture change. There is a process of transition underway as community members take on new leadership roles.

If Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership is to continue to strengthen local decision-making, it must focus on improving understanding of AP governance

²⁷ Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy (2014)
<https://www.localdemocracy.info/news/final-report/>

structures; enabling more inclusive community participation; developing facilitative styles of leadership; and strengthening the commitment to action partnerships and participatory budgeting over the longer-term.

Key success factors include:

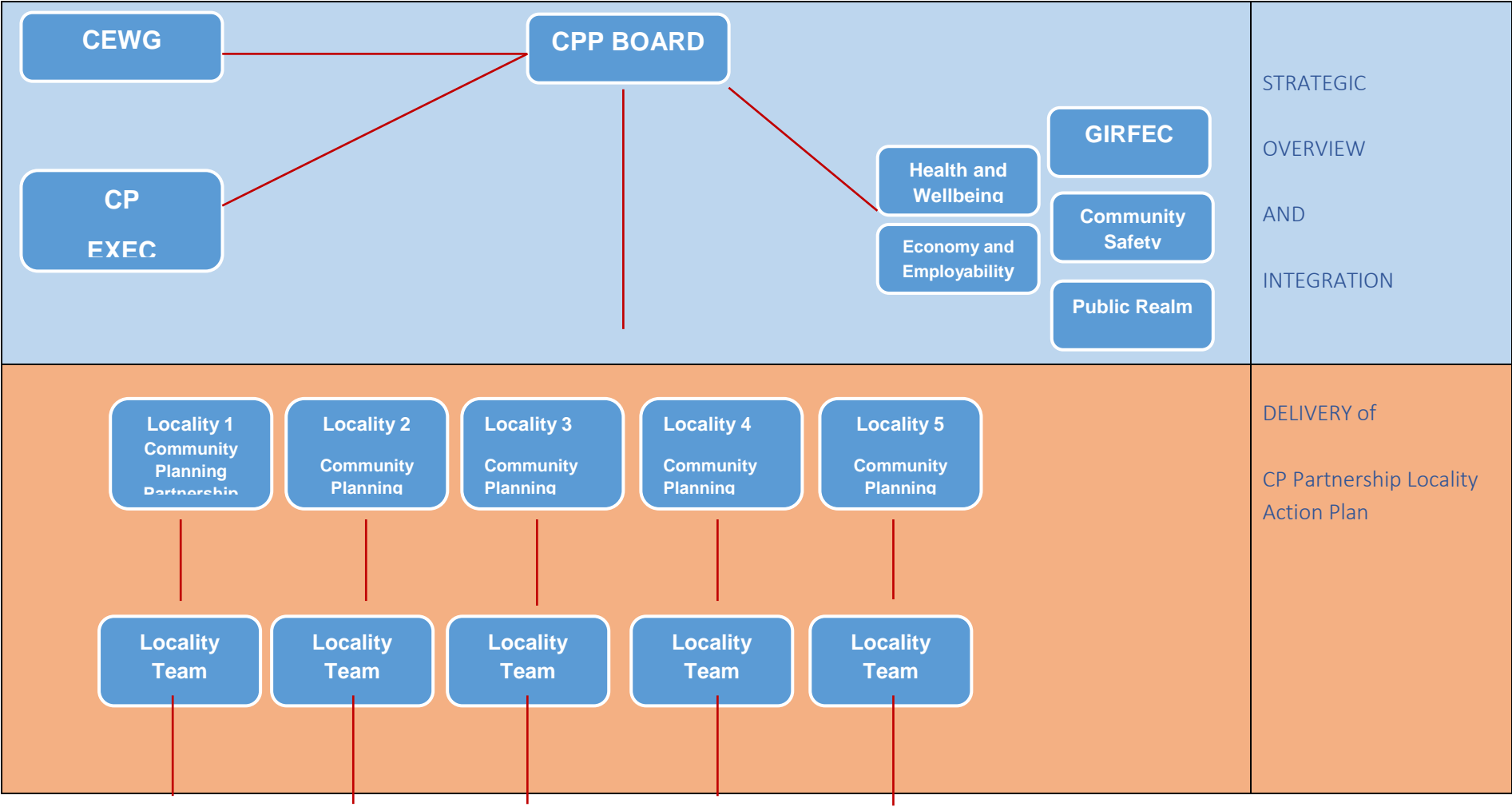
- **Local and national context:** APs are still in their infancy, characterised by new political membership, competing perspectives on community empowerment and a wider context of austerity. It is important to engage with this context and create a long-term platform for APs to succeed, for example, by seeking cross-party support so that APs can become an accepted and established space for governance in Perth and Kinross.
- **Culture and mindsets:** arrange events for AP members to learn about the new era of collaborative decision-making and the need for facilitative styles of leadership
- **Budget distribution:** Consider a review of the approach to budget allocation across APs. A policy of equal distribution of resources across a landscape of inequalities is potentially regressive, especially in the context of participatory budgeting .
- **Long-term planning:** the participatory budgeting process could be planned as an annual cycle to allow APs more time to prepare in advance for the different stages.
- **Incentives and support mechanisms:** improve incentives to public participation in local decision making by continuing to develop and strengthen participatory budgeting and trialling other democratic innovations such as mini-publics , online participation and digital dialogue . Continue to draw on best practice from national and international sources . Lower barriers to participation by providing help with financial costs, digital access, childcare and transport
- **Governance and delivery structures:** increase the inclusion and influence of community members in partnership meetings through careful and skilled facilitation. Support elected members with a clear definition of their roles and their responsibilities in these spaces. Specify more clearly the roles of CP partners supporting this process. Clarify that APs have the autonomy to work flexibly in more localised forums within their own contexts and according to the needs of each locality.
- **Facilitative leadership:** APs would be better served by a model that includes both a chairperson, with a formal role, and an impartial facilitator, responsible for the process of meetings. Experienced facilitators can help to

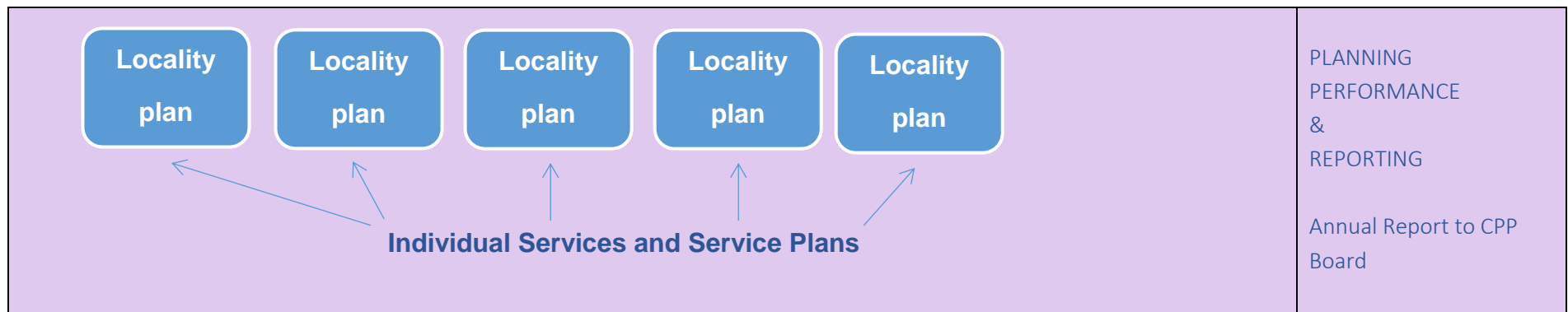
change the style of meeting by designing sessions that are dynamic and engaging, drawing on a range of facilitation techniques.

- **Improve links with local structures:** There is a recognised need for reform and improved support for community councils across Scotland . In addition, Perth and Kinross Council has initiated a review of community councils. Given this wider context of reform it is important to clarify the relationship of APs to other democratic structures and community organisations, including community councils, community partnerships and development trusts, and to clearly articulate the distinct role of APs within this landscape
- **Learning and skills:** Promote a culture of inquiry and learning to support the development of new approaches to local decision-making. Stimulate passion and excitement for the transformative potential of action partnerships and participatory budgeting.

Overall, a key challenge for PKCPP going forward is to better connect AP processes and structures with other democratic structures, as well as improving community involvement through facilitative leadership, incentives and innovations to strengthen local decision-making in Perth and Kinross.

Annex A: Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership structures





Annex B: What Works Scotland Analytical Framework – Participatory Governance

Intermediate outcomes	What does success in participatory governance look like? Evidence from What Works Scotland research	Review of programme/ intervention - local community planning partnerships
Inputs / Resources	<p>Adequate and secure funding (Cook 2015; Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>A management support structure (Cook 2015)</p> <p>Sufficient staff with previous experience of local partnerships and skills in inclusive engagement (Cook 2015; Lightbody et al 2017)</p> <p>There is commitment to the partnership at operational and strategic levels (Cook 2015)</p>	<p>Is there adequate budget available for organising processes? Delivering the actions that should follow after the process?</p> <p>Is there a management support structure for local community planning?</p> <p>Are there sufficient staff with relevant skills and experience in partnership working, facilitation and inclusive engagement to support the process?</p> <p>Have resources been shared (or aligned) between partners to achieve outcomes?</p>
Activities	<p>There is a clear and shared understanding of the purpose of the activity (Escobar et al 2018; Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>Effective IT systems that enable information sharing (Cook 2015)</p> <p>Effective use of digital technology including social media, online forums, recording/ streaming online</p>	<p>What is the purpose of partnership meetings? Is this purpose clear and understood by most members?</p> <p>How is information shared/ communicated between members? Are there IT systems that are accessible to all members?</p> <p>Are there opportunities for those who cannot attend face-to-face meetings to participate through digital technology?</p>

	<p>(Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>Clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability (Cook 2015)</p> <p>Leadership competencies are dispersed – everyone is both a leader and a follower (Chapman et al 2017)</p>	<p>What are the roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability of members? Are these clear?</p> <p>Who are the leaders and who are the followers? Are these roles formally allocated or have they emerged through the interaction of members?</p>
Engagement, involvement and reach	<p>Inclusion –there is diversity in backgrounds and perspectives on the partnership (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>A mix of different models of associative and direct participatory democracy²⁸ to reach a wider cross section of the local population</p> <p>Participation initiatives are sensitive and responsive to the local context (Cook 2015; Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>Education, information and support including ‘technical friends’²⁹ are provided to community members (Lightbody et al 2017)</p>	<p>Who is involved in the local partnership?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elected members? (in power? and in opposition?) - Community members? Third sector? - Public sector? Operational? Strategic? <p>How is community involvement organised? Through community representatives or directly with citizens and residents or a mix of both?</p> <p>To what extent is the approach to community participation flexible and responsive to the local context?</p> <p>How are community representatives and citizens supported to overcome barriers to participation including the opportunity to learn about the issues at hand and engage with evidence (broadly understood)?</p>

²⁸ Associative participatory model - those invited to participate are community representatives or intermediaries from established community groups and associations. Direct participatory model- those invited to participate are citizens or residents (they do not need to be part of an existing group) Hybrid is a mix of both (see Escobar et al 2018)

²⁹ ‘Technical friends’ are individuals who can help translate and make sense of complex technical language and jargon in participation processes (Lightbody et al 2017p.1)

	<p>There is recognition and respect shown for the investment of time and energy from participants, including remuneration or compensation, if appropriate, for those on low incomes or with other barriers to participation. (Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>Community engagement includes innovative methods to increase the participation of the local population, including citizens who do not engage with intermediaries (Escobar et al 2018), communities of identity (LGBT), and communities of interest (e.g. women's groups) (Lightbody 2017)</p>	<p>How is recognition shown for the investment of time and energy by participants in the partnership? Are there any measures in place to lower practical barriers to participation? (e.g. childcare, transport, accessibility)</p> <p>What other activities are used to engage local communities in decision making? E.g. PB, citizens juries and panels, public meetings, task groups, forums, others? Do these activities usually involve some form of deliberation - discussing evidence (broadly understood) and competing priorities and local policy issues?</p> <p>Are there forums and activities that directly involve citizens and residents (who may not be part of an organised group)? What is the role of such forums? Are these forums clearly linked to formal decision-making spaces?</p>
Reactions/ Awareness	The need for the partnership is recognised and understood (Cook 2015; Chapman et al 2017)	How have local communities reacted to the development of this new approach to local decision making?
Knowledge, skills and attitudes	<p>The partnership is seen as a key site for co-production and decision making rather than a 'secondary arena' with core business carried out elsewhere (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Perceived interdependence – (collaborative advantage/ added value) (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Staff see their roles not only as administering the</p>	<p>How have public services and the third sector reacted to this new approach to local decision making at operational and strategic levels?</p> <p>What is the added value of local partnership? To what extent do members of the partnership feel that they need each other to get things done? Could you have achieved the same outcomes or better without the partnership?</p> <p>How do staff see their role in supporting the partnership? To what extent do</p>

	<p>process but also as activists promoting culture change and reform (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Leadership in a collaborative settings entails key relational skills - building trust, maintaining; developing strong relationships, facilitating collaboration and equality between members, stimulating the flow of information between members, understanding the context, identifying opportunities, resources and potential stakeholders, mobilising people and resources and taking a pragmatic stance (Chapman et al 2017)</p> <p>The expectations of leaders/ strategic managers and central government are realistic about what the partnership can achieve (Cook 2015)</p>	<p>they see their role as administrative or as champions of culture change?</p> <p>To what extent do staff, elected members and community members display the skills and qualities of facilitative leadership such as building trust and strengthening relationships?</p> <p>What expectations do elected members, strategic managers and central government have of this form of local partnership? Are those expectations realistic?</p>
Practices and Behaviours	<p>The partnership is an important site for collaborative decision-making (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Priorities from local partnerships and public forums are feed clearly into strategic decision making (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Elected members have an important role in enabling</p>	<p>Are important decisions taken by the partnership or taken elsewhere?</p> <p>Do the decisions of the local partnership feed clearly into the work of the central board / theme groups (CPP) and/or other relevant strategic/institutional spaces (e.g. integrated HSC board; council chambers; other bodies)? To what extent have local partnerships influenced CPP priorities e.g. the development of LOIPs and locality plans?</p> <p>Are there decisions that could be devolved to the local partnership? Would</p>

	<p>or hindering the impact of community engagement processes on policy and governance (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>The quality of deliberation during meetings (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diverse participants have a meaningful opportunity to participate and exercise influence at meetings - High deliberative standards seek to ensure that decisions are made on the basis of the best evidence and reasons available, and through robust deliberation between partners - Other agendas, such as grants and funding for community organisations, does not restrict the quality of deliberation 	<p>the local partnership have the legitimacy to take these decisions?</p> <p>Does the involvement of elected representatives influence the extent to which the partnership has impact on policy decisions and services? Do elected members use the input from local partnerships to inform their decisions?</p> <p>To what extent do all members of the APs have an equal opportunity influence its decisions?</p> <p>To what extent are competing priorities and perspectives scrutinised at meetings? Are there disagreements at the meeting or is disagreement unusual?</p> <p>Are there other agendas and interests that may limit the quality of deliberation at meetings? (e.g. organisations seeking funding from the public sector)</p> <p>To what extent are relationships between members of the partnership productive? Examples?</p>
Final Outcomes for Participatory Governance	<p>There is more influential community participation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - community-based or community-led social and economic development activity - the way public authorities design and deliver services 	<p>How effective do you feel the local partnership/s have been in increasing the influence and inclusion of communities and citizens in local decision making?</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - policy, strategy and planning processes. (National Standards for Community Engagement - Scotland 2017)	What could be done to improve the effectiveness of local partnerships?
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Annex C: Results from Thematic Analysis

Please note that the findings recorded here are indicative and inconclusive, limited by the availability of data and the scope of the study.

Intermediate outcomes	What does success in participatory governance look like? Evidence from What Works Scotland research	Results and Supporting Statements
Inputs / Resources	<p>Adequate and secure funding (Cook 2015; Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>There is commitment to the partnership at operational and strategic levels (Cook 2015)</p> <p>A management support structure (Cook 2015)</p> <p>Sufficient staff with previous experience of local partnerships and skills in inclusive engagement (Cook 2015; Lightbody</p>	<p>Budget</p> <p>Research participants believed there was adequate budget available for running the APs, organising PB processes and delivering the actions that should follow after the process. The CPP awarded £250,000 over a period of 2 years to the APs. £50,000 per partnership for running the AP and PB. Demand for PB varied across some AP areas and in some areas the budget had been re-allocated to areas with a higher level of demand for PB funding.</p> <p>Resources have been shared between partners to achieve outcomes. Budgets come from three main sources, Community Choices fund (Scottish Government), Council fund and Health and Social Care fund with an additional £2,000 from Fire & Rescue for Perth city.</p> <p>Partnership</p> <p>Senior officers from public bodies have been involved in chairing AP meetings.</p> <p>At an operational level, the CPP have established a virtual team – Stronger Communities which includes CLD, tenant participation, community greenspace, health and social care staff – all with a community focus. The team have undertaken joint work to deliver PB. There has also been support from other colleagues with the Council for PB and support from the HSCP with their PB. In the current round of PB the HSCP and Council</p>

	2017)	<p>officers are working together.</p> <p>Management</p> <p>There is a management support structure for local community planning, led by the Community Planning Team. Officers attend APs meetings, provide information as required and perform a secretariat role.</p> <p>There are staff with relevant skills and experience in partnership working, facilitation and inclusive engagement to support the process. Most staff have received generic training on PB prior to running the events (delivered by PB Partners) although only a few staff have previous experience and the depth of training has been limited.</p> <p>Staff resources</p> <p>An area where there is pressure for additional staff resource is in the officer support and secretariat function. Given that the direction of travel is to split into sub-groups or subdivide the APs, a significant future challenge is the capacity of officers:</p> <p><i>“the conversation is evolving and I think pretty much every APs have had the same conversation of subdivision.. so I think it’s happening organically... [but] we have not quite bottomed out how we might support a federal state of APs” (officer, interview)</i></p> <p>APs need to be underpinned by community capacity building work at a local level to support great inclusion and participation. CLD staff recognized that they had a key role in supporting the CEA transition but they were under resourced:</p> <p><i>“We are a key part of the transition because we are the experts working with communitieswe are creaking at the seams, because we have lost so many staff... we are really a small team for what we cover and what we deliver...” (CCB officer, interview)</i></p>
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Activities	<p>There is a clear and shared understanding of the purpose of the activity (Escobar et al 2018; Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>Effective IT systems that enable information sharing (Cook 2015)</p> <p>Effective use of digital technology including social media, online forums, recording/ streaming online (Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>Clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability (Cook 2015)</p> <p>Leadership competencies are dispersed – everyone is both a leader and a follower (Chapman et al 2017)</p>	<p>Purpose Members of APs recognised PB and reducing inequality as key purposes of APs, although a number of councillors and a significant proportion of community members struggled to articulate the overall purpose of APs. Many felt that they lacked clarity of purpose. <i>“it just seemed a sort of strange parcel to me... their lack of a constitution or a constitutional framework that was coherent and understandable”</i> (community member);</p> <p>Digital technology IT systems and digital inclusion were not identified by participants as a barrier to participation. This may reflect a genuine lack of need or lack of awareness that this could be a potential barrier for local residents. Skype is now available for all AP meetings. Community members and councillors felt that greater use could be made of digital technology and video conferencing (FG1, FG2,community member interview)</p> <p>Roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability At present the roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability of members of APs are not clear. Officers described the role of community members as leading the partnership and deciding how it should develop, with officers and councillors supporting and facilitating community members. Some community members believed that they should be regarded as the core members of the APs and that the future focus of APs should be to progress community-led ideas and actions.</p> <p>Many councillors appeared willing to play second fiddle to community members on the partnerships. One even proposed giving up the voting rights of councillors in favour of community members. Other councillors questioned the legitimacy and credibility of community members to take decisions if they are appointed, invited or self-selected and otherwise non-elected. Some councillors and community members supported a collaborative partnership approach with councillors and community members sharing responsibility for decisions and equal votes.</p>
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		<p>Community councils (CCs) provide a statutory function as the most local level of democratic engagement and participation. A key distinction made by officers and some AP members between the two types of democratic engagement was that <i>'the remit of community councils does not address inequalities'</i>.</p> <p>There were issues of clarity on accountability and the extent to which officers were allocating the funding and therefore accountable, or if the accountability rests with the AP members – councillors and community members, with the officers' role as advisory only.. <i>'In theory it should sit with the APs members' (councillor)</i>. However, a CPO officer countered this view:</p> <p><i>"the communities ...have no accountability and they are not reporting to us. They are there because they are doing good things for the communities."</i> (officer, interview)</p> <p><i>"We are giving money to APs, they decide how to spend the money and ...as long as they are spending money in terms of the achievement of the objectives which they were set up for... similarly community choices fund... as long as that money is being spent on PB and we know it's being spent on PB, that is the issue. The communities decide how the money's spent"</i> (officer, interview)</p> <p>This level of autonomy in the decision making of APs was somewhat outside the comfort of AP members especially community members who felt there should be tighter processes and more controls.</p> <p>Apart from the role of the chair, the roles of members as leaders and followers on the APs have not been formally allocated. For new members the difference between being a <i>'public or community member'</i> and being a <i>'councillor'</i> was not clear or if the public member has an equal voice as a councillor or officer.</p> <p>Changing the number of local elected members in 2017 has meant that there is an element of 'learning' still being experienced by the elected members involved in APs and by implication 'bedding-in' of the APs as</p>
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		<p>councillors try to navigate and understand their new roles. Roles identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouragement and facilitative role. <i>“I see it as an encouragement role, to try and get other people involved” (councillor, FG1).</i> • raising awareness of PB, adding PB to the agenda of meetings, and ‘getting the message out’. <i>‘If you want to get them really involved, you have to go to them. You can’t expect them to come to you’ (councillor, FG1).</i> • promoting culture change: <i>“I think it’s about changing the culture. It’s everybody’s responsibility actually within the council, if they can promote that in any small way” (FG1).</i> • scrutiny and accountability. <i>“Our role is to make sure they [APs] follow due processes” (councillor, interview).</i> <p>Officers were valued by most members of APs for the support and administrative role they provide and senior officers for their knowledge and expertise: <i>“[Officers] are the life-support system” (councillor)</i> <i>“I found the actual staff themselves amazing, all of them, really helpful” (community member, interview)</i></p>
Engagement, involvement and reach	A mix of different models of associative and direct participatory democracy ³⁰ to reach a wider cross section of the local population	<p>Participatory model</p> <p>APs are currently based on an associative participatory model, reliant on community representatives. Community representatives tend to be multiple group volunteers and as such suffer from ‘volunteer fatigue’.</p> <p>Officers and councillors regarded greater consistency and continuity in membership as a priority for AP development.</p>

³⁰ Associative participatory model - those invited to participate are community representatives or intermediaries from established community groups and associations. Direct participatory model- those invited to participate are citizens or residents (do not need to be part of an existing group? Hybrid – a mix of both (see Escobar et al 2018)

<p>Inclusion –there is diversity in backgrounds and perspectives on the partnership (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Participation initiatives are sensitive and responsive to the local context (Cook 2015; Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>Education, information and support including ‘technical friends’³¹ are provided to community members’ (Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>There is recognition and respect shown for the investment of time and energy from participants, including remuneration or compensation, if</p>	<p>There was a lack of clarity over whether members of the public could attend meetings. The original terms of reference state that meetings are open to members of the public (FG3). One councillor complained that “<i>anybody can participate and you don’t know who they are</i>” (councillor), leading to ‘<i>revolving door</i>’ participation and ‘<i>groundhog day</i>’ in meetings. Community members were invited to the AP or self-selected and some councillors critiqued this approach for engaging people ‘<i>with a very specific agenda</i>’, arguing that elections are needed to ensure that people are there for ‘<i>the bigger picture of the community</i>’ and to give ‘<i>locus and credibility</i>’.</p> <p>Community members appeared more open to the idea of members of the public being engaged in APs. One chair felt strongly that members of the public should be allowed to attend meetings without being invited. There may be greater support from community members for a hybrid model of participation that includes local residents who are not members of organised groups.</p> <p>There was a suggestion that AP members might ‘serve a term’ or ‘be ‘elected for a year’ (councillor) This shorter term would fit with the life transitions of young people and the changing population dynamics of some communities (FG3)</p> <p>Community councils</p> <p>Many CCs were regarded positively by councillors and community members as very active and engaged in their communities, especially in rural areas. An example was given by one councillor of a village in which the 25 people attending the community council meeting equates to one fifth of the local population.</p> <p>There were strong and conflicting views on the inclusivity of community councils. Some participants</p>
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³¹ ‘Technical friends’ are individuals who can help translate and make sense of complex technical language and jargon and participation processes (Lightbody et al 2017p.1)

	<p>appropriate, for those on low incomes or with other barriers to participation. (Lightbody 2017)</p> <p>Community engagement includes innovative methods to increase the participation of the local population, including citizens who do not engage with intermediaries (Escobar et al 2018) communities of identity (LGBT) and communities of interest (e.g. women's groups) (Lightbody 2017)</p>	<p>expressed the view that CCs serve narrow interests and <i>"focused almost entirely on planning applications and there was a high level of nimbyism"</i>(community member). Another councillor argued that community councils are an essential building block for democratic participation but they need to be <i>'properly codified'</i> with elections to give <i>'locus and credibility'</i> and to ensure that they <i>"work for the common good, regardless of political allegiance"</i> (councillor, FG2(</p> <p>The problem of representation from community councils is also one of scale, with 11 CCs in Eastern, 13 CCs in Highland. Some APs are seeking representation through a CC forum operating across a number of CCs. It was noted that in some local areas CCs have no representation (such as Rannoch), where there is an active community development trust, and in areas of Perth local residents have opted to continue as resident's associations rather than become community councils.</p> <p>Diversity and inclusion</p> <p>Involved in the local APs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elected members - Community members (representatives of organized community groups) - Council officers (Community Planning Officers and Community Learning and Development Officers/ Community Capacity Builders) <p>There is limited or no involvement from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community members (not involved in organized community groups) - Public sector organisations (some officers at a strategic level have chaired APs) <p>Third sector have recently become involved. The Third Sector Interface are now invited to every action partnership meeting</p> <p>Members raised concerns that the APs attracted a particular demographic and lacked <i>'cultural diversity and age diversity'</i> (councillor). APs members were keen to involve young people. Engagement with local high schools to encourage young people to attend had been successful in the past (e.g. S&S AP). It should be</p>
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		<p>possible to engage them for a year or so, although there were problems with long-term retention (FG1, FG2, FG3). Another suggestion was to engage members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (community member, interview).</p> <p>A third sector participant made a link between reducing inequality and increasing inclusion:</p> <p><i>“If the APs were to look at inequality, [they need to look at] the lack of diversity and lack of people that are on these groups. There are still a lot of people who would not get involved with community councils... people with mental health issues, substance misuse and poverty. A lot of these people just feel a lot of the time that they aren’t good enough. They have low self-esteem. What I’m seeing, it’s still very much exclusive, we we’ve not broken that.” (third sector member, focus group)</i></p> <p>Increasing inclusion will entail:</p> <p><i>“taking some risks but also trying to motivate those people that are so withdrawn from the whole of society... engaging at a heart to heart level... this is very much about human beings to human beings.”</i></p> <p>One idea for widening participation was to engage groups and individuals who are pitching for PB funding:</p> <p><i>“Local people not part of constituted groups can apply for PB, they don’t have to constituted, if they have a good idea, but they have to have a non-personal bank account...and through that you would inform them about local APs” (officer, interview)</i></p> <p>PB events could provide a good opportunity for the initial ‘soft touch’ engagement needed for a more inclusive approach:</p> <p><i>“It’s about that ground work, that initial engagement that we do with communities, the soft stuff, the cup of tea and a biscuit and having a blether, getting to know somebody – have you thought about getting involved?... when you do PB there is an opportunity to go around the stalls and say ‘Do you know about the APs? Here’s our plan’”(officer, interview)</i></p>
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		<p>Local context</p> <p>The geographies associated with the five APs were perceived as too large in some instances (e.g. Highland) leading to a lack of participant buy-in and lack of clarity of purpose of the group. The issue of significant concern to most participants in this review was the current boundaries and scale APs. The explanation given for current boundaries were administrative in terms of officers time and capacity to serve APs, but some councillors felt that this should not be <i>‘the driving factor’</i> –</p> <p><i>“we have got to sit in the same meeting and listen to each other on totally different demographics and different issues, different agendas as such... it may suit officers in a sense, because they would then have to attend two meetings if they were coming along. But as far as the AP goes, the benefit I think of splitting would be huge...” (councillor)</i></p> <p>There is a significant difference between rural communities and urban communities in Perth and Kinross. Perth has three small wards with high populations compared to the low populations and vast distances in a single Strathmore ward. The connection between some communities is through their functions and service links rather than proximity and geography - <i>“our ward is split over a number of different communities that actually are not connected at all. They all connect in to Perth but from different directions”.</i> (councillor)</p> <p>The 5 APs align roughly to the old pre-1975 district councils. For one councillor, this history was instructive because a district council is not intended to operate at a community level. The challenge is defining the meaning of locality and community in this context and identifying localities that ‘make sense’. It was recognised that localities need to operate at a scale that local people identify with <i>“it’s got to link to services. It’s got to be linked to how people see their community”.</i> (councillor). There was strong support for splitting into smaller geographies but recognition of potential staff resourcing difficulties.</p> <p>Scales/ levels of community:</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 54 community council areas • '12-13 centres of activity' – <i>'a borough kind of relationship.. that is a community that people can recognise. It's got a school, it's got banks it's got shops... (councillor)'</i> <p>There was a question over whether boundaries should be imposed or chosen to some degree by the communities . Some APs have split the geography themselves in line with the practicalities of running the PB process. e.g. Kinross had a separate process from Almond and Earn. This was done informally and subgroups were created. The budget was split into two. Other partnerships have tried moving the meetings to different parts of the partnership, although, this has led to problems with the lack of consistent members.</p> <p>Barriers to participation</p> <p>Community members face some practical barriers to participation such as distances to travel – volunteers give up their own time to travel long distances to meetings (FG1; FG3). APs can decide if they want to use their budget to reduce barriers to participation including reimbursement of travel costs. They have autonomy to decide how they approach running costs. The chair of one AP was drafting proposals to have crèche facilities available to overcome the barrier of childcare.</p> <p>There was recognition of a number of other, perceptual barriers to participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apathy, lack of awareness or interest amongst members of the public (FG1, FG3) <i>'It's really hard to find community leaders and people who want to be part of administrative approaches. Most people want to do things. They don't want to sit on committees' (FG3)</i> <i>"We are actively engaging groups for PB. Last time was very successful... but in terms of the organisation behind it, the APs, I think there is a lot less interest. (councillor, interview)</i> • Clarity on the purpose of the partnership (FG1) and <i>'the muddle of the organisation itself' (FG3)</i> <i>'people aren't really sure what they are there for' (FG3)</i> • Negative experiences of participation and consultation processes in the past, tokenism, communities feeling that they were not listened to or being wrongly recorded as having been consulted (FG3) <i>"I</i>
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		<p><i>think there is a lot of ‘it’s never worked in the past, why is it going to work now’” (councillor, interview)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes that are too rushed, not enough time to raise awareness of PB amongst members of the public and increase applications and levels of participation in PB and in APs (FG1; FG2). Absence of need for more funding or empowerment in areas that were already affluent and active (FG1) • Style of meeting – concerns that meetings are ‘dull’ , ‘tedious’ and ‘boring’ for younger people and unattractive to more diverse membership (FG1). <p>Education, information and support for community members</p> <p>Access to information varied across community members. Community members noted that the terms of reference for APs were out of date. They sought a constitution, operating instructions, a manual/ guidance on the PB process, a clearer strategic framework.</p> <p><i>“I think that what they need to be doing is putting in place something that supports volunteers and supports them through learning and mentoring with other volunteers” (community member, interview)</i></p> <p>The issues that APs are intended to focus on include steering the PB process and actions to reduce inequalities. It is not clear how community representatives and citizens are currently supported to learn about and engage with these issues. Evidence from PB evaluations is currently being collated and may provide an opportunity to deepen learning on PB. The Fairness Commission provided an opportunity for meaningful engagement with the evidence on the complexities of hidden poverty and inequality:</p> <p><i>“We were going through the Fairness Commission when we were developing our action plans. We had presentations by colleagues at APs on indexes of multiple deprivation etc.... Some people were saying ‘deprivation, that’s not something that affects our area’, but when you actually show some of the statistics, it’s really quite eye watering”(CPO officer, interview)</i></p> <p>There was a need for more opportunities to exchange learning across APs and with other structures of the</p>
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		<p>CPP</p> <p>There was a desire for more opportunities to learn from other local authority areas and exchange ideas.</p> <p>Other methods of participation</p> <p>Positive examples of other activities included PB voting at a Farmers Market, Q&As with school children at the Council, and young people being involved in designing their own play park facilities. These forums were occasional, and, apart from PB voting, were not clearly linked to formal decision-making processes.</p> <p>One AP chair has proposed a mini-public for young people to decide how to spend part of the AP core budget (community member, interview).</p> <p>There might be potential to work with other structures within the CPP (such as the Community Equality Advisory Group) on innovative methods to engage communities of identity (LGBT) and communities of interest (e.g. women's groups) (Lightbody et al 2017).</p>
Reactions/ Awareness	The need for the partnership is recognized and understood (Cook 2015; Chapman et al 2017)	<p>Communications</p> <p>Most participants felt the need for better communication with communities on the benefits of APs:</p> <p><i>"there's quite a key role in actually advancing what the benefits of local APs are and how we can be a credible part of the work of decision making and planning process. That's something to sell I think" (community member, FG3).</i></p> <p><i>"I think there is that gap in the communications between APs, their role in the community and what other community groups are [doing], particularly community councils, because I think even at national level, that's not clear." (CP officer, interview)</i></p>

		<p>Suggestions were that APs needed to <i>'blow some trumpets'</i> – celebrate the good news stories, using the data gathered from evaluation forms from previous PB rounds (FG2)</p> <p>The language should include a clear articulation of the purpose and benefits of PB and APs and avoid too much <i>'council speak'</i>, such as reference to commissions and legislation</p> <p>There is a need to overcome perception that funding is only for deprived areas</p> <p>There have been negative reactions from some CCs towards APs. Some CCs have argued that there is no need for APs, aside from perhaps the PB steering role. Councillors suggested that community councils were not fully engaged and were to some extent excluded from the set up phase and that this was a mistake (FG1). Effort made to gain buy in from CCs has included allocating part of the participatory budget to CCs to <i>'distribute to whatever project they decide is appropriate'</i>.</p> <p>Participants suggested that APs might have been regarded as a threat to CCs and a way to 'refresh' community participation:</p> <p><i>"they become very resistant to the whole idea of this and seemed to think it was a power steal from them" (FG1)</i></p> <p>These political tensions may pertain to a wider issue of the role of community councils, which are currently being reviewed by What Works Scotland and SCDC:</p> <p><i>"there's not been any political direction at Scotland level to say ... the relationship between community councils and APs is this, that or the other, so there have been some turf wars" (officer, interviews)</i></p> <p>There is a rich and vibrant landscape of community and voluntary organisations, groups and activities in P&K with community partnerships, community trusts, community councils, residents associations, youth groups.</p>
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		<p>There is, however, a gap in the interface between APs and community groups and the link to these organisations is not that clear:</p> <p><i>“we need community councillors, resident associations to understand that what the APs is doing is not sitting against what they are doing, but rather enhancing it... the focus needs to be on PB (community member, interview)</i></p> <p><i>“it’s about trying to get that balance of not stepping on the lawn of well established, self-sustaining community groups that are doing a fantastic job” (CP officer).</i></p> <p>The Scottish Government could do more to articulate and explain how and why structures like APs have been established across Scotland – so that people can see that they are getting involved in a national process as part of the community empowerment agenda :</p> <p><i>“I don’t think people realise that community empowerment is also the APs and PB” (councillor)</i></p> <p><i>“A greater awareness of the broader community empowerment outcomes agenda is needed as not only about landownership and assets but also participatory processes.” (councillor)</i></p>
Knowledge, skills and attitudes	The partnership is seen as a key site for co-production and decision making rather than a ‘secondary arena’ with core business carried out elsewhere (Escobar et al 2018)	<p>Changing attitudes</p> <p>Community members argued that for APs to be seen as a key site for co-production and decision making rather than a ‘secondary arena’ (Escobar et al 2017), there needs to be a change in attitude towards participation:</p> <p><i>“if we truly want to move and change things so that there is a more bottom up flow to decision making then ...the established management have to change their attitude to their job and to the concept of participation...There has to be a fundamental change among the lead officers and the councillors...not the first reaction being ‘we know best’”. (community member, FG3)</i></p>

	<p>Perceived interdependence – (collaborative advantage/ added value) (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Staff see their roles not only as administering the process but also as activists promoting culture change and reform (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Leadership in a collaborative settings entails key relational skills - building trust, maintaining; developing strong relationships, facilitating collaboration and equality between members, stimulating the flow of information between members, understanding the context, identifying opportunities, resources</p>	<p><i>“I think to encourage more people along what we need to do is start listening to them properly. Stop using them as a token, and actually take on their ideas, and instead of telling them what won't work, make them work” (community member interview)</i></p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>APs members felt that the chair needs to be able to convey a clear sense of direction and to chair the meeting so that all voices are heard equally.</p> <p>Initially community planning partners were asked to take on the chairing role, to avoid APs being led by council-led. Officers expressed an ambition for greater community leadership on the APs with community members as chairs.</p> <p><i>“I think communities are more likely to get involved when it is a community person leading.” (CCB officer, interview).</i></p> <p>This view was supported by a community member:</p> <p><i>“sitting in front of a group of people that you feel are your peers is different from sitting in with a group of people that you think are above you.” (community member, interview).</i></p> <p>There was recognition of the need for transition from leadership by senior officers to community members. Officers suggested that support for community members as chairs would involve shadowing and mentoring to support transition to the role. A community member felt that training was needed for the role</p> <p><i>“I think if you're going to have a community member as a Chair, you should give them governance training”</i></p> <p>Chairs need to be kept well informed of the vision, direction and governance of APs, for example through the regular meetings of chairs and lead officers.</p>
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	<p>and potential stakeholders, mobilizing people and resources and taking a pragmatic stance (Chapman et al 2017)</p> <p>The expectations of leaders/ strategic managers and central government are realistic about what the partnership can achieve (Cook 2015)</p>	<p>Realistic expectations</p> <p>One officer felt that the Council did not have realistic expectations of the time it takes for a partnership to develop:</p> <p><i>"I have no trouble with how long it takes to build up these groups because they take time and again if we go back to South Perth. When I first started there were 3 local people but if you look at it now there is at least 20 -30 people that go to it and there are all the people who feed into it virtually, they get a newsletter.. its massive and its service providers as well as local people and projects. That took a while to set up and they will have highs and lows, but there is the expectation within the council that they should be up and running and glorious within 6 months and why aren't they."</i></p>
Practices and Behaviours	<p>The partnership is an important site for collaborative decision-making (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Priorities from local partnerships and public forums are feed clearly into strategic decision making (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>Elected members have an</p>	<p>Feeding priorities into strategic decision making</p> <p>There are three streams within the community planning structures – APs, the Community Equality Advisory Group, and the Outcome Delivery Groups. A stronger connection is needed between APs and the other streams. Officers recognised that the link between the delivery groups and APs is tenuous and needs to be strengthened.</p> <p>APs influence CPP priorities through the development of locality plans which fed into the community plan.</p> <p>Some members were not aware of how information was shared with the Council or CPP. This might be the responsibility of the chair or of officers, but also of councillors. There was linkage to the CPP board through the elected members and the CPOG (Community Planning Operating Group) through officers although greater clarity is needed on 'reporting accountability'.</p>

	<p>important role in enabling or hindering the impact of community engagement processes on policy and governance (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <p>The quality of deliberation during meetings (Escobar et al 2018)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diverse participants have a meaningful opportunity to participate and exercise influence at meetings - High deliberative standards seek to ensure that decisions are made on the basis of the best evidence and reasons available, and through robust deliberation between partners - Other agendas such as grants and funding for 	<p>Below the CPP board are three work streams - APs, the Community Equality Advisory Group, and the Outcome Delivery Groups. A stronger connection is needed between APs and the other streams. Officers recognised that the link between the delivery groups and APs is tenuous and needs to be strengthened. One suggestion was that AP chairs could attend the CPP board and outcome delivery groups to give updates (CCB officer).</p> <p>Opportunities to exercise influence and quality of deliberation</p> <p>The types of decisions being taken by APs usually focus on agreeing the approach to running PB processes and events, scrutinising PB applications in relation to agreed criteria, ideas for widening participation and increasing voting participation. Periodically partnerships review and agree action plans and priorities. These are potential opportunities for all participants to exercise influence at meetings, although fieldwork observations found that councillors tended to dominate at AP meetings.</p> <p>High deliberative standards seek to ensure that decisions are made on the basis of the best evidence and reasons available, and through robust deliberation between partners. In AP meetings the process of deciding which applications could go forward for PB and the approach to running events involved a degree of deliberation over options, alternatives and the most suitable approach, although there were varying views on how robust this process was.</p> <p>Competing priorities and perspectives were scrutinised at meetings and there were disagreements. For example there was a debate over whether it is appropriate for PB funds to be spent on <i>‘flower pots and park benches’</i> or on projects that might more obviously contribute towards reducing inequalities. On the one hand, ‘flower pots’ might gain some helpful ‘quick wins’, on the other hand, this type of spend may not be regarded as within the remit of APs. A further discussion was if funding for ‘more gritters’ could be regarded as an inequalities issue in potentially reducing the number of A&E admissions for elderly people – (an issue that would be an interesting deliberation for a PB event!)</p>
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	<p>community organisations does not restrict the quality of deliberation</p> <p>Deliberation can be uncomfortable and at times controversial and there was a learning process in how to manage the relationship with potential applicants for PB and perform the scrutiny function of the AP.</p> <p><i>“we scrutinise everything and actually some of the things that got thrown out caused quite a bit of controversy ...after the event about what should and shouldn’t qualify” (councillor focus group 2)</i></p> <p>Productive relationships</p> <p>In relation to the scrutiny role of APs, relationships between members of the partnership appeared to be productive.</p> <p><i>“we don’t necessarily reject the application. We give it back to them with discussion on how to reformat it to meet the criteria, what they’ve missed... so everybody was put through.”(FG2)</i></p> <p><i>“two applications last year, one was asking for something and another group could give it. We put them together and they went off quite happy” (FG2)</i></p> <p><i>“A couple of the ones we rejected were from private companies... They were coming to help in one of the old folks homes, but they wanted to set up a private clinic themselves and that’s really not what we were about.”</i></p> <p>However, in some APs it was felt that councillors could be too dominant and community members did not have an equal opportunity influence its decisions.</p> <p>The potential for members on the AP to be involved in organisations who are seeking funding from the PB process could limit the quality of deliberation at meetings.</p> <p>PB events did not appear to be recognised as important sites for deliberation on ideas for projects and local</p>
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		budgets. The focus of decision making appeared to be less on the PB events and more on the APs.
Final Outcomes for Participatory Governance	<p>There is more influential community participation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - community-based or community-led social and economic development activity - the way public authorities design and deliver services - policy, strategy and planning processes. <p>(National Standards for Community Engagement - Scotland 2017)</p>	<p>Community empowerment as an outcome</p> <p>There were divergent interpretations of the meaning of community empowerment as an outcome amongst local councillors, community members and officers. There was confusion for some over the difference between community empowerment and PB and the value of the participatory element. Some councillors understood community empowerment as community asset transfer or direct allocation of funding to community groups. The giving of funds or assets to community groups was seen as key to passing more responsibility to groups to do more for themselves. A view from a local officer and some councillors was that the end point to this process is to pass more responsibility for running services to communities:</p> <p><i>‘rather than giving him the money to go and grit the pavements, why not give him the gritters and get him to do it himself’</i> (councillor)</p> <p>One view was that the ultimate outcome of the community empowerment process was community self-help rather than wider participation in decision-making over spending on local services run by the public sector.</p> <p><i>They [the APs] should be working with communities and for them so that they can start taking over. Forward facing as a council is that communities start delivering services. That’s the bottom line</i> (officer, interview)</p> <p>Concerns were raised by one councillor that small grants and PB could be perceived as <i>‘window dressing for cuts’</i> (FG2)</p> <p>Other felt there was a need to ‘push the boundaries on what community empowerment means’:</p> <p><i>“I think we have got to keep pushing the boundaries of what community empowerment means and what it can deliver for communities ... I’d like to see more decisions getting taken by community and community feel</i></p>

		<p><i>more empowered and more involved to do it".(councillor)</i></p> <p><i>"It's about pushing decision making and devolving decision making down to the lowest possible level. It's about getting communities involved in decision making so that they feel empowered, enabled and engaged in the whole decision making".(councillor)</i></p> <p>From small grants PB to mainstreaming PB</p> <p>The Scottish Government and COSLA have announced that at least 1% of local government budgets will be decided through PB (PB) by the end of 2021. The requirement for councils to allocate 1% of their budgets via PB presents a vision of a different form of PB with potentially different outcomes.</p> <p><i>"it's a continuum from the 'good old days' when the councils just decided stuff and didn't ask their communities.. to consultation, but you just kind of listen to folk and did what you were going to do anyway, to engagement to actually communities deciding. There is a difficulty with that because council services are not homogenous. You are never going to let communities decide on child protection, on which bridge we're going to repair... but you can have conversations around street sweeping, litter-picking, grounds maintenance – that sort of thing"</i></p> <p>Mainstreaming PB was a source of anxiety for some AP members. A few shared the view of one councillor that there would need to be</p> <p><i>"a step change in the ability and robustness of the structures before they can start handling the sums of money and taking the accountable decisions."</i></p> <p>Greater consideration is needed on how the options for funding would be developed and the sequencing of this process, beginning with the visions and ideas of members of the public that are then developed into robust, costed proposals, drawing on the expertise of service providers.</p>
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Glossary of Terms

Participatory governance – governance through partnership between the public and third sectors, as well as meaningful and consequential participation by citizens and community groups

Associative participatory model – those invited to participate are community representatives or intermediaries from established community groups and associations.

Direct participatory model – those invited to participate are citizens or residents (do not need to be part of an existing group)

Hybrid participatory model – a mix of direct and associative participation

Fairness commission – a group of independent experts who gather evidence on inequality and recommend changes

Stronger communities team – a virtual community planning team involving community learning and development, tenant participation, community greenspace, and health and social care staff.

Acronyms

AP	action partnerships
CEA	Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015
CC	community council
CCB	community capacity building
CLD	community learning and development
CPO	community planning officer
CPPs	community planning partnerships
FG1	focus group one (councillors)
FG2	focus group two (councillors)
FG3	focus group three (community members)
HSCP	Health and Social Care Partnership
PB	participatory budgeting
P&K	Perth and Kinross
PKCPP	Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership
PSR	Public Service Reform

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