

Agenda Item	14.
Report No	CPPB/14/25



Highland
Community
Planning
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas
Dealbhadh
Coimhearsnachd

na Gàidhealtachd

Highland Community Planning Partnership Board – 6 June 2025

Partnership Development Team Quarterly Update

Report by: Gail Prince, Partnership Development Manager and CPP Senior Officers

Summary

This quarterly update outlines the continued progress of the Partnership Development Team in supporting the delivery of the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP) and strengthening Community Planning across Highland. Between February and May 2025, the team has:

- Supported all nine Community Partnerships, delivering two full rounds of meetings and facilitating workshops focused on Priority Action Trackers, survey reviews, and structural development.
- Launched the Community Planning & Community Partnerships Toolkit, now being adopted across several Partnerships to improve governance and delivery.
- Advanced the development of Community Partnership Plans, with a planned launch in Summer 2025.
- Coordinated CPP responses to key national consultations, including the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill and Community Benefits from Net Zero Energy Developments consultation.
- Delivered the second annual CPP Conference, attended by over 100 delegates, with strong feedback on its relevance and impact.
- Progressed national engagement, including participation in the Scottish Government's Whole Family Support Working Group and the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service's Service Delivery Review.

Key challenges this quarter include:

- Managing the transition of support for Caithness and Sutherland Community Partnerships following the end of Project Support Officer funding.

The report also outlines next steps, including the launch of the Community Planning Induction Module, a full website review, and preparations for the CPP Annual Report in September 2025.

The Board is asked to:

- Note the Quarterly Report.
- Note the updated Year 2 Milestones at Appendix 1.

1. Background

- 1.1 As agreed by the Board during the September 2023 meeting, an update on the progress of the Partnership Development Team will be included as a standing item on the CPP Board agenda on a quarterly basis.

2. Quarterly Update

- 2.1 An overview of progress is outlined in the Year 2 Milestones document which can be found at Appendix 1. The work of the team to May 2025 has focussed on:

Community Partnerships

- **Priority Action Tracker Workshops** – Reviews completed and updated trackers developed (Badenoch & Strathspey, Mid Ross, and Nairn & Nairnshire).
- **Survey Reviews** – Feedback being gathered from partners to evaluate the effectiveness, structure, priorities, and communication. Insights will help identify successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in the partnerships and how they are addressing community needs and tackling inequalities (Inverness, Caithness).
- **Workshops** – Further workshops will be organised to discuss survey findings, complete a series of workshops or begin the Priority Action Tracker review process. These will help shape future changes to improve partnership structures and how community needs and tackling inequalities are addressed (Inverness, Caithness, Sutherland, Lochaber).
- **Additional Support** - The Board is asked to note the additional time and resource being allocated by the Partnership Development Team to specific Community Partnerships (Caithness and Sutherland) which, up to March 2025, were supported by alternative funding for Project Support Officers. With this funding coming to an end, these Partnerships require additional support to enable partners to discuss and shape their future structure and direction, aligning with the guidance tools introduced by the Team during 2024.
- **Quarterly Meetings** - Supported delivery across the network, all nine Community Partnership meetings took place between February and March 2025 with the current round taking place between May and June 2025. Themes highlighted throughout these two rounds of meetings include:
 - Youth participation
 - Poverty reduction
 - Transport
 - Whole family wellbeing
 - District plans (Adult Services)
 - Area place plans
 - Digital connectivity
- **Anti-social Behaviour** – One example of partnership working to be highlighted is in the Easter Ross Community Partnership area, where Scottish Fire & Rescue Service co-ordinated a round table meeting bringing together several key agencies and partners from across the area to discuss anti-social behaviour within the community. The Partnership Officer supported this by identifying key agencies and partners to include in this forum.

- **Community Planning & Community Partnerships: Guidance and Toolkit** – Officially launched in February 2025, the Toolkit provides practical guidance and tools to support Community Planning and Community Partnerships across Highland. It aims to strengthen collaboration, tackle inequalities, and improve outcomes by offering clear explanations, strategic context, and ready-to-use templates for effective local delivery. Several Community Partnerships have reviewed and signed the template Terms of Reference, for transparency these will be uploaded to their individual webpages.
- **Community Planning Partnership Plans** - Template almost complete. The data section will be updated to include newly identified potential data sets resulting from the work of the Health Inequalities Short Life Working Group. As a result of several Community Partnerships reviewing and updating their priorities this section will be updated once this work is complete. The template will be completed, and the Team aims to launch the Plans with individual Community Partnerships during the Summer of 2025.

2.2 Highland Community Planning Partnership

- **Partnership Coordinating Group** – An in-person meeting of the Group took place in March 2025, themes covered were Housing, Data and Mental Health & Wellbeing.
- **Improvement Service's National Community Planning Self-Assessment** – The follow up CPP Board workshop took place in April led by the Improvement Service. The draft Development Plan for the Board will be circulated, with a further session to take place August 2025 to continue this area of work.
- **Short Life Working Groups** - Supporting the work of the Health Inequalities group which runs January to June 2025, with support now starting with the Natural Capital group.
- **CPP 2025 Year Planner** – The team have developed a year planner for internal use within the Partnership Development Team, it aims to avoid dates clashing between meetings for the Community Partnerships in particular. A copy of the planner is available at Appendix 2. Should any other groups, partnerships or partners wish to be included submit details to highlandcpp@highland.gov.uk.
- **Community Planning Induction Module** – Excellent progress has been made by the Team in developing the Module, with a pilot planned for Elected Members in the next few weeks. This module is being developed using the Highland Council internal e-training system and will be made available to partners and staff once finalised.
- **Community Wealth Building** – Supporting the delivery of three consultation sessions with Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) involving representatives from the Community Partnerships, partners have been invited to help identify strategic projects for the Strategic Investment Plan as part of the implementation of the Social Value Charter.
- **Community Benefits from Net Zero Energy Developments: Consultation** – Coordinated the submission of a CPP response statement to the Scottish Government's consultation on community benefits from net zero energy developments to advocate for a more structured, equitable, and strategic approach to benefit distribution across the Highlands. The statement reinforced the CPP's commitment to community wealth building, long-term economic resilience, and inclusive decision-making, aligning with the 2024–2027 Highland

Outcome Improvement Plan and the Highland Social Value Charter for Renewables. A copy of the Statement can be found at Appendix 3.

- **Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill Call for Views** – Coordinated the CPP response to the draft Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill to support the creation of a consistent, strategic framework for local economic development that retains and circulates wealth within communities. The response highlighted the need for legal backing, adequate resources, and inclusive engagement to ensure equitable implementation—particularly in rural and remote areas—and advocated for stronger integration with existing legislation and community planning structures to maximise long-term social and economic benefits across the Highlands. A copy of the Response can be found at Appendix 4.
- **Scottish Government's new National Islands Plan** – Attended an information session and contributed to highlight the need for clear definitions and distinctions between "Local Authority Plans," "Local Area Plans," and "Island Community Plans" to ensure consistency and understanding across planning frameworks. Given the variety of plans and overlapping boundaries in Highland, the importance of a coherent naming and classification system that reflects both statutory and non-statutory plans was emphasised.
- **Highland Council Communities and Place Committee** – An interim report outlined the progress made by the CPP in delivering the 2024–2027 HOIP on 22nd May 2025. Key developments include the establishment of thematic partnerships, progress on shared service models, childcare pilots, and a Strategic Investment Plan for renewables.
- **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Balanced Room** – Invited to attend the next stage of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Shaping Our Future Service Delivery Review, a Balanced Room in Strirling. The opportunity to input was welcome, reflecting on any changes that may affect local needs and priorities, particularly in rural and remote communities. A copy of a short information video available on YouTube is available here: [Service Delivery Review May 2025 update: ACO David Farries - YouTube](#)
- **Scottish Government Whole Family Support Short Life Working Group** – The Partnership Development Manager attended this group as the representative for the Scottish Community Planning Network. The work of this group has now completed. Outcomes from the group included a Shared Vision, Roles with delivery of the Whole Family Support Programme, Practical Expectations and Proposed Phase One Implementation. These outcomes, along with the outcomes from the other two short life working groups were put forward to the First Minister to support development of their Programme for Government for 2025/26. A follow up communication from Scottish Government will be circulated to the Board for information.
- **Your Police Stakeholder Engagement Forum** – Along with some other colleagues from across the Scottish Community Planning Network attended this meeting. Discussions covered 2030 Your Police Vision and 3 Year Business Plan Update – Safer Communities, Less Crime, Supported Victims, Thriving Workforce. Final stages of Your Policing pilot in Forth Valley, to be rolled out from September 2025 across additional further CPP areas.

- **HADP Community Fund** – Involved in discussions regarding the reopening of the Community Fund for financial year 25/26. The Fund will be managed internally in HADP with applications welcomed from statutory and third sector organisations across Highland. The Fund aims to provide grants for one off funding for small – scale projects up to a value £2500 whose outcomes align with one or more of the National Drugs Mission Outcomes removing the requirement for applications to come from one per Community Partnership area.

2.3 **2025 Highland Community Planning Partnership Conference**

The second annual Conference took place on Friday 25th April 2025, with 100 delegates attending from across Highland representing a number of partner and groups working within the wider Community Planning Partnership. Thank you to all Board members and Senior Officers for their involvement in organising and delivering the Conference on the day.

A visual highlight of the day was the graphic illustration created live during the event, capturing key themes, discussions, and insights in a dynamic and engaging format. This artwork serves as a vibrant summary of the collective energy and ideas shared throughout the Conference. A copy of the Illustration can be viewed at Appendix 5.

Feedback from this year's conference was overwhelmingly positive, with attendees valuing the networking opportunities, strategic insights, and engaging speakers. A copy of the Feedback report can be reviewed at Appendix 6. However, participants noted the potential to further enhance the event by broadening representation - particularly from the third sector - to ensure a more diverse range of voices is reflected.

There is also an appetite for stronger links to local delivery, with more examples of how Community Planning is making a tangible difference at the community level. These insights present a valuable opportunity to evolve the Conference into an even more inclusive, action-oriented event that continues to build momentum across the CPP.

It is recognised that future development of the conference will need to consider limitations around venue capacity and available budget, which may influence the scale and structure of the event.

2.4 **Next Steps**

- Pilot Community Planning Induction Module.
- Launch Community Partnership Plans.
- Organise Board Development Plan session for August 2025.
- **Website Review** – the Team will undertake a full review of the website during the Summer, if any groups, partners, or partnerships wish to update, change, or add their information on the CPP website contact highlandcpp@highland.gov.uk.
- **Digital Switchover** – Attending various meetings and supporting information dissemination in terms of the various digital switchovers proposed over the coming months, including meetings with NHS Highland, Age Scotland, AbilityNet. Future meeting to be arranged by Age Scotland with digital providers.

- **CPP Annual Report** – In line with the CPP Board agreement of the HOIP Delivery Plan the CPP Annual Report will be produced in September each year. Delivery Groups, Partners, Partnerships will be contacted over the Summer to submit updates for the Annual Report.
- **Partnership Coordinating Group** – Next meeting of the Group taking place on Tuesday 27th May with thematic focus on Community Safety & Resilience and Climate, with input from Community Justice Partnership, Highlands and Islands Climate Hub, Delivery Group Chair and NatureScot who will be leading a demonstration on the new Natural Capital Tool.
- **Age Friendly Communities** – Researching across CPPs in the SCPN network their approaches to develop Age Friendly Communities work.
- **Scottish Community Planning Network** – Next meeting is taking place on 3rd June in Edinburgh, with a focus on Community Safety and Resilience.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- i) Note the Quarterly Report.
- ii) Note the updated Year 2 Milestones at Appendix 1.

Author: Partnership Development Manager and CPP Senior Officers

Date: 21st May 2025

Appendices: 1. Year 2 Milestones; 2. CPP Calendar; 3. Net Zero Consultation Statement; 4. Community Wealth Building Response; 5. Conference Graphic Illustration; 6. Conference Feedback Report

Partnership Development Team Milestones Year 2

■ On Track
■ Underway
■ No Progress



Milestone	Measures for Success at end of Year 2	Measures for Success Lead	Status	Status Update
Circulate quarterly HCPP Board updates to Community Partnerships	Quarterly updates circulated within 4 weeks of meetings	Partnership Development Manager	On Track	Last update circulated April 2025
Complete National Community Planning Self-Assessment	Board members complete and submit individual CCP checklists when circulated Organise a Board Development Session to review the Highland CPP checklist report once available from Improvement Service to identify actions	Highland Community Planning Partnership Board	On Track	The draft Board Development Plan will be circulated to the Board, with a further workshop session to take place August 2025 to implement and continue this area of work
Continue to review HCPP Governance: Terms of Reference; Strategic Risk Register; Action Tracker	Strategic Risk Register reviewed quarterly ahead of Board meetings Action Tracker monitored and progressed ahead of Board meetings Terms of Reference updated to reflect new HOIP Delivery Structure	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers	On Track	Strategic Risk Register Review paper to June 2025 Board Updated Terms of Reference to June 2025 Board
Coordinate involvement in Place Standard Tool for Community Safety	Participate in Information Sessions and work with Senior Community Development Manager and Police Scotland Senior Officer to assess opportunities for identified communities in Highland - Spring 2025	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers	No Progress	No further information available from Scottish Community Safety Network
Create & implement Performance Monitoring & Reporting Framework	HOIP Delivery Framework and Indicators implemented Framework adapted and implemented for Community Partnerships	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers	On Track	Performance Framework indicators being adapted for Community Partnership Plans with priority localities identified.
Create Community Planning Induction Module	Induction Module created and shared across partners Potential to pilot with Elected Members	Partnership Development Team	Underway	Progress made in developing the Module, aim to have ready to pilot with Elected Members in the next few weeks.
Create National/Highland/Local Plans/Policies/Strategies central resource for HCPP Website	Resource created and uploaded to CPP website	Partnership Development Team	No Progress	To be included in Website Review Summer 2025
Create Quarterly / Annual Reporting schedule for HCPP Board meetings	Schedule to be drafted based on new HOIP Delivery Structure for discussion at December 2024 Board meeting	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers	Underway	Draft schedule prepared, to be reviewed by Senior Officers
Deliver first round of Community Networking Events: October/November 2024	Partnership Officers coordinating organisation of in person events Minimum 50% Community Partnerships will deliver events	Partnership Development Team	On Track	Successful events delivered for 5 Community Partnerships: Easter Ross, Lochaber, Mid Ross, Nairn & Nairnshire and Badenoch & Strathspey. Excellent local partner engagement, demand expressed for annual events to continue
Deliver HCPP annual update to Elected Members business meetings	Aim to deliver an annual CPP update to all Service Support Business Meetings between October and December 2024	Partnership Development Team	On Track	
Develop shared virtual space for CPP network (Aligning Partnership Practices HOIP Cross-cutting Theme)	Platform identified - with support through Highland Council Content developed and use implemented	Partnership Development Team	Underway	Potential platform identified - Egress. Business Case drafted, to be reviewed prior to submission to Chief Officer
Finalise Community Partnership Plans: including priority locality areas - thematic community of interest and/or geography	Plans finalised and presented to Community Partnerships January to March 2025	Partnership Development Team	Underway	Template almost complete. Data section will be updated to include potential data sets resulting from the work of the Health Inequalities Short Life Working Group. As a result of a number of Community Partnerships reviewing and updating their priorities this section will be updated once this work is complete. The template will be completed and the Partnership Development Team aims to launch the Plans with individual Community Partnerships during the Summer of 2025.
Finalise HOIP Delivery Plan, HOIP Delivery Framework, Indicators	2024 - 2027 HOIP officially published New governance arrangements identified	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers	On Track	Presented to December 2024 meeting
Identify opportunities to engage seldom heard voices in Community Partnerships: Gypsy / Travellers communities	Ongoing Initial discussions with Gypsy / Travellers communities contacts in Highland Council and NHS Highland	Partnership Development Team	Underway	Initial discussion with Gypsy/Travellers communities undertaken
Implement HCPP Communications Strategy	Following agreement of Strategy at September 2024 Board meeting Communication from the CPP will be increased	Highland Community Planning Partnership Board	On Track	Agreement in place, Strategy has been adapted for Community Partnerships

Investigate Age-Friendly Communities framework, including alignment with existing Partnership work	Identified opportunities to include framework in Highland - consider all ages	Partnership Development Team & Senior Officers		Researching across CPPs in the SCPN network their approaches to develop Age Friendly Communities work
Launch Community Partnerships Guidance & Toolkit	On completion of the HOIP Delivery structure incorporate into document and launch October 2024	Partnership Development Team		Officially launched in February 2025, A number of Community Partnerships have reviewed and signed the template Terms of Reference, for transparency these will be uploaded to their individual webpages.
Manage, develop & maintain HCPP Website	Ongoing management of CPP website as main point of contact for all community planning information	Partnership Development Team		A full review of the website during the Summer 2025
Organise Annual CPP Conference: April 2025	Delivery second annual Conference and continue engagement across all partners and the region	Partnership Development Team & Senior Officers		Second annual Conference took place on Friday 25th April 2025, with 100 delegates attending from across Highland representing a number of partner and groups working within the wider Community Planning Partnership.
Participate in National CPP network & feedback to HCPP Board	Partnership Development Manager to attend quarterly meetings and include updates in quarterly reports	Partnership Development Manager		Scottish Government Whole Family Support Short Life Working Group; Your Police Stakeholder Engagement Forum; online SCPN sessions
Report on Community Partnerships progress against Minimum Standards Model to HCPP Board	Monitor progression and include updates in quarterly reports	Partnership Development Manager		Included in PDT quarterly update report December 2024
Report Partnership Development Team Year 1 activity to HCPP Board: September 2024	Report submitted to September 2024 Board meeting	Partnership Development Manager		Completed - September 2024
Schedule Calendar of Partnership Engagement Events: August 2024 - May 2025	Calendar developed for September 2024 to May 2025	Partnership Development Team		Calendar included with Partnership Development Team report June 2025
Support development of proposals for Highland Alcohol & Drugs Partnership grants across Community Partnerships	Engage with HADP Coordinator to progress Partnership Officers support development of proposals locally	Partnership Development Team & HADP Coordinator		Fund will be managed internally in HADP with applications welcomed from statutory and third sector organisations across Highland. The Fund aims to provide grants for one off funding for small – scale projects up to a value £2500 whose outcomes align with one or more of the National Drugs Mission Outcomes
Support development of service delivery mapping (Connecting People & Places HOIP Cross-cutting Theme)	Engage with HTSI/NHS re Highland Directory of Services development	Partnership Development Team & Senior Officers		Soft launch of the Highland Directory of Services May 2025
Publish HCPP Annual Report	June 2025 - develop and publish Annual Report - to be presented to Board, and Full Council and published on the CPP website	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers & Highland Community Planning Partnership Board		Action to start now ahead of the September deadline



Community Partnership Year Planner 2025 (subject to change)

	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	M	T							
Jan			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 SLWR	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 L&R	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		Jan		
Feb						1	2	3	4	5 CLDOP	6	7	8	9	10 CLD	11 LOC	12	13 MHDG	14	15	16	17	18	19 N&NS	20 INV	21	22	23	24	25 PR	26	27	28		Feb		
Mar						1	2	3	4	5 B&S	6	7 SUTH	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19 MID	20	21 CPPB	22	23	24	25 SLWR	26	27	28	29	30	31	Mar
Apr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7 CLD	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 L&R	22	23	24	25 CPPAC	26	27	28	29	30				Apr		
May				1	2	3	4	5	6 LOC	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15 MHDG	16	17	18	19	20 PR	21 N&NS	22 CS&R	23	24	25	26	27 PCG	28 INV	29	30	31		May	
Jun							1	2 CLD	3	4	5	6 CPPB	7	8	9	10 B&S	11	12	13 CAI	14	15	16	17	18 MID	19	20	21	22	23	24	25 SLWR	26	27	28	29	30	Jun
Jul		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23 CLDOP	24	25	26	27	28 CLD	29	30	31			Jul		
Aug					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12 ER	13 MHDG	14	15	16	17	18	19 LOC	20 N&NS	21 INV	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29 PCG	30	31	Aug	
Sep	1	2 PR	3	4	5 SUTH	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17 B&S	18	19 CAI	20	21	22 CLD	23	24 MID	25	26	27	28	29	30					Sep		
Oct			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 L&R	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		Oct		
Nov						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12 CLDOP	13	14	15	16	17 CLD	18 PR	19 N&NS	20 INV	21	22	23	24	25	26 CPPFR	27 LOC	28	29	30		Nov
Dec	1	2	3 SLWR	4 PCG	5 CPPB	6	7	8	9	10 B&S	11 MHDG	12 CAI	13	14	15	16	17 MID	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				Dec		
	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	M	T							

KEY

B&S	Badenoch & Strathspey CP	MID	Mid Ross CP	PR	Poverty Reduction Delivery Group	CPPFR	CP Police & Fire Reps		
CAI	Caithness CP	N&NS	Nairn & Nairnshire CP	CS&R	Community Safety & Resilience	CPPAC	CPP Annual Conference		
ERS	Easter Ross CP	SLWR	Skye, Lochalsh & Wester Ross CP	MHDG	Mental Health Delivery Group	L&R	Learning & Resilience Group		
INV	Inverness CP	SUTH	Sutherland CP	CPPB	CPP Board	PCG	Partnership Coordinating Group		
LOC	Lochaber CP			CLD	CLD strategic Group	CLDOP	CLD Operational Group		



Community Benefits from Net Zero Energy Developments: Consultation Highland Community Planning Partnership Response Statement: April 2025

In December 2024, the Scottish Government launched a consultation to review the Good Practice Principles for onshore and offshore renewable energy. The aim is to enhance community benefits provided by developers. These voluntary benefits, which include funding, in-kind contributions, and other site-specific advantages, offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of renewable energy resources, leading to lasting social and economic impacts.

The consultation seeks input on community benefits from onshore technologies, such as onshore wind, solar, hydrogen, and storage, as well as offshore technologies, such as offshore wind. The Scottish Government will also engage with key stakeholders to gather a comprehensive understanding of the potential opportunities and limitations.

Additionally, the Scottish Government has commissioned research on the provision of community benefits across renewable energy technologies. The feedback will inform a refresh of the Good Practice Principles in late 2025.

The pipeline of development for Scotland, in particular Highland, from renewables is significant, with many original developments in the process of being repowered. The landscape is changing rapidly, and the UK Government has recently announced a new community benefit programme related to electricity transmission infrastructure, a copy of the guidance is available here [Community funds for transmission infrastructure \(accessible webpage\) - GOV.UK](#). Guidance from the Scottish Government on offshore wind development has been in place since 2019. However, both UK and Scottish Government guidance on benefits from renewables is voluntary, making it essential to ensure a legacy of community benefits the wider Highland area.

Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP)

Highland is already experiencing, and is projected to continue experiencing, a changing demographic picture. An aging population creates pressure on specific services, while the decline in the working-age population impacts the ability to support and deliver services. The lack of housing in some areas, along with limitations on childcare and transport, creates challenges in sustaining and growing populations in rural areas. This, combined with the drift of younger people out of Highland, results in difficulties attracting investment and growing a vibrant local economy. It is therefore essential to sustain strong communities by providing opportunities, including economic opportunities, for those living there while addressing the barriers experienced by others.

In response to evolving challenges such as the global pandemic, cost of living crisis, and financial difficulties in the public and third sectors, the Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP) undertook a comprehensive review of the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP) during 2024. This review, conducted through extensive engagement with strategic partners, led to the development of the 2024 - 2027 HOIP. The updated plan includes three new strategic priorities, along with supporting principles and outcomes aimed at addressing key community challenges. The CPP Board also established a Delivery Plan with seven cross-cutting themes and a Performance Framework to monitor progress and measure the impact of the HOIP at a population level, ensuring the plan remains relevant and effective in improving the lives and experiences of everyone across the Highland area.

The 2024 - 2027 HOIP demonstrates the partnership's commitment to maximising opportunities for Highland, including investment and financial prospects. By encouraging involvement from the business and social enterprise sectors in community planning, the Partnership aims to embed community wealth building



approaches into its activities. The CPP is leading the establishment of a Community Wealth Building Partnership, which will bring together partners from across Highland to discuss attracting investment opportunities, progress discussions around the implementation of the Highland Social Value Charter for Renewables endorsed by the CPP Board, and collaboratively address opportunities and gaps when implementing the new Good Practice Principles from 2025.

The vision for the HOIP is to tackle inequality and maximise opportunities for all people of Highland. To deliver this, the Partnership has three strategic priorities:

- **People:** Enable people to live independently, safely, and well within their community.
- **Place:** Work in partnership to develop sustainable and resilient local communities.
- **Prosperity:** Create opportunities for all people and places to prosper and thrive economically.

By focusing on these priorities, the Partnership aims to enable people to live independently, safely, and well within sustainable and resilient local communities, ensuring that both people and places can prosper and thrive economically.

Taking a partnership approach aligns with the commitments and direction agreed upon in the 2024 – 2027 HOIP. The strategic priority of prosperity aims to create opportunities for all people and places to prosper and thrive economically. A core outcome supporting this priority involves embedding community wealth building approaches, i.e., taking a people-centred approach to economic development and ensuring that this approach is adopted in partnership practices and activities. Developing a more consistent approach to leveraging community benefits from renewables investment will help deliver greater socio-economic benefits for Highland communities.

Highland Social Value Charter for Renewables

In June 2024, the CPP Board agreed to adopt the Highland Social Value Charter for Renewables Investment. The aim of the Charter is to set out the Partnership's expectations and requirements for doing business in Highland and the range of ways companies and developers can add benefit and social value to the Highland economy.

The Social Value Charter for Renewables Investment provides a framework to ensure that renewable energy investments deliver significant socio-economic benefits to Highland communities. It aligns with the Scottish Government's goals for community benefits from net zero developments by promoting community wealth building, equitable distribution of benefits, and sustainable economic growth.

Community benefits must be allocated fairly, ensuring that both directly impacted communities, and the wider Highland area receive appropriate investment. This includes prioritising communities closest to developments while also considering the broader socio-economic needs of Highland. The Highland Social Value Charter emphasises the importance of a balanced approach, ensuring that all communities across Highland benefit from renewables investment.

The Social Value Charter outlines a 9-point plan articulating the expectations of the Highland area for any renewables and green energy developments. The aims of the Charter are to:

- Embed an approach to community wealth building in Highland.
- Maximise economic benefits from our natural environment and resources.
- Engage and involve relevant stakeholders to understand how we can continually improve our impact.
- Unlock economic opportunities for the area.



Key points within the Charter include:

- **A community fund:** Maintain the current level of community benefit received by local communities.
- **A strategic fund:** A pan-Highland fund managed by a partnership of public, private, and community representatives to achieve equity of access to community benefits from renewables across all communities.
- **Housing:** Provision of legacy housing for investors undertaking large-scale developments.
- **Shared investment into renewables:** Opportunity to participate in a shared ownership model to enhance community involvement.
- **Workforce for the future:** Investors to adopt the Highland Employer Charter, which sets out commitments to fair work, living wage, apprenticeships, and training.

As part of the Charter, it was agreed that a Strategic Community Benefit Fund would be established to ensure that communities across the Highland area benefit. It is suggested that investors contribute a minimum of £7,500 per MW for each renewable energy development to the strategic fund, which will support and enable economic development, increase prosperity, and achieve equity for communities across Highland. This would be in addition to any direct community-specific benefit arrangements.

It was agreed that a Strategic Investment Plan would be developed, a prospectus that would set out the investment priorities for the area. This could include housing, employment, and co-investment opportunities aligned to the Highland Investment Plan. All of which align with the 2024 – 2027 HOIP and will support in the strategic aim of tackling inequalities and maximising opportunities across Highland.

It was agreed that the management of any fund needs to be on a partnership basis, there are different potential governance models that could be used, and learning from other Highlands and Islands Local Authorities who are also progressing this approach will be important. The Community Wealth Building Partnership will progress options for governance models and present these to the CPP Board.

Community Wealth Building

Community Wealth Building is one of the seven cross-cutting themes identified as a priority for the CPP within the 2024 – 2027 HOIP. The CPP views Community Wealth Building as an opportunity to provide an alternative approach to economic development and a practical response that aims to keep wealth within a local area. Community Wealth Building is often described as a people-centred approach to economic development, ensuring every area and community can participate in and benefit from economic activity. It is therefore a critical plank in addressing inequality for the CPP, especially considering a number of communities, including rural and remote rural communities that will never benefit from community benefit under the current Guidelines.

To progress and promote the HOIP commitments and develop a collaborative approach to Community Wealth Building across Highland, a Highland Community Wealth Building Partnership has been established. The purpose of the Community Wealth Building Partnership is to provide a space for joint discussion and sharing of best practices across the CPP and oversee the delivery of the commitments made in the HOIP. The group will also pool together actions contained within the separate partner Community Wealth Building Strategies to identify cross-overs in actions and identify gaps and opportunities for partnership working.

Community benefits from renewable energy developments should be structured to support strategic projects that lead to sustainable economic development, such as skills training programs, infrastructure enhancements, and local enterprise support. Investments in education, training, and local businesses should create long-term prosperity rather than short-term, transactional funding. This approach aligns with



the CPP's objectives to maximise economic benefits and promote community wealth building. This new Partnership will oversee this investment, offering guidance and support, while also supporting the implementation of the new Good Practice Principles.

Communities must have a meaningful role in shaping how benefits are used, ensuring that funds are directed towards prioritised local and strategic needs. This involves engaging communities early in the decision-making process, using participatory budgeting mechanisms, and ensuring that local voices are heard and considered. The Highland Social Value Charter for Renewables advocates for strong governance and community engagement to empower communities in managing and directing benefit funds. To support this vision, community benefit contributions, both direct and strategic need to be mandatory and a material planning consideration. This approach secures and safeguards funding for long-term planning, as well as providing robust democratic accountability and transparency.

By implementing robust measures, community benefits from renewables can be maximised to support long-term economic resilience, infrastructure investment, and sustainable growth across the Highlands. A structured and inclusive approach ensures that all communities, both directly and indirectly affected, share in the opportunities presented by Scotland's renewable energy transition.

Conclusion

Once the principles for community benefits from renewable energy developments are agreed upon by the Scottish Government in late 2025, the CPP through the Community Wealth Building Partnership will evaluate their implementation and impact. This evaluation will include assessing how these principles align with and influence the CPP's cross-cutting themes, outcomes and priorities within the 2024 – 2027 HOIP.

Strategic Alignment: The CPP is committed to aligning its strategies with national and regional policies, this ensures a cohesive approach to tackling inequalities, economic development and community benefits.

Collaborative Efforts: The establishment of the Highland Community Wealth Building Partnership highlights the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders, including public sector partners, third sector partners, and community representatives. This collaborative approach is crucial for maximising the impact of renewable energy investments.

Focus on Long-Term Benefits: The emphasis on sustainable economic growth indicates a shift towards long-term prosperity rather than short-term gains. Investments in education, training, and local businesses are designed to create lasting benefits for the Highland communities.

To further develop the long-term benefits, it is crucial to highlight how combined CPP efforts will sustain and grow communities, tackle inequalities and maximise opportunities across all parts of Highland. The approaches being developed in Highland aim to reverse population decline, particularly the decline in the working-age population. While long-term prosperity is important, it is also essential for CPP partners to recognise the need for every part of Highland to benefit. Sustainable economic growth requires the presence of economically active people, reinforcing the points made previously with regards shifting demographics.

Inclusive Decision-Making: The text underscores the need for inclusive decision-making processes, where communities have a meaningful role in shaping how community benefits are used. This approach ensures that funds are directed towards prioritised local and strategic needs, fostering democratic accountability and transparency.



Highland
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Planning
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas
Dealbhadh
Coimhearsnachd

na Gàidhealtachd

Equitable Distribution: The commitment to equitable distribution of benefits ensures that both directly impacted communities, and the wider Highland area receive appropriate investment. This balanced approach aims to address broader socio-economic needs while prioritising communities closest to developments.

Continuous Improvement: Regular monitoring and independent assessments of community benefit allocations are essential for accountability and continuous improvement. This ensures that the impact of benefit schemes is evaluated, and priorities are adjusted as needed.

By drawing these conclusions, the CPP and its partners can better understand the broader implications of their strategies and make informed decisions to support sustainable growth and community resilience.

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Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill

Highland Community Planning Partnership Response – May 2025

Question Page 1

Question 1

1. The Scottish Government's objective is to ensure consistent implementation of Community Wealth Building across Scotland.

(a) Do you think the proposed Bill will achieve this object?

Please provide your response in the box provided.

The proposed Bill aims to create a strategic foundation for Community Wealth Building. It mandates the publication of a Community Wealth Building statement and action plans by local authorities and relevant public bodies. This structured approach, combined with the requirement for public bodies to have due regard to community wealth building guidance, should facilitate consistent implementation across Scotland.

Additionally, the Bill introduces several mechanisms to ensure its objectives are met:

- **Clear Accountability:** By requiring local authorities and relevant public bodies to publish and implement action plans, the Bill ensures that there is clear accountability for community wealth building initiatives.
- **Regular Review and Reporting:** The Bill mandates regular review and reporting on the progress of community wealth building initiatives. This continuous monitoring will help identify and address any inconsistencies or challenges in implementation.
- **Guidance and Support:** The requirement for public bodies to have due regard to community wealth building guidance ensures that there is a consistent framework and set of principles guiding their actions. This guidance will provide the necessary support and direction to achieve the Bill's objectives.
- **Collaboration and Partnership:** The Bill encourages collaboration between local authorities, public bodies, and community organisations. This partnership approach will help leverage local knowledge and resources, ensuring that community wealth building initiatives are tailored to the specific needs of each community.
- **Focus on Reducing Inequality:** By emphasising the reduction of economic and wealth inequality, the Bill ensures that community wealth building efforts are inclusive and benefit all communities, particularly those that are disadvantaged.

While the Bill is designed to achieve its objectives, there are potential negative consequences that should be noted:

- **Administrative Burden:** The requirement for local authorities and public bodies to publish and implement action plans may increase the administrative burden on these organisations. This may be particularly challenging for organisations with limited resources.
- **Inconsistent Implementation:** There is a risk of inconsistent implementation across different regions, depending on the varying levels of commitment, resources, and expertise among local authorities and public bodies. Adequate support and resources are essential to mitigate this risk.
- **Resource Constraints:** Smaller community organisations may struggle with the capacity to engage fully in community wealth building activities, especially if they lack the necessary skills, knowledge, or financial resources.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Ensuring that all community voices are heard and represented in decision-making processes can be challenging. Marginalised or less vocal groups may find it difficult to influence outcomes.



There are also potential positive unintended consequences:

- **Increased Community Engagement:** The Bill may lead to higher levels of community engagement and participation as local organisations and residents become more involved in economic development processes.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** The requirement for public bodies and community organisations to work together on Community Wealth Building initiatives could lead to improved collaboration and partnerships.
- **Capacity Building:** As community organisations engage with the processes outlined in the Bill, they may develop new skills and capacities, enhancing their ability to manage projects and advocate for their communities.
- **Innovation and Creativity:** The focus on local economic development and community ownership may encourage innovative and creative solutions to local challenges.
- **Strengthened Local Economies:** By retaining wealth within local communities and promoting local procurement, the Bill could lead to stronger and more resilient local economies.

Overall, the Bill's approach, combined with its emphasis on accountability, regular review, guidance, collaboration, and inclusivity, should effectively facilitate the consistent implementation of community wealth building across Scotland.

(b) Does the Scottish Government need to change the law to achieve this objective?

Yes

Please explain your answer in the box provided.

Yes, changing the law is necessary to ensure that all local authorities and relevant public bodies are legally obligated to implement Community Wealth Building measures. This legal framework will provide consistency and accountability.

Additional Points to Note

- **Legal Mandate:**
 - **Obligations:** The Bill mandates the publication of Community Wealth Building statements and action plans, ensuring that all relevant bodies are legally required to participate in and implement these measures.
 - **Consistency:** By establishing a legal mandate, the Bill ensures that Community Wealth Building initiatives are implemented consistently across Scotland, reducing regional disparities.
- **Accountability and Transparency:**
 - **Reporting Requirements:** The Bill includes provisions for regular review and reporting, which will enhance transparency and accountability. Public bodies will be required to demonstrate their progress and adherence to Community Wealth Building principles.
 - **Monitoring:** Continuous monitoring and feedback mechanisms will help identify and address any challenges or inconsistencies in implementation.
- **Support and Guidance:**
 - **Guidance Issuance:** The requirement for public bodies to have due regard to Community Wealth Building guidance ensures that there is a consistent framework and set of principles guiding their actions. This guidance will provide the necessary support and direction to achieve the Bill's objectives.
 - **Capacity Building:** Legal changes can facilitate the provision of resources and capacity-building initiatives to support local authorities and community organisations in implementing Community Wealth Building measures effectively.
- **Collaboration and Partnership:**
 - **Enhanced Collaboration:** The Bill encourages collaboration between local authorities, public bodies, and community organisations. Legal changes will ensure that these partnerships are formalised and supported, leveraging local knowledge and resources.



- Community Involvement: Legal provisions will enhance community involvement in economic development processes, ensuring that local voices are heard and considered in decision-making.
- **Addressing Unique Challenges:**
 - Rural and Remote Communities: Additional legal changes could include specific provisions for rural and remote communities to address unique challenges they face. Enhancing community ownership and participation in local economic activities could also be further emphasised.
 - Existing Acts: Relevant Acts such as the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act 2024, and Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 can be referenced to support tailored legal provisions for these areas.

(c) Are there other ways in which the Scottish Government could achieve this objective?

Please provide your response in the box provided.

In addition to legislative changes, the Scottish Government could enhance support for local authorities and public bodies through funding, training, and resources. Encouraging best practice sharing and collaboration among regions could also help achieve consistent implementation.

Note: The additional points regarding proportionate duties, capacity, and resources mentioned in Question 2 immediately below are also relevant to this question.

Question 2

2. The Bill would place extra duties on some public sector organisations. Are these duties proportionate? Do these organisations have the capacity and resources to meet the duties placed on them?

Extra duties on some public sector organisations: The Bill would require local authorities and 'relevant public bodies' to publish and implement a CWB plan for their area.

Please provide your response in the box provided.

The duties outlined in the Bill are proportionate as they align with the broader goals of economic development and Community Wealth Building. However, the capacity and resources of public sector organisations to meet these duties may vary. It is essential to assess and address any resource gaps to ensure successful implementation.

Additional Points from a Community Planning Partnership Perspective

- **Strengthening Community Planning Partnerships:**
 - Enhanced Collaboration: Strengthening the role of Community Planning Partnerships can facilitate better collaboration among local authorities, public bodies, and community organisations. This collaborative approach ensures that Community Wealth Building initiatives are aligned with local priorities and needs.
 - Shared Leadership: Promoting shared leadership within Community Planning Partnerships can enhance collective decision-making and ensure that all partners are committed to the Community Wealth Building agenda.
- **Local Outcomes Improvement Plans:**
 - Strategic Alignment: Community Planning Partnerships have a legislative duty to prepare Local Outcomes Improvement Plans, which outline local priorities and planned improvements. Integrating Community Wealth Building initiatives into Local Outcomes Improvement Plans can ensure that these efforts are aligned with broader community goals and address specific local needs.
 - Performance Management: Local Outcomes Improvement Plans may provide an additional framework for tracking progress and measuring the impact of Community Wealth Building



initiatives. This can enhance accountability and ensure that resources are directed towards achieving tangible outcomes.

- Avoid Duplication: To avoid duplication and administrative burden, it is recommended that reporting requirements for Community Wealth Building be aligned with existing statutory frameworks such as Local Outcomes Improvement Plans. This would ensure coherence across planning and performance systems, reduce the risk of parallel reporting structures, and allow public bodies to focus more on delivery and impact rather than compliance.
- **Capacity Building and Training:**
 - Training Programs: Providing targeted training programs for Community Planning Partnership members can enhance their understanding of Community Wealth Building principles and practices. This can include workshops, seminars, and online courses focused on economic development, community engagement, and asset management.
 - Resource Allocation: Allocating resources to support the capacity building of Community Planning Partnerships can help them effectively implement Community Wealth Building initiatives. This includes financial resources, technical assistance, and access to expert advice.
- **Best Practice Sharing:**
 - Knowledge Exchange: Establishing platforms for knowledge exchange and best practice sharing among Community Planning Partnerships can facilitate the dissemination of successful Community Wealth Building strategies. This can include conferences, webinars, and online forums where Community Planning Partnerships can share their experiences and learn from each other.
 - Case Studies: Developing and distributing case studies of successful Community Wealth Building projects can provide practical examples and inspiration for other Community Planning Partnerships.
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Inclusive Participation: Ensuring that community engagement processes are inclusive, and representative of all community members is crucial. Community Planning Partnerships should actively involve marginalised and underrepresented groups in decision-making processes to ensure that Community Wealth Building initiatives address the needs of all residents.
 - Participatory Budgeting: Implementing participatory budgeting within Community Planning Partnerships can empower communities to have a direct say in how resources are allocated. This approach can enhance transparency, accountability, and community ownership of local projects.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:**
 - Continuous Improvement: Establishing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks within Community Planning Partnerships can help track the progress and impact of Community Wealth Building initiatives. Regular assessments can identify areas for improvement and ensure that initiatives are delivering the intended outcomes.
 - Feedback Mechanisms: Implementing feedback mechanisms to gather input from community members and stakeholders can help Community Planning Partnerships refine their strategies and respond to emerging needs and challenges.
- **Leveraging Existing Legislation:**
 - Relevant Acts: Utilising existing legislation such as the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act 2024, and Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 can provide a strong foundation for tailored legal provisions that address the unique challenges faced by rural and remote communities.
 - In addition to land ownership, there is significant potential for community ownership of renewable energy infrastructure—such as wind, hydro, and solar projects—to act as a powerful economic lever. Legislative support that enables communities to develop, co-own, or benefit directly from renewable energy developments would help retain wealth locally and support long-term sustainability. These could include shared ownership models,



community benefit agreements, and streamlined access to funding and planning support. Strengthening the link between land reform and renewable energy ownership would ensure that natural resources contribute meaningfully to local economic resilience and empowerment. These Acts can support community ownership, participation, and economic resilience.

- In addition to aligning with existing legislation, it is essential that the Scottish Government adopt a more integrated and coordinated approach to policy development and implementation. Current practice often results in siloed initiatives - such as separate consultations on Net Zero or planning frameworks. This can place overlapping demands on local bodies without a unified strategic direction. A whole-system approach that ensures Community Wealth Building is embedded across all relevant policy areas would reduce duplication, enhance coherence, and improve outcomes for communities.

Question 3

3. Do you agree with the list of relevant public bodies proposed in the Bill? If not, how should these be changed?

Relevant public bodies

Alongside local authorities, 'relevant public bodies' would be required to publish and implement a CWB action plan.

The proposed relevant public bodies are:

- *colleges*
- *health boards*
- *Scottish Enterprise*
- *South of Scotland Enterprise*
- *Highlands and Islands Enterprise*
- *Skills Development Scotland*
- *regional transport partnerships*

Please provide your response in the box provided.

The list of relevant public bodies appears comprehensive, including key organisations such as health boards, Enterprise agencies, and regional transport partnerships. However, it may be beneficial to periodically review and update this list to ensure it remains relevant and inclusive of all necessary stakeholders.

Additionally, it is important to note that colleges in Highland sit under the umbrella of the University of the Highlands and Islands. This unique structure should be considered to ensure that the specific needs and contributions of these colleges are adequately represented and addressed within the Community Wealth Building framework.

Given Leisure Trust's significant contribution to the areas' social, cultural, and economic landscape, it would be beneficial to include them in the list of relevant public bodies. This inclusion would ensure that their activities are aligned with Community Wealth Building objectives and that they play an active role in developing and implementing action plans.

In addition, the Community Planning Partnership recommends that the Bill consider the inclusion of other key stakeholders that play a significant role in communities and rural economies. This includes Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs), which support and coordinate voluntary sector activity, as well as private sector bodies. These sectors are deeply embedded in local communities and have the potential to contribute meaningfully to Community Wealth Building through local employment, procurement, and investment. Their inclusion would help ensure that the Bill reflects the full spectrum of economic contributors in rural Scotland.



Question page 2

Question 1

1. Do you agree with the list of specified public bodies proposed in the Bill? If not, how should these be changed?

Specified public bodies

‘Specified public bodies’ must have due regard to CWB guidance from the Scottish Government when developing their corporate plans and associated delivery strategies.

The proposed specified public bodies are:

- *Creative Scotland*
- *Crown Estate Scotland*
- *Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd*
- *Historic Environment Scotland*
- *Integration Joint Boards*
- *National Park Authority*
- *NatureScot*
- *Scottish Police Service*
- *Scottish Canals*
- *Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service*
- *Scottish Environment Protection Agency*
- *Scottish Fire and Rescue Service*
- *Scottish Forestry*
- *Scottish Funding Council*
- *Scottish Futures Trust Ltd*
- *Scottish Land Commission*
- *Scottish National Investment Bank*
- *Special Health Boards*
- *Sportscotland*
- *Scottish Water*
- *VisitScotland*

Please provide your response in the box provided.

The specified public bodies listed in the Bill cover a wide range of sectors, ensuring a holistic approach to Community Wealth Building. Regular reviews and stakeholder consultations can help ensure this list remains appropriate and effective.

To ensure a more comprehensive and effective implementation of Community Wealth Building, it is recommended to include Regional Economic Partnerships in the list of specified public bodies. Their inclusion would ensure that regional economic development perspectives are adequately represented and integrated into Community Wealth Building efforts.

Question 2

2. Are there any ways the law in devolved areas could be changed to facilitate Community Wealth Building that are currently not proposed in the Bill?

Please provide your response in the box provided.



Additional legal changes could include specific provisions for rural and remote communities to address unique challenges they face. Enhancing community ownership and participation in local economic activities could also be further emphasised.

1. Islands (Scotland) Act 2018

- This Act aims to improve outcomes for island communities by addressing unique challenges such as population decline, economic development, transport services, digital connectivity, and fuel poverty.
- The Act's focus on sustainable economic development and community empowerment aligns well with the goals of Community Wealth Building.

2. Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act 2024

- This Act provides support for agriculture, rural development, and related matters. It includes provisions for rural support plans, funding for rural development, and measures to address exceptional market conditions.
- The Act's emphasis on supporting rural communities and enhancing economic resilience can complement Community Wealth Building initiatives by providing a framework for rural economic development.

3. Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016

- This Act aims to increase community ownership of land and improve land management practices. It includes provisions for community right to buy land, including neglected, abandoned, or detrimental land.
- Enhancing community ownership of land is a key aspect of Community Wealth Building, and this Act provides a legal mechanism to facilitate such ownership.

4. Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

- This Act promotes community empowerment and participation by creating new rights for community bodies and placing new duties on public authorities. It includes provisions for community planning, participation requests, and asset transfers.
- Community Planning and Tackling Inequalities: The Act's focus on community planning and tackling inequalities aligns with the principles of Community Wealth Building. Community planning aims to improve outcomes for local people by ensuring that public services are planned and delivered in a way that meets the needs of communities, particularly those experiencing the greatest inequalities. This approach supports the retention and circulation of wealth within local economies, fostering inclusive economic growth and resilience.
- Community Participation and Asset Transfer: The Act also emphasises community participation and asset transfer, which are key components of Community Wealth Building. By enabling communities to take ownership of local assets and have a greater say in decision-making processes, the Act empowers communities to drive their own economic development and create sustainable, locally-rooted economies.
- Overall, the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 provides a robust legal framework that supports the principles of Community Wealth Building by promoting community-led economic development, enhancing local ownership, and addressing inequalities.

5. National Islands Plan

- The National Islands Plan, developed under the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, sets out strategic objectives to improve the quality of life for island communities. It addresses issues such as economic development, transport, digital connectivity, and community empowerment.
- The Plan's comprehensive approach to addressing the unique challenges of island communities can inform and support Community Wealth Building efforts in these areas.

By referencing these existing Acts, the Bill could highlight the importance of tailored legal provisions to address the unique challenges faced by rural and remote communities. These Acts provide a strong foundation for enhancing community ownership, participation, and economic resilience, which are central to the goals of Community Wealth Building.



Question 3

3. Are there any potential unintended consequences to the proposed Bill?

Please provide your response in the box provided.

Potential unintended consequences could include the administrative burden on public bodies and the risk of inconsistent implementation if adequate support and resources are not provided. Continuous monitoring and feedback mechanisms can help mitigate these risks.

Potential Positive Unintended Consequences:

- **Increased Community Engagement:**
The Bill may lead to higher levels of community engagement and participation as local organisations and residents become more involved in economic development processes. This increased engagement can foster a stronger sense of community and civic responsibility.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:**
The requirement for public bodies and community organisations to work together on community wealth building initiatives could lead to improved collaboration and partnerships. This can result in more cohesive and coordinated efforts to address local issues and opportunities.
- **Capacity Building:**
As community organisations engage with the processes outlined in the Bill, they may develop new skills and capacities. This capacity building can enhance their ability to manage projects, secure funding, and advocate for their communities more effectively.
- **Innovation and Creativity:**
The focus on local economic development and community ownership may encourage innovative and creative solutions to local challenges. Communities may develop unique approaches to leveraging local assets and resources, leading to new and sustainable economic opportunities.
- **Strengthened Local Economies:**
By retaining wealth within local communities and promoting local procurement, the Bill could lead to stronger and more resilient local economies. This can result in increased local employment, business growth, and economic stability.
- **Improved Social Cohesion:**
The collaborative and inclusive nature of community wealth building initiatives can help bridge social divides and improve relationships within communities. This can foster a greater sense of unity and shared purpose among residents.

Potential Negative Unintended Consequences:

- **Potential for Increased Inequality:**
 - Resource Disparities: Wealthier or more organised communities might be better positioned to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Bill, potentially exacerbating existing inequalities between different areas.
 - Access to Information: Communities with better access to information and resources may benefit more, leaving disadvantaged communities behind.
- **Risk of Tokenism:**
 - Superficial Engagement: There is a risk that community engagement could become tokenistic, with public bodies engaging communities in a superficial manner without genuinely considering their input in decision-making processes.
- **Overburdening Community Organisations:**
 - Capacity Strain: Community organisations may face strain on their capacity as they take on additional responsibilities and roles. This could lead to burnout among volunteers and staff, particularly in smaller organisations.
 - Financial Pressure: Managing and maintaining community-owned assets can be financially demanding. Without adequate support, community organisations might struggle to sustain these assets in the long term.



- **Implementation Challenges:**

- Inconsistent Application: The effectiveness of the Bill may vary across different regions, leading to inconsistent implementation and outcomes. This could be due to varying levels of commitment, resources, and expertise among local authorities and public bodies.
- Bureaucratic Hurdles: The processes involved in accessing funds, participating in economic development initiatives, and managing assets could be bureaucratic and time-consuming, potentially discouraging community participation.

- **Conflict and Competition:**

- Inter-Community Conflicts: The allocation of resources and opportunities might lead to conflicts between different community groups, particularly if there are perceived or actual disparities in the distribution of benefits.
- Competition for Resources: Increased competition for limited resources and funding could create tensions between community organisations, potentially undermining collaboration and collective efforts.

- **Dependency on External Funding:**

- Sustainability Concerns: Community wealth building initiatives may become overly reliant on external funding sources. If these funds are reduced or withdrawn, it could jeopardise the sustainability of community projects and initiatives.

While the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill aims to bring numerous benefits, it is important to be aware of and address these potential negative unintended consequences. By providing adequate support, resources, and capacity-building initiatives, the Scottish Government and other stakeholders can help mitigate these risks and ensure that the benefits of community wealth building are realised equitably across all communities.

Question page 3

Question 1

1. To what extent will small businesses benefit from this Bill?

Please provide your response in the box provided.

Small businesses stand to benefit significantly from the Bill through increased local procurement opportunities, support for local entrepreneurship, and the promotion of fair work practices. These measures can enhance the economic resilience and sustainability of small businesses.

Question 2

2. To what extent will local community organisations benefit from this Bill?

Please provide your response in the box provided.

The Highland Community Planning Partnership is well-positioned to benefit from the proposed Bill, as it has already demonstrated proactive measures in community planning and development. In 2024, the Highland Community Planning Partnership undertook a comprehensive review of their Local Outcomes Improvement Plan in response to challenges like the global pandemic, cost of living crisis, and financial pressures across the public and third sectors.

A Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is a strategic document prepared by Community Planning Partnerships that outlines the key priorities and planned improvements for a local area. The Local Outcomes Improvement Plan aims to improve outcomes for local communities by focusing on specific goals and actions that address the needs and challenges of the area. It is developed through collaboration among local authorities, public bodies, and community organisations, and is designed to reduce inequalities and enhance the well-being of residents. The Local Outcomes Improvement Plan provides a framework for tracking



progress and measuring the impact of community initiatives, ensuring that resources are directed towards achieving tangible and positive outcomes for the community.

Highland is already experiencing, and is projected to continue experiencing, a changing demographic picture. An aging population creates pressure on specific services, while the decline in the working-age population impacts the ability to support and deliver services. The lack of housing in some areas, along with limitations on childcare and transport, creates challenges in sustaining and growing populations in rural areas. This, combined with the drift of younger people out of Highland, results in difficulties attracting investment and growing a vibrant local economy. It is therefore essential to sustain strong communities by providing opportunities, including economic opportunities, for those living there while addressing the barriers experienced by others.

In response to evolving challenges such as the global pandemic, cost of living crisis, and financial difficulties in the public and third sectors, the Highland Community Planning Partnership undertook a comprehensive review of the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan during 2024. This review, conducted through extensive engagement with strategic partners, led to the development of the 2024 - 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan. The updated plan includes three new strategic priorities, along with supporting principles and outcomes aimed at addressing key community challenges. The Highland Community Planning Partnership Board also established a Delivery Plan with seven cross-cutting themes and a Performance Framework to monitor progress and measure the impact of the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan at a population level, ensuring the plan remains relevant and effective in improving the lives and experiences of everyone across the Highland area.

The 2024 - 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan demonstrates the partnership's commitment to maximising opportunities for Highland, including investment and financial prospects. By encouraging involvement from the business and social enterprise sectors in community planning, the Partnership aims to embed community wealth building approaches into its activities.

- **Community Wealth Building Partnership:**

The establishment of the Highland Community Wealth Building Partnership serves as a model for collaborative efforts in implementing community wealth building strategies. This partnership provides a space for joint discussion and sharing of best practices across the Highland Community Planning Partnership.

- **Highland Social Value Charter for Renewables:**

The Highland Social Value Charter for Renewables emphasises the importance of frameworks like this in ensuring equitable distribution of benefits and promoting sustainable economic growth. The Charter sets out community benefit expectations from developers wishing to invest in renewables and outlines what the Highland Community Planning Partnership led by Highland Council will do to support and enable this contribution.

- **Strategic Priorities:**

The strategic priorities outlined in the revised 2024 – 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan align closely with the principles of community wealth building. The strategic priorities are:

- People: Enable people to live independently, safely, and well within their community.
- Place: Work in partnership to develop sustainable and resilient local communities.
- Prosperity: Create opportunities for all people and places to prosper and thrive economically.

The Highland Community Planning Partnership can demonstrate a proactive approach to community wealth building, setting a strong example. This alignment with the proposed Bill ensures that local community organisations in Highland are well-positioned to benefit from the initiatives and opportunities it presents.

Local community organisations will benefit from greater involvement in economic development processes, access to community benefit funds, and opportunities for community ownership of assets. This could lead



to stronger, more resilient local economies, resulting in increased local employment, business growth, and economic stability.

- **Greater Involvement in Economic Development:**

The Bill encourages local community organisations to participate actively in economic development processes. This involvement ensures that the unique needs and perspectives of local communities are considered in economic planning and decision-making.

- **Access to Community Benefit Funds:**

Community organisations will have access to community benefit funds, which can be used to support local projects and initiatives. These funds can help address specific community needs, promote local development, and enhance the quality of life for residents.

- **Opportunities for Community Ownership of Assets:**

The Bill provides mechanisms for community organisations to acquire and manage local assets. This ownership can empower communities, giving them control over local resources and the ability to generate income and create jobs.

- **Strengthening Community Resilience:**

By involving community organisations in economic development and providing access to resources, the Bill helps build stronger, more resilient communities. These communities are better equipped to respond to challenges and seize opportunities for growth.

- **Enhanced Social and Economic Outcomes:**

The combined effects of greater involvement, access to funds, and community ownership lead to improved social and economic outcomes. Communities can develop tailored solutions to local issues, fostering a sense of ownership and pride.

- **Role of Community Planning Partnerships:**

- Collaborative Decision-Making: Community Planning Partnerships bring together various stakeholders, including local authorities, health boards, police services, and community organisations, to collaborate on planning and delivering services. This collaborative approach ensures that community organisations have a voice in shaping local policies and initiatives.
- Shared Resources and Expertise: Community Planning Partnerships facilitate the sharing of resources, knowledge, and expertise among partners. This collaboration can enhance the capacity of community organisations to implement projects and achieve their goals.
- Focus on Local Priorities: Community Planning Partnerships work to identify and address the specific needs and priorities of local communities. By aligning efforts and resources, Community Planning Partnerships can help ensure that community organisations' initiatives are well-supported and aligned with broader community goals.

By incorporating and considering the role of Community Planning Partnerships, the Bill could be strengthened, the comprehensive support and collaborative framework that the Bill provides to local community organisations, ultimately leading to more effective and sustainable community development.

While the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill aims to bring numerous benefits to local community organisations, there are potential challenges and negatives that could arise:

Potential Negatives for Community Organisations

- **Administrative Burden:**

- Increased Responsibilities: Community organisations may face additional administrative responsibilities to comply with new regulations and reporting requirements. This could be particularly challenging for smaller organisations with limited resources.
- Complex Processes: Navigating the processes for accessing community benefit funds, participating in economic development initiatives, and managing community-owned assets may be complex and time-consuming.

- **Resource Constraints:**



- Capacity Issues: Smaller community organisations may struggle with the capacity to engage fully in community wealth building activities, especially if they lack the necessary skills, knowledge, or financial resources.
- Funding Gaps: While the Bill aims to provide access to community benefit funds, there may be gaps in funding availability or delays in fund disbursement, impacting the ability of organisations to implement projects effectively.
- **Equity and Inclusion:**
 - Unequal Benefits: There is a risk that the benefits of community wealth building may not be distributed equitably across all communities. More affluent or well-connected communities might be better positioned to take advantage of the opportunities, potentially widening existing inequalities.
 - Representation: Ensuring that all community voices are heard and represented in decision-making processes can be challenging. Marginalised or less vocal groups may find it difficult to influence outcomes.
- **Coordination and Collaboration:**
 - Partnership Challenges: Effective community wealth building requires strong collaboration between various stakeholders, including local authorities, public bodies, and community organisations. Coordination challenges and differing priorities among partners could hinder progress.
 - Conflict of Interests: There may be conflicts of interest between different community organisations or between community organisations and other stakeholders, leading to disagreements and delays in project implementation.
- **Sustainability:**
 - Long-Term Viability: Ensuring the long-term sustainability of community-owned assets and initiatives can be challenging. Community organisations need to develop robust business models and governance structures to manage and maintain assets effectively.
 - Economic Fluctuations: Community wealth building initiatives may be vulnerable to economic fluctuations and external factors that could impact their success and sustainability.

While the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill offers significant opportunities for local community organisations, it is important to be aware of and address these potential challenges. By providing adequate support, resources, and capacity-building initiatives, the Scottish Government and other stakeholders can help mitigate these risks and ensure that the benefits of community wealth building are realised equitably across all communities.



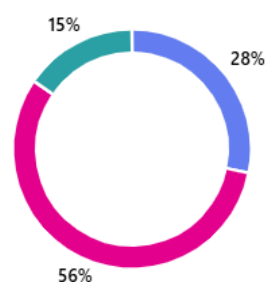
2025 Highland Community Planning Partnership Conference

Maximising Opportunities Together

Feedback Summary

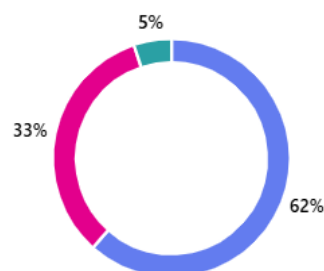
How would you rate your overall experience at the Conference today?

Excellent	11
Very Good	22
Good	6
Fair	0
Poor	0



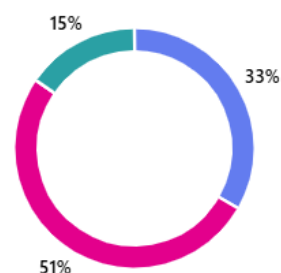
How satisfied were you with the organisation of the Conference?

Extremely Satisfied	24
Very sStisfied	13
Somewhat Satisfied	2
Not very Satisfied	0
Not Satisfied at all	0



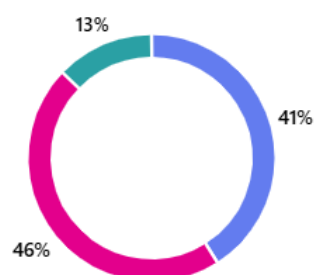
Overall, how satisfied were you with today's Programme?

Extremely satisfied	13
Very satisfied	20
Somewhat satisfied	6
Not very satisfied	0
Not satisfied at all	0



How would you rate the quality of the Speakers and their presentations overall?

Excellent	16
Very good	18
Good	5
Fair	0
Poor	0

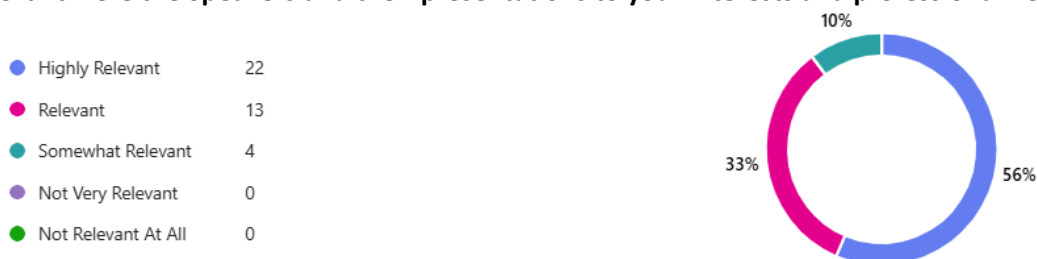




Did any of the speakers and their presentations stand out to you? If so, please specify which ones and why.

- Calum MacPherson – was fantastic, great oversight into the Green Freeport development and opportunity it is presenting to Highland.
- Lewis Gillies – about his lessons learnt from community projects worldwide and his practical insights.
- Scott Dalgarno – good to hear about school/community hub approach.
- Mhairi Wylie – praised for her engaging and insightful delivery.
- Dr. Tim Allison – commended for his informative and impactful session.
- Jaci and Simon – also received positive feedback.

How relevant were the Speakers and their presentations to your interests and professional needs?



Describe today's Conference in three words



What do you feel was the most impactful part of the day?

- Networking opportunities
- Presentations linking strategy to real-world impact
- Discussions on communities and childcare

"Having everyone in the room together and hearing from all of the speakers."

"Seeing the level of engagement with community planning in Highland."

"Hearing links to our work to improve what we do!"

"All of it in different ways. I found it really informative about what is happening with the FreePort and Ardersier but then back to earth with childcare etc"

What do you feel was the least impactful part of the day?

- Some felt the afternoon sessions were too long
- A few noted lack of third sector representation
- Suggestions for more interactive elements and movement during the day



Highland
Community
Planning
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas
Dealbhadh
Coimhearsnachd
na Gàidhealtachd

"Hard to link the strategic vision with the reality on ground"

"I would have liked to hear more about whole family and community based approaches"

"No talks from 3rd sector (HTSI can't speak for all). Speakers were all useful in educating us but not really examples of what the cp has done to make a change, its successes."

Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

Many expressed gratitude and appreciation

Suggestions included:

- More time for discussion
- Greater focus on local delivery of community planning
- Improvements in speaker delivery

"Links to existing workstreams and progress"

"Maybe an activity around community partnership work with wider discussion about what works / doesn't work/ potential solutions tapping into speakers knowledge & experience."

"Well done, last year was fab but this year levelled up. Only thing lacking was input from how cp is delivered at the local cp level"