

**Edinburgh Partnership Review and Consultation of Governance and Community Planning Arrangements**

**July 2018**

**Introduction**

Community planning brings together public agencies, the third sector and communities to work together to plan and deliver services which make a real difference to people's lives. The Edinburgh Partnership involves these partners in overseeing this work for the city.

The Edinburgh Partnership recognises that we can improve community planning processes. In this consultation, the Edinburgh Partnership would like to hear people’s views on:

* how communities and community groups can more effectively influence decisions about their community
* how the governance arrangements can be improved to:
	+ make it clear how decisions are made, and who is making them, by improving the groups and structures involved
	+ make partnership working stronger
	+ make better connections between the different levels of partnership working in the city.

**Context**

In Scotland, the law says a range of public bodies must take part in community planning. This is set out in the Scottish Government’s Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. The Act was designed to strengthen the influence communities have in making decisions about their area – this is known as community planning.

Below is the current governance structure in Edinburgh, which forms the basis of this consultation. It shows many partnership and advisory groups feed into and from the Edinburgh Partnership.



There are other bodies in the city which link to and/or have a role in these arrangements but they are not part of the governance structure. These include community councils, Council committees, the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils and the Equality and Rights Network. They provide the city-wide perspective for community and interest groups. These are not included in the consultation.

To help develop the consultation, the Edinburgh Partnership carried out a review with the people involved in the current partnerships and groups shown in the governance structure on page 2. Their views on what is working well and what could be better have shaped the proposals and questions in this consultation.

We would now like to hear your views as we recognise that this consultation is relevant in different ways to a wide range of organisations.

**Timescales**

You can let us know your views between Monday 16th July 2018 to Sunday 9th September 2018.

**Ways to respond**

Let us know your views

* using the online questionnaire at consultationhub@edinburgh.gov.uk
* fill in this document and send it by email to [community.planning@edinburgh.gov.uk](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5C3518594%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CXVCZ7CJB%5Ccommunity.planning%40edinburgh.gov.uk%E2%80%99) or post it to us at:

 Community Strategies Team

The City of Edinburgh Council

 Business Centre 2.1, Waverley Court

 4 East Market Street

 Edinburgh

 EH4 7BG

**Your Details**

**What is your name? (optional)**

Judy Wightman

**What is your email address? (optional)**

chair@radcc.org

**Which of these best describes you? (please tick)**

Community Group

X

Voluntary Sector Organisation

Public Sector Body

Other organisation

Individual

**What is the name of your organisation?**

Ratho and District Community Council

**The review**

In the review, we asked people about their views on what a new governance structure might look like.

**Proposed structure**

During the review, we asked people to consider different governance structures ranging from a streamline version to one which included a wider range of partnerships and groups.

**The review told us**

There was strong agreement that we need to develop a streamlined and simple structure for community planning governance at all levels in the city. The proposal for this has the Edinburgh Partnership with two groups linking to it. The two groups are Locality Community Planning Partnerships and City-wide/Strategic Partnership or Partnerships.

With this structure, the Edinburgh Partnership, as the legal group, will remain although views on how it works and who is involved forms part of the consultation.

The neighbourhood/local and city-wide/strategic levels have the greatest potential for change. We would like your views on how these levels could be made better for all involved.

Making sure communities can meaningfully participate and influence community planning in the city is crucial. Given this, we have specific questions about how this might be improved.

This proposed structure reflects feedback from the review. However, you can of course tell us about your ideas for other structures which you feel might work.

**Section 1 - Community Participation**

Currently, communities and interest groups are represented in the community planning governance arrangements by community councils on Neighbourhood Partnerships. They are also represented on the Edinburgh Partnership by the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils and the Equality and Rights Network. Communities are also more widely engaged in community planning in other ways such as through participation in surveys and workshops on particular issues.

**What the review told us**

The review identified that there was not meaningful community participation in the current structure and we need new ways of working.

**Questions:**

Q1.1 Should community bodies continue to have a representative role in the new governance arrangements?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | X | No |  |

If no, please explain why?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Q1.2 If you agree to community bodies being represented, which groups should be involved at each level, please identify and explain why?

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| --- |
| Locality level – Councillors should attend Community Council meetings to ascertain the views of the entire population, not just those with large numbers of voters. The community should be involved in the work streams that form the basis of the local plans, and all areas (ie each community council area) should have the opportunity to participate regularly and not just once a year. It is for each locality to decide how to make this manageable, maybe area sub groups Local democracy must be seen to carried out by deed and not just pay lip serviceto the communitiesStrategic/city-wide level – there needs to be greater community representation on the Strategic Partnerships and Strategic Advisory Groups. The groups at present represent interested parties, usually paid professionals, but it is difficult to ascertain their relationship with the community and could be regarded as “self-serving”Edinburgh Partnership –There are at least 21 members of the Edinburgh Partnership (EP) but only **one** is a representative of the community. It is difficult to see if the EP is considering what is in the interests of the whole community or is just a tick box requirement of government |

Q1.3 Looking wider than a representative role, how do we ensure communities are involved and influence community planning in the city?

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| --- |
| This is always difficult; in our experience, the community will come forward to comment on specific problems such as buses, doctors, planning….At other times they rely on “someone else” to ensure the rest of the matters concerning their area, which may be perceived as boring, are watched over on their behalf.The “someone else” will be the community council, possibly with back up from residents associations and local amenity groups, which are frequently the same people!Remember that it is not only the areas of multiple deprivation that need support; not everybody is income deprived - there are areas with limited health, education or transport facilities who need additional support.  |

Q1.4 Do we need a community participation strategy to support the meaningful engagement in community planning?

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | x | No |  |

If yes, what might this include?

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| --- |
| Support for Community Councils and additional funds to undertake frequent and meaningful consultations Help with publicityMake the city wide consultations more user friendly and restrict them in number – we are awash with them and this negates from their importance |

**Section 2 - Locality Level**

The current community planning arrangements in the four localities in the city are complex and include:

* a Locality Management Board which oversees and supports locality working. It is chaired by a senior officer of the Council and involves senior officers from a range of public and voluntary sector bodies.
* four Locality Leadership Teams which bring together the same organisations as the Locality Management Board at a locality level. These teams co-ordinate local partnership working and oversee the development and delivery of the Locality Improvement Plan. Their work is supported by working groups which focus on the themes which are set out in the Locality Improvement Plans.
* twelve Neighbourhood Partnerships which were formally created as advisory committees of the Council. They aim to improve the quality of life in their areas and members include elected members, community councils and officers from the public and voluntary sectors.

There is no legal requirement to have community planning governance arrangements at this level.

**What the review told us**

The review identified that groups and partnerships were not well-connected at the local level, and that it was not clear how they related to the city-wide/strategic level. The current arrangements were also considered complex, with areas of duplication, and costly to support and maintain.

The review identified mixed views on whether Neighbourhood Partnerships should continue. Under the proposed structure, the Neighbourhood partnerships would not continue to form part of the community planning governance arrangements. However, they are advisory committees of the Council and so the City of Edinburgh Council would need to take a separate decision about their status as part of its governance structure.

**Proposal**

Based on these views, the proposal is to establish a new Community Planning Partnership for each of the four localities. These would be responsible for developing and delivering Locality Improvement Plans. Members must have the authority to make decisions for and on behalf of the organisation they represent.

As these partnerships would develop the Locality Improvement Plan and agree delivery of the actions, we would need additional operational arrangements and engagement processes. Each partnership would need to decide what is needed based on resource, service and community requirements. During the review, people raised concerns about the size of localities and how to address the varying needs and circumstances of the different communities. We would need flexibility in each locality to decide what arrangements and processes would work best.

**Questions:**

Q2.1 Do you agree that there should be four Locality Community Planning Partnerships?

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | X | Go to Question 2.2 | No |  |  |

If no, what should be established instead?

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| --- |
| Your comments |

Q2.2 If you agree to the establishment of Locality Community Planning Partnerships, which bodies/groups should be represented?

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| --- |
| Your comments**All** Community CouncilsPossibly Residents Associations and Amenity GroupsThe problem is size of Locality Community Planning Partnerships (LCCP). To restrict the number of Community Councils on the LCCP in favour of other groups would see the demise of the Community Councils. This would be a retrograde step as the Community Councils are the only organisation considering all matters in the whole area rather than just one area or amenity |

Q2.3 Thinking wider than the Locality Improvement Plans, are there other areas of responsibility the locality partnership should oversee?

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| --- |
| Your commentsLet’s just get everybody involved with the existing work streams before we try to widen the remit. It is better to do a few things properly rather than spread the community involvement, as well as Council Officers and Councillors, to thinly |

Q2.4 The proposal is to no longer retain Neighbourhood Partnerships as part of the community planning governance structures, how do we ensure that all views and needs are meaningfully represented in a community planning partnership at a locality level?

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| --- |
| Your commentsWith great difficulty!The Community needs to feel included, and not just at election time. Councillors need more commitment to attend local meetings – some are excellent, others not so much. We need the opportunity to be involved in the local work stream groups. This has worked well in the Neighbourhood Partnerships and must be continued; if a group were too large it is unmanageable but if the groups are restricted in number of members the lack of local democracy would give rise to significant unquiet and concern in many areas. So Neighbourhood Partnerships or their like is needed to act as a conduit between the Community and and the Locality Board |

Q2.5 The existing partnerships have a traditional meeting-based format, are there innovative and more accessible ways the Locality Community Planning Partnership might work?

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| --- |
| Your commentsFace to face meetings are the best format. Interaction will spark new ideas and lead to more inclusive decisions.Telephone conferencing can be confusing and discussion by e mail leads to the desired outcome of the writer and not the whole group. However means to increase inclusiveness need to be developed.  |

Q2.6 This proposal allows for the Locality Community Planning Partnership to develop its own operational and engagement arrangements within the locality. Do you agree that the Locality Community Planning Partnership should do this?

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | X | No |  |

If no, please explain why?

|  |
| --- |
| Your commentsYes. One size does **NOT** fit all. Each area is different with different officers and community representatives. It needs to fit those engaging with the Locality Community Planning Partnership. You cannot choose the types of representatives that fit your model. |

Q2.7 How could this new arrangement better link with the Edinburgh Partnership and its strategic partnership groups e.g. representation across the various partnerships?

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| --- |
| Your commentsThere needs to be representation from the localities, not just councillors, with more community input The papers need to be distributed earlier and wider so that community views can be ascertained and fed into our representatives. For wider views at least 4 weeks is required, probably more. |

**Section 3 - Strategic Level**

Currently, we have a mixture of strategic partnerships and advisory groups in the city. You can find details of this in a supporting document (see Appendix 1 – Governance Existing Arrangements).

**What the review told us**

The review identified that the current arrangements are complex with duplication and evidence of partnerships working in isolation. There was little or no community participation at this level and it was unclear how communities influenced the partnerships/groups. There was a strong view that we need to streamline this level and make better connections with community planning arrangements in localities.

There is no legal requirement to have partnership/group(s) at this level. However, within the community planning duties, the Edinburgh Partnership must have oversight of the delivery of outcomes which relate to the Children’s’ Services Plan, Community Learning and Development Plan and Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan. These currently form part of the remit of existing partnerships/groups.

**Proposal**

Based on the views expressed, the proposal is to reduce the number of city-wide strategic partnerships/groups which will support the Edinburgh Partnership to develop and deliver the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, the community plan for the city. The new partnership(s) would also provide the governance route for the other legal community planning requirements described above.

**Questions**:

Q3.1 Do you agree that strategic partnerships are created in line with the themes in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan?

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | X | No |  |

If no, what should be established instead and why?

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| --- |
| Your comments |

Q3.2 What, if any, of the existing strategic partnerships are needed and why?

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| --- |
| Your commentsThe existing partnerships and advisory groups cover and, possibly duplicate, the necessary work streams but they need to be grouped together mirroring the Locality Work stream Groups  |

 Q3.3 How would we best take account of the legal duties in relation to other plans within the proposed structure?

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| --- |
| Your comments |

**Section 4 - Edinburgh Partnership**

The Edinburgh Partnership is the city's community planning partnership. It brings together public agencies, third sector and communities to work together to plan and deliver services which make a real difference to people's lives.

By law, the Edinburgh Partnership must provide the strategic leadership and oversight of community planning in the city. The structure needs to provide a way of making strategic decisions. The partnership must involve senior representatives from partner bodies, who have high levels of authority, and can hold senior executives to account. The Edinburgh Partnership is responsible for putting in place effective structures which:

* will deliver joint action
* make sure there is a clear role for the community in making decisions and
* provide clear lines of accountability between partners and to the community.

**What the review told us**

The review identified the need for the Edinburgh Partnership to be more effective in meeting these requirements with the membership and remit to be revised on this basis.

**Questions:**

Q4.1 What do we need to do to make sure the Edinburgh Partnership can effectively meet its legal duties?

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| --- |
| Your commentsHave an understanding of what the Community wants while taking into account what is achievable and tell everybody what can and can’t happenHave a greater visibility, perhaps even public meetings in each locality. Ensure that Community representation as described above is implemented  |

Q4.2 What would make the Edinburgh Partnership more accessible and transparent?

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| --- |
| Your commentsHave a greater visibility, perhaps even public meetings in each locality.Publish the Agenda and papers on line before the meeting |

**Section 5 - Resourcing**

For community planning to be effective, partners must take joint action and share resources.

The legal guidance identifies that statutory community planning partners must contribute funds, staff and other resources which are considered appropriate to make sure community groups take part in community planning.

**What the review told us**

A key issue arising from the review is that the current administrative and support arrangements are costly and largely met by the Council. The Council cannot maintain this level of support in the longer-term.

**Question:**

Q5.1 How should partners jointly resource the administration, support and participation of community bodies in the new community planning arrangements?

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| --- |
| Your commentsLocal Democracy can only be achieved by proper consultation. At all levels this involves some cost. Where there are joint committees perhaps other members such as the Police and the Army can bear some of the costs.As for Community Councils the Level of financial support is the less than when the Community Councils were established in the 1980’s, with no increase for inflation. It could be argued that Community Council Grants could be increased in line with Councillors allowances! The funding is not over generous. The amount Community Councils receive does not take into account any increase in population since the 2011 census. Costs of rent are increasing. If community councils were offered free accommodation in council buildings such as schools, when they are being used by other organisations would allow for the targeting of funds more efficiently as well as saving on administrative costsLocal organisations such as the Airport and supermarkets, who have community funds could be persuaded to fund their local community councils rather than sending us out with begging bowls!  |

**Section 6 – Any Other Feedback**

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| Your commentsThe whole questionnaire is about involving the community involvement and then at the end you tell us that you will reduce local funding – local democracy cannot be done on the cheap! |