

Report to the Community Planning Joint Delivery Team by the Third Sector Interface on behalf of the Third Sector Forum

Raising awareness and getting buy-in for co-production in the Scottish Borders

Purpose of Briefing Paper

The purpose of this report is to highlight the potential benefits to Community Planning Partners of embedding co-production and community capacity building approaches in the planning and delivery of services in the Scottish Borders, and to gain approval for a half-day awareness raising event in April/May 2013 .

Why co-production and community capacity building matter for the Scottish Borders

Current pressures upon all service providers to achieve efficiencies while continuing to deliver excellent services which meet the changing needs of the population require the adoption of new and innovative approaches to service planning and delivery. Achieving this requires that Community Planning Partners must work increasingly more closely, not only together, but with service users and the wider Scottish Borders community, for whom the current range of services have become an expected reality, in order to identify priorities for investment, avoid duplication, and maximise collective resources. Doing so requires that citizens are seen as equal partners in service planning and delivery. The linked approaches of co-production and capacity building provide useful frameworks for achieving this.

What is co-production?

Co-production means that the people who use services are equally involved alongside professionals, in planning and delivering services. It has been described as: *...delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours. Where activities are co-produced in this way, both services and neighbourhoods become far more effective agents of change.*

For *Governance International* co-production is about “*public services and citizens making better use of each other's assets and resources to achieve better outcomes or improved efficiency*”.



The *Co-Production Star* developed by *Governance International* demonstrates different ways of involving users and communities in public services.

They include:

- **Co-commissioning public services** - shifting the focus from services that councils think people need to outcomes that local people themselves believe to be priorities, e.g. through *neighbourhood budgeting in Govanhill*.
- **Co-designing public services** - using the *customer journey approach* to look at how the service process can be improved from the user's point of view. The outcomes and efficiency savings from [the re-design of the Stockport social care website 'My Care, My Choice'](#) show how powerful co-design can be.
- **Co-delivering public services** - identifying who is willing to do what and how, e.g. through [community asset-mapping in NW Kilmarnock](#) and service user *capability assessments in social services in Walsall Council*.
- **Co-assessing public services** – involving citizens in service inspections and scrutiny, often through the use of social media or online ratings. The [case study of citizen-led inspections in West Lothian Council](#) shows that citizens have an important role to play alongside professional inspectors.

What is community capacity building?

Community capacity building is defined as: *... a way of working with people to develop their ability to jointly influence what happens in their community. This can involve developing confidence, skills, structures and knowledge, to increase the opportunities communities have to make a real difference to the services, activities, activities and changes that take place in their area.*

What co-production and community capacity building will mean for the Scottish Borders

Embedding these approaches in service areas where they are not well understood will involve learning and change both in culture and practice for elected members, managers and frontline staff. There are, in addition, significant challenges to implementing the approaches with service users in respect of the willingness and ability they have to invest time in the public services they are accustomed to receiving. A realistic understanding of the time and resources required to enable users, providers and decision makers to engage effectively in this process is therefore required.

However, the benefits which could accrue from adopting these approaches are significant. For example; community members gain a better understanding of the complexities and practicalities of service design and delivery, develop skills and knowledge in these areas and as a result tend to be more satisfied. There is also a reduced chance that services will be wasteful or ineffective. Overall, it has been demonstrated that where challenges can be overcome the involvement of communities can result in services which are delivered in ways that are more cost-effective, fit-for-purpose and sustainable.

The reciprocal benefits to services from embedding co-production and community capacity building approaches as part of service provision therefore are that services are more likely to be successful because they are better informed and influenced by service users and their families and communities, since those affected by the services are directly involved in delivering the change and therefore 'own' them.

Additional benefits include:

- Resources are better targeted to deliver services that are needed.
- Reduced dependence on the statutory sector delivering needs-led services (i.e. supporting preventative spend).
- Opportunity for individuals, families and communities to flourish as they are empowered to their improve quality of life.

The long-term aim of embedding co-production and capacity building approaches is to better utilise resources both by preventing costly problems within communities (through, for example, improving health and community safety) and, where realistic, by outsourcing the provision of certain services to

sustainable third sector providers and social enterprises. These savings, however, will only be achieved over a longer term scale.

Policy Drivers

Adopting co-production and capacity building approaches is compatible with high level Scottish Government policy. In particular, it fits with the recommendations of the report of the *Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services (Christie Report) 2011*. This report calls for a greater role for community-led organisations and greater involvement of service users in the design and delivery of services.

The Way Forward

Increased investment in community capacity building and in service delivery models involving co-production is key to the future delivery of effective and efficient public services in Scottish Borders. However, this involves both investment and commitment on the part of public sector organisations to working in an open and equal relationship with members of community, including people who use services. The development of these relationships must be seen as a long-term aim, though one which will ultimately enable both savings and the delivery of more effective and satisfying services for Scottish Borders communities.

It is recommended that a half -day awareness raising event is organised for the Community Planning Partnership. This will enable partners to understand what co-production means for their organisations and partnerships within the Borders area. In order to ensure that the learning at the event will be sustainable and lead to action, a brief summary will be provided which will highlight issues which require further discussion and the next steps needed to move the co-production agenda forward in the Borders.

The half-day Co-Production Workshop will be highly interactive and be facilitated by Gerry Power (*Joint Improvement Team*) and Elke Loeffler (*Governance International*) with contributions from Annette Lang of Midlothian Council.

In order to make the learning at the Workshop sustainable and to disseminate the learning outcome it is intended that brief summary of the outcomes from the awareness raising event are produced.

All participants will be provided with briefing material and will be given online access to wider resources on co-production and community capacity building on the Governance International resource pages.

The case studies presented at the Workshop will focus on the following services and outcomes:

- Social inclusion, community engagement and development
- Social care, health and well-being
- Housing

- Community safety

Draft Programme (indicative timings only)

9:00-9:15	Introductions and welcome
9:15-9:30	Ice-breaker and feedback to participants on 'Your Views on Co-Production' survey
9:30-9:45	<i>What co-production is and isn't and why it matters for the Community Planning Partners of the Scottish Borders</i>
9:45-10:45	<i>How co-production works in practice: Presentation of good practice cases from Scottish Borders, Midlothian and Europe</i>
10.45-11.00	<i>Break</i>
11:00-12:00	<i>Benefits, risks and limits of co-production for the Scottish Borders</i>
12:00-12:30	Next steps to move co-production in the Scottish Borders forward