



CLD Standards Council Scotland

Submitted Response
to

Scottish Government Consultation

Community Wealth Building

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Introduction

The Scottish Government's developmental plans regarding Community Wealth Building (CWB) as an approach to delivering inclusive growth across Scotland offer the opportunity to spotlight the critical role that the Community Learning and Development (CLD) workforce already offers in creating prosperous, robust, skilled and sustainable communities.

Tom Arthur, Minister for Community Wealth and Public Finance, stated *“The Scottish Government wants to put people, place and the environment at the heart of our economy. That ambition has never been more important than in the current moment as we tackle a Cost of Living Crisis which is harming communities across Scotland. Community Wealth Building is a key tool to help us achieve an economy that is focused on delivering wellbeing for all. It seeks to do this by growing local wealth and making sure it stays in communities”*

The Government's National Performance Framework sets out the strategic objectives for all public services, including those delivering CLD. CLD's specific focus is:

1. improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship.
2. stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.

The purpose of CLD is to empower people, individually and collectively, to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities, **through learning and development**. Community Development is a CLD approach to achieving social change. It is action taken through building organisation, learning and power within communities in order to promote democracy, sustainable development, equality and social justice. Working cross-sectoral, it builds community capacity and influence by enabling people to develop the confidence, understanding and skills required to influence decision making and service delivery.

While it is recognised that many other public and voluntary sector staff contribute to the type of engagement required, CLD practitioners both paid and voluntary, are best placed in terms of their skills and relationships with communities to co-ordinate activities and demonstrate good practice. It is essential to acknowledge that community development practitioners already play a crucial role in supporting the skills and learning needed for the implementation and development of community groups in response to emerging need. They offer professional, high quality learning, guidance and skills needed for not only the development, progress and governance of community organisations, but also in supporting the operational delivery of community-based services, for communities, groups and individuals, empowering them to have a greater stake in the communities in which they live and work, and in turn, Scotland's wellbeing economy which includes just transition to Net Zero.

The CLD Standards Council Scotland is the professional body for people who work or volunteer in community learning and development in Scotland. We are a member led organisation. Our approach and work plans to deliver our core responsibilities are defined by our member committees and based on feedback from the wider membership.

Our core responsibilities are:

- Deliver a professional approvals structure for qualifications, courses and development opportunities for everyone involved in CLD
- Maintain a registration system available to practitioners delivering and active in CLD practice
- Develop and establish a model of supported induction, professional learning and training opportunities

We have a growing membership of over 2850 members, an executive committee and 3 functional committees which are made up of members from across the sector in Scotland.

This response was compiled following consultation with members of the CLD Standards Council and partner organisations. The CLD Standards Council facilitated a consultation event with members of the Scottish Government Community Wealth Building Policy team, along with 10 CLD Standard Council members on 27th April 2023. We attended online consultations hosted by Volunteer Scotland and by Scottish Government, as well as having dialogue with individual members, CLD Standards Council staff team and Community Development Alliance Scotland.

Question responses from the CLD Standards Council to Scottish Governments Community Wealth Building Consultation

1.

a) We are proposing a duty to advance Community Wealth Building, which form do you think this duty should take:

Consensus was that option B provides the best approach and an overall agreement of the importance of a duty. Concerns were raised regarding the statement that bodies would be statutorily obliged to participate in community planning, specifically around third sector organisations and their capacity. The CLD Standards Council would urge Scottish Government to offer clear instruction regarding the accountability and expectations of third sector public bodies who would be duty bound whilst stipulating that third sector organisations would be supported to partake, fostering meaningful collaboration but they would not be statutorily obliged. Members also raised apprehensions around resources and funding for participation, especially for smaller organisations, recognising that CLD practitioners working or volunteering would be those who influence or play a critical role implementing community wealth building approach and supporting communities. There is a real consideration to be had in terms of what meaningful engagement would look like and making sure that all those involved are able to participate.

Questions were raised around the legislative path, specifically how will this legislation connect and impact on existing legislation such as Community Empowerment Act of 2015, Community Planning Act of 2001 and the current review of CLD regulations. The CLD Standards Council would like assurance that these legislations are being considered in this regard. We would also highlight that whilst there is a duty regarding development and implementation of CLD partnership plans for each of the 32 local authority areas, the CLD Standards Council feels strongly that the requirements and governance of these plans need reviewing and strengthening, specifically regarding the data gathered, and the implementation and impact, and we would invite further discussions on this matter.

The CLD workforce, paid and voluntary, across local authority and third sector should be viewed as the existing network supporting communities to be more informed, engaged and involved. Without strong policy, secure funding and professional recognition of this sector in Scotland, the CLD workforce required to assist in the success of the Community Wealth Building and other legislation mentioned will continue to be depleted and dispersed. The latest report on CLD Workforce in Scotland is available here: <https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/about-cld/working-with-scotlands-communities-2018/>

b) One way Scottish Government could support the implementation of the proposed Community Wealth Building duty is to provide statutory or non-statutory guidance. Would this be helpful to partners in meeting the proposed duty?

Yes.

The CLD Standards Council members consider statutory guidance to be vital to support the implementation of the community wealth building duty, offering assurance regarding the relevant organisations who are expected to and are able to contribute, whilst having clear understanding of accountability, roles and responsibilities.

The CLD Standards Council welcomes a review of the language, guidance and definition of roles and responsibilities regarding the Wellbeing Economy Toolkit Supporting place-based economic strategy and policy development [Wellbeing Economy Toolkit Supporting place-based economic strategy and policy development \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot). Specific attention should be paid to partnership working,

accountabilities and acknowledgement of linking community engagement, need and development with local CLD plans.

2.

a) Are there other non-legislative measures that you believe are required to accelerate the implementation of the Community Wealth Building approach in Scotland?

The CLD Standards Council would like to see recognition of the role and expectations of the CLD workforce, paid and voluntary, to be clearly stipulated in the guidance ensuring safeguarding of both paid employment of CLD practitioners whilst recognising the powerful and positive impact of volunteers and the volunteering opportunities for individuals and communities under this duty.

The CLD sector works with learners and communities to grow community participation through a wide range of learning programmes and experiences. Recognition of these development benefits regarding wider achievement at all ages can be life changing for those vulnerable, isolated or disempowered. Participation and the outcomes from these engagements for young people as well as adults in our communities need to be acknowledged, valued and included in community planning. CLD supported learning experiences develop and prepare skilled, knowledgeable and confident learners for the world of work and industry, public services, the third sector and in our communities. The delivery of skills in communities with and for learners of all ages relevant to their lives and the communities they live in develop curiosity and critical thinking skills such as communications skills (verbal and written), numeracy skills, meta skills, digital skills, hand and tools skills, problem solving, motivational intelligence, open minds, growth mindsets. The CLD Standards Council would like recognition that CLD learning opportunities and approaches are crucial to the success of community wealth building and a wellbeing economy. <https://www.voicescotland.org.uk/national-standards>

Community and utilising digital community infrastructure is important and it was discussed that there is learning to be had from Covid, when everything went online and communities helped each other out through digital technologies, Whats App, Facebook, Instagram, WordPress, websites etc. Members agreed that there is a need to ensure that the digital community infrastructure is therefore reflected in community wealth building

b) Are there specific actions required to advance delivery of the items contained within the Shared Policy Programme outlined on page 11?

The CLD workforce, paid and voluntary, across local authority and third sector should be recognised as a core service supporting communities to be more informed, engaged and involved regarding policy and policy development, community empowerment and developing community enterprise. Without strong CLD legislation and policy, secure funding and professional recognition of the CLD sector in Scotland, we believe that the CLD workforce that Scottish Government require to assist in the success of the implementation of Community Wealth Building, Community Empowerment Act and other legislation mentioned previously, will continue to be cut, depleted and dispersed. Volunteer Scotland report concerns regarding “*funding pressure on public and third sector services may lead to the inappropriate engagement of volunteers*” which you can read in their recent “Cost of Living” report here <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Report-for-Cost-of-Living-Task-Group.pdf>. This would be a direct contravention of the Volunteer Charter, which you can access here: <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/volunteer-practice/quality-standards/volunteer-charter>

The Shared Policy Programme specifies “to base public sector capital and revenue funding decisions on targeted social, economic and environmental outcomes”. We would welcome clarity around this process. Again, we strongly recommend the CLD workforce across local authority and third sector is .

Utilising professional CLD practitioners and approaches, ensures communities have a strong voice and are able to inform funding decisions that have meaningful impact as well as reflect communities needs.

Equity and Applicability: Concerns were raised about the legislation and the relevance/support in connection with raising costs regarding community buildings, and the negative impact these are having in communities. Some local authority practitioners report the closure of facilities due to budget cuts, as well as raises in lets, increasing overhead costs etc. and how these have huge bearing on the sustainability of community groups, small micro businesses, social enterprise and others moving forward.

Robust Structure: Members requested that Scottish Government look at the support structures regarding implementation, reporting and evaluation. Experience is that legislation doesn't guarantee that it translates through to action, and to perfect implementation on the ground. The CLD Standards Council would urge that there are robust times and measured processed in place to ensure accountability from all stakeholders, and that Scottish Government have accountability to ensure expectations are reviewed and met.

References regarding Community Learning and Development and approaches to support communities can be found here:

[SCDC - We believe communities matter](#)

[Community Development Alliance Scotland](#)

<https://www.coproductionscotland.org.uk/>

<https://pbscotland.scot/>

<https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Partnership.pdf>

3. Are there ways in which the law could be changed to advance the spending pillar of Community Wealth Building?

It was suggested that marketing awareness campaigns would be advantageous regarding the benefits of shorter supply chains. Agreement was had by members regarding the need for culture change, and the challenges around the learning that may be required for this to happen, and suggested it perhaps is easier in rural or remote communities in comparison to significant urban areas. Ideas were offered around the larger employers such as local authorities and anchor organisations encouraging their workforce to spend locally, illustrating the benefits in wealth building regarding supporting the town centres that a local authority or another body may be trying to regenerate. Spending locally improves local economy. The benefits for the community members regarding health and wellbeing, and economy are vastly improved. CLD and community based learning is well placed to assist in the learning and understanding of these “spend locally” benefits through the approaches used by the CLD sector previously to support and develop learning in communities regarding issues such as improving health literacy, digital literacy, sustainability and climate change.

Further information regarding CLD community approaches and its impact are:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/inclusive-growth-look/>

<https://sccan.scot/>

[Home \(darkwoodcrew.co.uk\)](#)

[Practitioner Spotlight: Laura Sutherland | CLD Standards Council for Scotland](#)

<https://www.surf.scot/the-benefits-and-importance-of-town-centre-living/>

[Getting alongside communities - Corra](#)

Whilst community learning and development as a sector (CLD in Local Authorities, FE/HE, Third Sector) see the value and ethics behind CWB, the challenge may lie in private sector with regards to employers and businesses. Community development takes time as it is about building communities, relationships and connections. The CLD Standards Council feel it is important that the legislation and

guidance from Scottish Government really considers the issues regarding the private sector by in, and how to overcome those challenges.

4. Employment law is reserved to the UK Parliament. Are there other devolved areas where the law could be changed to advance the workforce pillar of Community Wealth Building?

Yes

The CLD Standard Council recognises and promotes the importance of supporting partnerships and fostering robust connections between colleges, community based learning and development programmes, and community employers. Questions were asked about how that looks at present. How community organisations and small businesses can currently assess funds to offer modern apprenticeships and opportunities for skills development to the local workforce? Is there a need for further support and funding to enable inhouse training for workforce? Is there currently assistance and guidance available regarding the benefits for small community employers to invest in their people? Is there a clear learning pathway from volunteering, to skills based community learning, to community development and social enterprise or employment?

It was agreed that a key criteria often overlooked, regarding a mechanism for supporting small community based employers to succeed and flourish, is community development and corporate volunteering, where enterprises give their employees time and help them to find volunteering opportunities, in the community in which that organisation is based. It was thought that the CWB should support and highlight the impact and benefits to furthering community well-being and personal well-being from both community development initiatives led by professional CLD practitioners as well as volunteering, upskilling and supporting community partnerships with regards to developing workforce in communities. This also aligns with Scottish Governments aims for Just Transition and Net Zero, empowering communities to resource locally, embed low-carbon lifestyles, and improve health and wellbeing.

[Just Transition: A Fairer, Greener Scotland \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

<https://www.netzeronation.scot/>

Some examples can be found here:

[Vibrant Communities | Improvement Service](#)

[Community Empowerment | Improvement Service](#)

<https://moofood.org/>

[ArtRoots.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)

[Here We Are – The Here We Are Story – past, present and future \(hereweare-uk.com\)](#)

A growing number of CLD practitioners are volunteers within our communities and play a vital role in Scotland's wellbeing economy. This could in part be attributed to the cuts in the CLD workforce in local authorities, however volunteers are often not recognised or evaluated regarding the role they carry out and the impact that has on our communities. A review of the Fair Work action plan may offer the opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of volunteers. Members also highlighted the need to reference the Volunteer Charter and the benefits that come from Employer Supported Volunteering. You can access the Fair Work action plan here: [Fair Work Action Plan: Becoming a leading Fair Work Nation by 2025 \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

5. Are there ways in which the law could be changed which are not already covered in the proposals for the Land Reform Bill to advance the land and property pillar of Community Wealth Building?

Community asset transfers have a strong reliance on community members to take on liability and ownership. Through the cost of living crisis and coming out of the pandemic it has been noted that volunteer trustees have been really struggling with the level of responsibility and burden, particularly pertaining to the feeling of pressure that the asset might close because they don't have the financial resources to keep it going in the current situation. Professional CLD practitioners support volunteers and community groups with both personal organisational skills, and underpinning knowledge, but also with support for funding applications and the range of approaches available to support the long term sustainability of community groups and asset transfers. CLD Standards Council members felt it was important to recognise that because of a passion for their community, volunteers are not necessarily coming with the skills that they need. There is a vital need regarding stakeholders understanding of the role of CLD, specifically around community development and capacity building. It should be clearly identified in the guidance, as well as the requirement for resources and funding to support that level of work by the CLD sector and enabling communities to be at the centre of these legislations.

[Land Reform in a Net Zero Nation: Consultation Paper \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

[Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

[Community Ownership | National Performance Framework](#)

Suggestions were made regarding CWB enabling the sharing of good practice from community groups across Scotland, which would enable smaller or inexperienced communities to learn from others and then more likely to set up and be financially viable and sustainable due to learning from others. It is vital that there is space within this legislation for communities to be able to make mistakes and learn and grow through the process. Production of “How To” guides, sharing of good practice, case studies offering lessons learned and what works from specific types of projects would be useful in supporting community learning and upskills of community groups. There are many assets in Scotland's communities which could be enhanced, however participants require support to develop skills, share practice and learn from others. This should be part of the CWB process. Suggestions were made to look at the evaluation document used by CLD sector “How Good Is Our Community Learning and Development” as these would offer challenge questions that groups could use to develop, embed and evaluate. Example of this evaluation document can be found here:

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/hgiocld/how-good-is-our-cld/>

6. Are there ways in which the law could be changed to advance the inclusive ownership pillar of Community Wealth Building?

Not Discussed

7. Are there ways in which the law could be changed to advance the finance pillar of Community Wealth Building?

It was agreed that the role of business is important regarding developing workforce and sustainable employment opportunities in our communities. It is estimated that Scotland spends between 12-14.5 billion pounds procuring goods and services, and members raised concerns regarding how we make sure that more smaller enterprises, community enterprises, social enterprises, third sector are supported to benefit from those contracts as well? The Federation of Small Business Scotland have research showing small businesses are more likely to spend that money locally therefore supporting them will have a greater local economic impact. Here are some reports from FSB.

[Opportunity for local government to unlock the key for business success post Covid-19 | FSB, The Federation of Small Businesses](#)

[Small Business, Big Heart: Bringing communities together | FSB, The Federation of Small Businesses](#)

8. Additional Comments

Overall, the Community Wealth Building plans being proposed by Scottish Government are welcomed by the CLD Standards Council members involved in this consultation but there are significant concerns regarding the detail of the legislation, specifically around the clarity of accountability of organisations involved and the recognition of the CLD workforce for this approach to be successful. Non-legislative measures are the need for considerable additional resources through local authorities, along with detailed and clear guidance to ensure fair and equitable access by community organisations who will be not only impacted by but have a critical role to play in the success of the CWB approach.

Promotion of concepts such as a community wealth building, and a wellbeing economy are unlikely to have an impact beyond a limited circle of those already involved in the legislation, without an effective strategy to support the development of the skills required by individuals and communities. To achieve the type of society-wide change that the community wealth building approach aims for, additional means of embedding engagement with community development into day-to-day activities of individuals and communities are required. The basis for this could be provided by a type of dialogue-based communication strategy. Engagement of this type requires to be supported by qualified practitioners who work in an enabling and educative role with communities. Therefore, the CLD Standards Council contends that Community Learning and Development (CLD) practitioners are essential to the successful implementation of the CWB approach.

Language: To ensure meaningful engagement it is important that the language used within this and other legislation is accessible and understandable to all who may be impacted by it and may want to use it. Suggestions were made that the legislation should be taken to a focus group of community members who are not involved in these consultations and legislation normally, to see how it is understood and there is no misinterpretation of words i.e: Scotland's Wellbeing Economy is not about an individual's mental health but the wellbeing of Scotland's economy.

CLD Plans: [The Requirements for Community Learning and Development \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#) place duties on local authorities to work with partners and communities to co-produce and secure the delivery of CLD in their area and publish a 3-yearly CLD Plan. In December 2020, the Scottish Government provided a [CLD Plans Guidance Note](#), setting out a number of expectations for education authorities and their partners when meeting duties in community learning and development (CLD) planning for 2021 to 2024. The CLD Standards Council call for the legislation regarding these plans to be strengthened so that more detail and accountability regarding community wealth building, community Empowerment and Community Assets transfer can be clearly seen as well as measured. Guidance is required to enable the 32 local authority CLD partnerships to not only record the same measurable data, but to offer insight into how CWB and other approaches are being developed and are impacting Scotland's communities.

We would like to make reference to some examples of CLD practice.

The "Changing Tides, Making Waves" youth conference in November 2020 was jointly organised by the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) North Sea Commission (which aims to "achieve a productive and sustainable, climate-neutral, connected and smart North Sea Region") and the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative. The conference focused on "Youth Participation Leading Positive Change Across The North Sea"; it was supported by CLD practitioners in the North East of Scotland and embodied approaches advocated in this response. The report on the conference is available here:

<https://cpmr-northsea.org/download/report-from-youth-conference-changing-tides-and-making-waves/>

Health Issues in the Community (<https://www.hiic.org.uk/>) is a course that enables participants to develop their understanding of the range of factors that affect their health and the health of their communities and to explore how these factors can be addressed. Co-ordinated and supported by the Scottish Community Development Centre, these courses are often run by Community Learning and Development practitioners and tutors across Scotland. HIIC supports people to develop the skills and knowledge to address health issues using community development approaches. It places value on supporting individuals to work collectively; on extending participatory democracy; and on social justice and equity. Developing and delivering a similar model in relation to community wealth building could provide an effective means of communicating with people who are unlikely to respond to marketing strategies, and engaging them in action and participation in decision-making. A link to further information is available here: <https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/hiic>

HM Inspectors engaged with the CLD sector between April and June 2022. They visited 23 CLD settings and engaged with learners, volunteers, practitioners, local authorities and national third sector organisations to gather evidence. The settings visited covered a wide variety of urban and rural areas across Scotland and included national and third sector organisations. The HM Inspectors gathered evidence of how high-quality community development in a CLD context is helping to secure better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities. The findings focus on the key themes of:

- Community response
- Volunteering
- Partnership working
- Digital access and workforce development
- Planning for the future and next steps

[Responsive, supportive and resilient communities: A review of community development during the pandemic \(education.gov.scot\)](#)