



CLD Standards Council Scotland

Submitted Response
to the
Scottish Government Consultation

Review of the National Outcomes

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Introduction

The CLD Standards Council Scotland is the professional body for people who work or volunteer in community learning and development (CLD) 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. For further information visit our website <https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/>

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 our members from across the CLD sector in Scotland.

This response was compiled following consultation with members of the CLD Standards Council, partner organisations and stakeholders. We attended online consultations hosted by Learning for Sustainability, Volunteer Scotland and by Scottish Government, as well as having dialogue with individual members and the CLD Standards Council staff team.

Response from the CLD Standards Council to Scottish Governments Review of National Outcomes Consultation

As field of professional practice, CLD plays a critical role in the achievement of all the current eleven National Outcomes. It supports the learning, growth, empowerment of individuals and communities, as well as the delivery of other services. From community development supporting climate action change, sustainability and protecting our environment, as well as community wealth building, developing neighborhoods and community support groups, to working with young people and adults regarding education, empowerment and citizenship, improving literacy, numeracy and meta skills within Scotland's communities. All of these effect and impact Scotland's economy, culture, health and wellbeing.

CLD enables people across Scotland to identify their own individual and collective goals, to take action to bring about change and through this to achieve these goals. Using a range of formal and informal methods of learning and social development, CLD programmes and activities are developed in dialogue with communities and participants, working particularly with those excluded from participation in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. Through working in these ways, CLD extends the reach of democracy and widens its scope.

The CLD sector are often found at the heart of communities, supporting growth, empowerment and development for groups, families and individuals. CLD workers provide essential support for learning in both formal and informal settings and we believe it is critical that the national outcomes are developed to recognise and value this. It is critical that the national outcomes and indicators acknowledge that education does not take place only in schools; nor do children and young people learn in schools in isolation from the educational opportunities that happen elsewhere, involving them, their families and the communities they are part of. Recognition of this in the national outcomes should be an essential starting point for the development of educational outcomes and indicators, along with underpinning knowledge that CLD practitioners make a major contribution.

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 Community Learning and Development in their area and publish a 3-yearly plan, which will give you an in depth overview of the broad range of work CLD supports across Scotland and is connected to the national outcomes.

[Community Learning and Development Planning 2021 – 2024 | Resources | Education Scotland](#)

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 national outcomes will continue to be depleted and dispersed. A link to the latest report on CLD Workforce in Scotland is available here: <https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/about-cld/working-with-scotlands-communities-2018/>

A growing number of CLD practitioners are volunteers within our communities and they 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 \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

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>

His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) range of inspection reports consistently rate and recognise the powerful impact CLD delivers through a range of agencies mainly across the public and third sector, within Adult Learning, Community Development and Youth Work. These reports evidence the effect of the work delivered and supported by CLD workers across Scotland, which play a critical role regarding the achievement of the national outcomes for the benefit of Scotland's economy and its communities. You can access further information on the HMIE reports: [Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#). HM Inspectors carried out a thematic review in 2022 of community development practice in response to COVID-19 and visited CLD settings, from

national, to local and third sector organisations. A published report '[Responsive, supportive and resilient communities: A review of community development during the pandemic](#)'. This detailed report explicitly outlines that central to local decision-making is meaningful engagement and joint working with learners and communities. It emphasises how the CLD partnerships across Scotland are not only knowing and understanding the needs of Scotland's learners and communities, but supporting the required learning and development through strong community development practice.

The Scottish Government's recent consultation on developmental plans regarding Community Wealth Building (CWB) as an approach to delivering inclusive growth across Scotland, spotlighted 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"*

While it is recognised that many other public and voluntary sector staff contribute to the type of engagement required for this CWB approach, and the success of this has significant impact on the national outcomes such as Environment, Communities, Economy, Fair Work and Business, and Poverty, we believe CLD practitioners both paid and voluntary, are best placed in terms of their skills and relationships with communities to co-ordinate activities, support the CWB approach 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.

Language is empowering but can also cause barriers. These national outcomes should be read and understood by anyone living and working in Scotland, they should be able to recognise themselves and their lives within them, and feel a sense of ownership and relevance at all levels, ages and stages of their lives. The CLD Standards Council recognises and values the inclusion of positive language in the purpose and values such as flourish, kindness, dignity and compassion. We believe the simple and clear approach offered to each outcome will assist in the manifestation and implementation of the outputs needed to achieve these outcomes, however we would suggest that it would be beneficial to have guidance and case studies which offer more meaningful evidence regarding how these outcomes could be achieved, as well as how the national outcomes could be used by organisations when planning and evaluation projects and programmes. We also see benefit in further guidance regarding measurement and targets that link to these outcomes. The CLD Standards Council would be happy to collaborate and contribute to this.

Conclusion

The CLD Standards Council works closely and in alignment with the current national outcomes and overall find them extremely beneficial particularly in regards to partnership working and supporting its members with professional development needs that impact the CLD sector. The CLD sector clearly runs through and influences almost all of the national outcomes, especially Communities, Economy, Education and Poverty. As they stand we feel they offer a fair, positive and balanced representation of the Scotland we want to work and live in, however there is some ambiguity around how much people across Scotland are aware of them, have a sense of ownership of them as well as recognition of their benefits and the legislation that supports them.

Whilst it is clear that the CLD sector offers the learning and development opportunities required to ensure communities and individuals across Scotland are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe, to support tackling poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally, and working collaboratively to make Scotland's National Outcomes a reality, the CLD sector and its workforce are not recognised or acknowledged for this critical and often hidden role. The CLD sector faces continued challenges regarding its workforce, professional pathways and recruitment and needs further recognition and funding to ensure it is able to continue with the valuable work it delivers ensuring Scotland's national outcomes are successful and understood by the learners and communities it works alongside.

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 reviewed national outcomes and other legislation mentioned previously, will continue to be cut, depleted and dispersed.