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## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

12 November 2019

### Audit and Scrutiny

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Audit Scotland: Principles for Community Empowerment</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To inform the Audit and Scrutiny Committee about the new Audit Scotland approach to Community Empowerment
<b>Recommendation:</b>	That the Audit and Scrutiny Committee notes the new Audit Scotland approach to Community Empowerment.

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#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Community empowerment is relevant to all parts of the public sector and is an area of increasing importance across sectors given developing legislation and policies.
- 1.2 The document was prepared by Audit Scotland, working with a Community Empowerment Advisory Group. The group included experts in the field of community empowerment and representatives from Scottish public bodies and scrutiny bodies. Two local authorities were invited on to the group. North Ayrshire Council was represented on the group by the Interim Executive Director of Communities.
- 1.3 The group was set up under the direction of the Strategic Scrutiny Group which brings together Scotland's main public-sector scrutiny bodies.
- 1.4 The Principles for Community Empowerment document aims to raise awareness of community empowerment and promote a shared understanding across scrutiny bodies, supporting high-quality scrutiny of community empowerment. It may be used as a tool by public bodies as they develop their own approaches to community empowerment, reflecting the particular challenges and environment each body faces.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Scottish Government defines community empowerment as: 'a process where people work together to make change happen in their communities by having more power and influence over what matters to them.' Communities may be geographically located, or they may share common interests, concerns or identities.
- 2.2 Community empowerment processes support people to do things for themselves and enable people to take control over the decisions and factors that affect their lives and communities.

#### Effective community empowerment processes:

- Rebalance power and influence between government and agencies and communities and citizens;
- Are underpinned by changes in the feelings and confidence of those being empowered;
- Help to build trust between communities and public bodies providing their everyday services, and their partners, and increase the value they place on the relationship; and
- Require active understanding and commitment from a wide number of stakeholders to achieve it.

- 2.3 Community empowerment is underpinned by public service reform and legislation. In 2011, the Christie Commission on the future delivery of public services identified four principles for public services reform. One of the principles is that public service reforms must aim to empower individuals and communities receiving public services by involving them in the design and delivery of the services they use.
- 2.4 In 2014, the Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy published its report. It identified seven principles for stronger democracy in Scotland.
- 2.5 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 provides supportive legislation which places duties on public bodies and provides rights for those being engaged and empowered.
- 2.6 In June 2018, the Scottish Government launched its refreshed National Performance Framework (NPF) jointly with COSLA with a new outcome: 'We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.' More empowered communities will also help achieve the other outcomes set out in the NPF.
- 2.7 The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 aims to further empower island communities.
- 2.8 During 2018/19, the Scottish Government and COSLA began reviewing local governance to look at how local decisions are made and how local democracy is working (Democracy Matters). Reports were published in May 2019 following the initial consultation phase with an outline of the next steps.
- 2.9 The report highlights that community empowerment activities are wide ranging and include (not exclusively) the following:
- *Community led and based organisations* (for example, North Ayrshire has 26 Community Associations who operate our community centres);
  - *Community activism* (for example, #SaveOurFerry – the Herald Society Awards 2017 Campaign of the Year)
  - *Participation in local decision-making structures* (for example, North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership's approach to Locality Planning, where community representatives, including community councils, have parity of esteem with Elected

Members).

- *Land or island buy-out* (for example, Beith Community Development Trust's purchase of Geilsland).
- *Asset transfer* (for example, Fullarton Community Association's asset transfer of land for their new community hub).
- *Participation requests* (for example, Friends of Stevenston request to be included in future development of the Ardeer Peninsula through the Ayrshire Growth Deal.)
- *People deciding how local money is spent* (Participatory Budgeting) (for example, 152 small projects have been funded to date in North Ayrshire and more than £750,000 has been committed to mainstream PB).
- *Local communities working with public bodies to improve outcomes in their local area through community planning processes* (North Ayrshire's Locality Partnerships have identified and acted on local priorities, with a view to reducing inequalities and these are included within the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan for North Ayrshire).
- *Engaging with local communities:* The National Standards for Community Engagement define community engagement as:

'A purposeful process which develops a working relationship between communities, community organisations and public and private bodies to help them to identify and act on community needs and ambitions. It involves respectful dialogue between everyone involved, aimed at improving understanding between them and taking joint action to achieve positive change.'

North Ayrshire is recognised as sector leading in this regard, winning the 2015 UK award by the Consultation Institute for Skills Development

## 2.10 The benefits of community empowerment include:

- Better, more responsive and efficient services;
- Better outcomes for communities, including improving well-being, self-confidence and self-esteem;
- A positive impact on the local economy, including developing co-operatives and delivering local services;
- Greater satisfaction with quality of life in a local neighbourhood;
- Re-energised local democratic processes, systems and structures;
- Greater accountability of public bodies and elected members; and
- Increased trust and confidence between communities and public bodies.

## 2.11 As a result of the work of Audit Scotland and the advisory group, the following principles have been developed and agreed to raise awareness and develop a renewed shared understanding of community empowerment:

### 2.11.1 Principle 1: Community control

Support communities to successfully take more control over decisions and assets

Public bodies support communities to successfully take greater control over decisions

and assets. Effective processes are in place and public bodies support a fair and sustainable approach.

#### 2.11.2 Principle 2: Public sector leadership

Strong and clear leadership on community empowerment sets the tone and culture of the organisation

Leaders provide a clear and consistent message, set clear objectives and priorities, encourage ideas and innovation, community leadership and support communities to develop sustainable approaches.

#### 2.11.3 Principle 3: Effective relationships

Build effective working relationships between public bodies, local communities and local partners

There is a healthy working relationship between communities, public bodies and local partners, marked by reciprocal trust, openness and transparency.

#### 2.11.4 Principle 4: Improving outcomes

Evaluate whether outcomes for local communities are improving and inequalities are being reduced

Public bodies are continuously improving their approach to community empowerment, evaluating local outcomes and experiences and learning from others. This includes evaluating the impact on local inequalities and understanding and learning from the experiences of seldom heard groups in communities.

#### 2.11.5 Principle 5: Accountability

Be accountable and transparent

Public bodies are clear and open about their approach to community empowerment and provide regular information to communities that is understandable, jargon-free and accessible. Public bodies are responsive to local communities when reaching decisions with a clear rationale for making difficult decisions and provide regular feedback.

2.12 Good practice and case studies are provided to illustrate how these principles could and should work in practice.

### **3. Proposals**

3.1 That the Audit and Scrutiny Committee notes the new Audit Scotland approach to Community Empowerment.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

4.1 The report contains no direct financial implications.

## **Human Resources**

4.2 The report contains no direct HR implications.

## **Legal**

4.3 The report contains no direct legal implications.

## **Equality/Socio-economic**

4.4 The report underlines and strengthens the principle of ensuring all voices are heard and that all individuals and groups in communities benefit from support from public bodies to fulfil their aspirations.

## **Environmental and Sustainability**

4.5 Strengthening individual and community social capital ensures more resilient and sustainable communities.

## **Key Priorities**

4.6 The following key priorities of the Council are supported by this report:

- Active and strong communities
- Children and young people experience the best start in life
- Inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy
- People enjoy good lifelong health and well-being
- People and communities are safe
- Vibrant, welcoming and attractive places.

## **Community Wealth Building**

4.7 The following Community Wealth Building principles are supported:

- Advancing community enterprises;
- Advancing local ownership of underused land and buildings.

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 Audit Scotland's advisory group consulted with a wide range of partners as part of their work.

Insert Director's name Audrey Sutton  
Executive Director (Communities)

For further information please contact **Audrey Sutton, Executive Director (Interim)**, on **01294 324414**.

## **Background Papers**

# Principles for community empowerment



Prepared on behalf of the Strategic Scrutiny Group  
July 2019

ACCOUNTS COMMISSION 

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 Inspectorate of  
Prosecution in  
Scotland

 improving policing  
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# Introduction

## from the Strategic Scrutiny Group

Community empowerment is relevant to all parts of the public sector and is an area of increasing importance given developing legislation and policies. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires community planning partners to secure the participation of community bodies in community planning, in particular those that represent the interests of people who experience inequalities of outcome from socio-economic disadvantage.

It is important that public service providers and scrutiny bodies have a shared understanding of what we mean by community empowerment when considering what it means for our work. The *Principles for community empowerment* document aims to raise awareness of community empowerment and promote such a shared understanding across scrutiny bodies to support high-quality scrutiny of community empowerment.

Although this document was primarily developed for scrutiny bodies it will also benefit public bodies and their partners to be aware of the expectations of scrutiny bodies as encapsulated in a shared framework of what good community empowerment looks like. It is not intended to be guidance or a checklist. It may be used as a tool by public bodies as they develop their own approaches to community empowerment reflecting the particular challenges and environment each body faces.

Community empowerment sits within an increasingly complex, changing and uncertain environment which places different demands and expectations on public bodies at the same time

The document was prepared by Audit Scotland, working with a Community Empowerment Advisory Group (CEAG) referred to in the [Appendix \(page 24\)](#).

The group includes experts in the field of community empowerment and representatives from Scottish public bodies and scrutiny bodies. The CEAG was set up under the direction of the Strategic Scrutiny Group (SSG), which brings together Scotland’s main public-sector scrutiny bodies.

as funding pressures continue. The level of resources provided by public bodies to support local communities varies and this is more challenging in areas with high levels of deprivation. This will require public bodies to collaborate with partners, with the third sector and with communities, to think differently about how they deliver and fund services. New ways of working bring risks. Public bodies will need to take measured and proportionate risks when implementing new approaches, recognising that not all will be successful. It is important that as new approaches are tested, public bodies use the learning from their own experience and that of others to develop and improve community empowerment processes. Not taking action is not a solution – there are also risks in public bodies not working effectively with communities and citizens not feeling empowered.

Community empowerment is relevant to all departments, roles and levels within public bodies. It should not be seen as only relevant to staff who work directly with communities. All public bodies should be involving citizens more in decisions about public services. It needs clear leadership to embed this approach across organisations and to empower staff to carry out the activities and behaviours required to do this. It will mean more co-production of services, which will require trust between communities and public bodies and time to build up relationships.

Community empowerment should not be considered as an add on or separate to other work, but part of a new way of working. It can help public bodies to manage the pressures they are facing by supporting communities and working with community groups to support each other in meeting the needs of communities. Ultimately, community empowerment should reduce inequalities and improve the wellbeing of communities, particularly those suffering from persistent inequality. This document provides:

- an overview of what we mean by community empowerment
- summarises the benefits for communities and public bodies of doing community empowerment well and some of the risks associated with it
- outlines principles to promote a shared understanding across scrutiny bodies and to help public bodies make the most of the opportunities
- highlights some good practice examples of what is already happening across Scotland.

Community empowerment is a priority area for the SSG. The SSG endorses the Principles for community empowerment as a common framework under which to carry out scrutiny work. The SSG also encourages public bodies to use this document as a tool to support community empowerment approaches.



Graham Sharp

Chair of the Strategic Scrutiny Group and Chair of the Accounts Commission

Links

- PDF download
- Web link
- Internal navigation



# Background

Community empowerment is about supporting people to take more control over their lives

## Definition of community empowerment

There is no one standard definition of community empowerment:

The [World Health Organisation](#)  describes community empowerment as:

‘the process of enabling communities to increase control over their lives.’

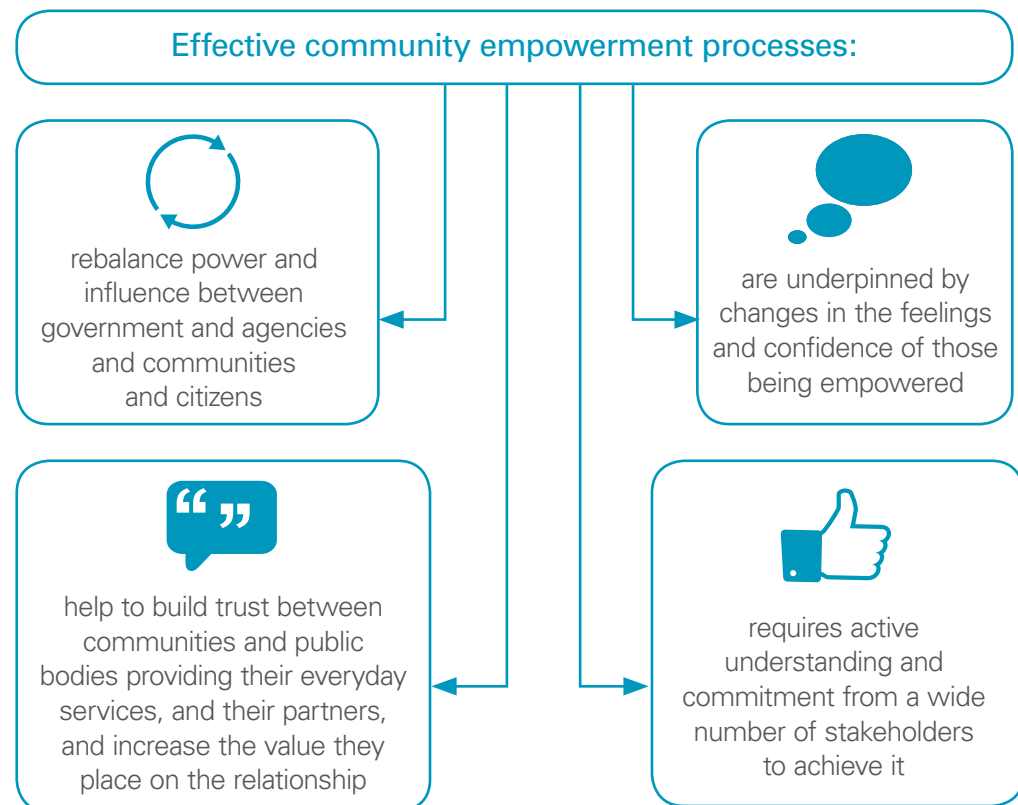
Similarly, the [Scottish Government](#)  defines community empowerment as:

‘a process where people work together to make change happen in their communities by having more power and influence over what matters to them.’

Communities may be geographically located, or they may share common interests, concerns or identities.

## What is community empowerment?

Community empowerment processes support people to do things for themselves and enable people to take control over the decisions and factors that affect their lives and communities.



# Community empowerment is a priority in Scotland

## Implementing community empowerment

Empowering communities is a national priority for the Scottish Government. It is an important part of public service reform, focusing attention on reducing disadvantage and inequality and improving outcomes for communities. Community empowerment is central to a human rights based approach to policy and decision-making. The human rights PANEL principles (Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination and Equality, Empowerment and Legality) mean that:

- people should be involved in decisions that affect their rights and be fully supported to take part in developing policy and practices which affect their lives
- prioritising those people who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights.

Community empowerment is a gradual process which involves continual learning and the constant building of a community's capacity to articulate and address their priorities. It also involves communities having greater influence and input to decision-making. Public bodies and communities are likely to be at different stages as they develop their understanding and gain confidence in working together. Public bodies need to invest in capacity building appropriate to their local communities, particularly in the poorest communities, to successfully address inequalities.

In some communities, people may already be driving change and public bodies have a role in supporting and facilitating this. Other communities will need to be supported to participate more fully. Public bodies should be finding ways to empower communities, for example by sharing and shifting power in decision-making and supporting local communities to make a difference. It is important that children and young people also have a say in services that affect them.

- If people are driving the activity, scrutiny bodies need to consider how public bodies help catalyse the activity, how they respond to it and support it. For example, a local community group developing a befriending project to link socially isolated people back into the community. They may want to access some training that the council could provide.
- If public bodies are driving the activity, scrutiny bodies need to consider how effective it is and what difference it is making to service delivery and outcomes for local communities. Leadership, organisational culture and ways of working are key to supporting staff to deliver change and work effectively with their communities.

# Community empowerment is underpinned by public service reform and legislation

## Implementing community empowerment



### The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

The Act is based on the principles of subsidiarity (that social and political decisions are taken at as local a level as possible), community empowerment and improving outcomes. Underpinning all these provisions is the intent to focus attention on reducing disadvantage and inequality.

The aims of the legislation are to:

- empower community bodies through ownership of land and buildings and through strengthening their voices in the decisions that matter to them
- support an increase in the pace and scale of public sector reform by cementing the focus on achieving outcomes and improving the process of community planning.

Three major elements of the Act have implications for audit and scrutiny:

- **Part 2** is about strengthening community planning so communities have more of a say in how public services are to be planned and provided.
- **Part 3** enables communities to identify needs and issues and request action to be taken by public bodies on these. These are known as participation requests.
- **Parts 4 and 5** extend the community right to buy or otherwise have greater control over assets.

# Community empowerment activities are wide ranging

## Community led and based organisations

Set up by individuals or community groups. Those with a well-established presence in a community, stable resources and capacity for supporting new developments and activities are often known as community anchors. They can have different purposes, but generally provide support, opportunities and develop positive cultures for people to feel valued and able to participate, influence and make local decisions. They are often a community development trust or a community-controlled housing association ([Case study 6, page 22](#)). For example, Ardenglen Housing Association is a community controlled housing association which owns almost 1,000 homes in the east of Castlemilk in Glasgow. Over the past 20 years, it has channelled almost £50 million of public money into transforming the housing, local environment and living conditions of their community in Castlemilk.


## Community activism

Individuals or community groups have self-organised to tackle a local issue, often known as community activism. Here, members of a community voluntarily work together, in a planned way, to bring about a clearly identified and agreed change which contributes to an improvement in quality of life.


## Participation in local decision-making structures

People have a voice on local decision-making structures and are helping to improve the lives of others in their community through new or improved services. This could be delivered by individuals and/or co-produced with local organisations. There are also routes through community councils and local authorities for participating in decisions about local issues.


## Land or island buy-out

Individuals or community groups have self-organised to buy land or an entire island. The right to buy land is extended under **Part 4 of [the Act](#)** .

## Asset transfer



Community bodies have bought, lease, manage or use land and buildings belonging to the public sector. This is known as asset transfer and is covered under **Part 5 of [the Act](#)** . To do this, the community must set out what it plans to do with the asset and how it will improve economic development, regeneration, health, social or environmental wellbeing, or reduce inequalities.

## Participation request


A community body can request to take part in a process with a public body where it believes it could help improve an outcome. This is known as a participation request and is covered under **Part 3 of [the Act](#)** . An individual community body requests a discussion with public authorities on their terms to have a say about local issues and services. It can also involve getting better access to a decision-making process, such as a board, working group or meeting, and making it more transparent to the wider community.

Continued on page 8

## People deciding how local money is spent

This is known as participatory budgeting (PB). The Scottish Government is working with PB Scotland to develop a [PB charter](#) . This sets out principles and good practice, including public deliberation before voting. People should have the opportunity to consider different evidence, perspectives and arguments before voting. Public bodies need to build capacity within local communities to get inclusive participation and sustainable shared benefits from PB processes. The Scottish Government and COSLA have agreed a joint [framework](#)  to support councils to develop PB as a mainstream approach for people to participate in local decision-making. This aims to move beyond small grants to more deliberative dialogue that enables communities to influence and agree local priorities and create meaningful outcomes.


## Local communities working with public bodies to improve outcomes in their local area through community planning processes

Under **Part 2 of the Act** , local authorities are required to work with their community planning partners, engaging with community bodies, to improve local outcomes. Joint efforts and resources should be targeted on those areas of greatest need to reduce inequalities. Each Community Planning Partnership must prepare and publish a local outcomes improvement plan (LOIP). The plan should set out priority areas for improving outcomes, the improvements it aims to achieve and the timescales. It should also link with outcomes set out in the National Performance Framework.

## Engaging with local communities

The [National Standards for Community Engagement](#)  define community engagement as:

‘a purposeful process which develops a working relationship between communities, community organisations and public and private bodies to help them to identify and act on community needs and ambitions. It involves respectful dialogue between everyone involved, aimed at improving understanding between them and taking joint action to achieve positive change.’

The standards set out good practice for public bodies, the third sector and others, to engage with communities. They are designed to help public bodies plan how to involve communities in shaping local plans and services, identify who should be involved, and make sure that the community engagement process is fair and effective. Public bodies will engage in different ways, but should consult people in a way that demonstrates genuine dialogue and enables communities to influence decisions. Public bodies can be legally challenged if they do not follow consultation law, known as the [Gunning principles](#) . These rules for public consultation were proposed in 1985 by Stephen Sedley QC, and accepted by the Judge in the *Gunning v London Borough of Brent* court case relating to a school closure consultation. The Scottish Government is developing guidance for integrated authorities on consulting with communities on major service change.

Public bodies should also be finding ways of involving communities more in the design and delivery of services. In a co-production approach, public bodies and communities work together to co-define the issues, co-design the best responses and co-deliver using all the available public body and community resources and assets. This represents a greater shift of power to local decision-making.

# The importance of getting community empowerment right



**All public bodies should be involving citizens more in decisions about public services to improve outcomes for communities and reduce inequalities.**

There are many benefits to both the organisation and the community:

- + If individuals and communities are able to express the issues which matter to them, it can help to direct investment in public services to where it is most needed. This includes the character of the area and the direction of the local economy.
- + It harnesses the strengths people from all communities can bring.
- + It increases confidence and skills among people.
- + It mobilises individuals to make improvements to their own lives and help others.

It can lead to:

- + better, more responsive and efficient services
- + better outcomes for communities, including improving well-being, self-confidence and self-esteem
- + a positive impact on the local economy, including developing co-operatives and delivering local services
- + greater satisfaction with quality of life in a local neighbourhood
- + re-energised local democratic processes, systems and structures
- + greater accountability of public bodies and elected members
- + increased trust and confidence between communities and public bodies.



**There are risks in implementing new approaches, but there are also risks associated with public bodies not working effectively with communities and citizens not feeling empowered.**

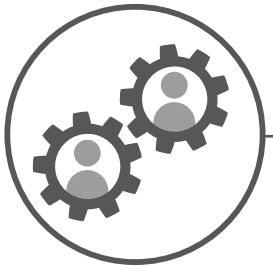
This can happen when:

- public bodies provide little opportunity for communities to influence or take control of decision-making processes
- it is not recognised that communities are varied, diverse and rarely speak with one voice. Community empowerment processes need to include a cross-section of the community, not just the most vocal, articulated or resourced
- communities that are under resourced, do not have the capabilities or are not supported to take part in community empowerment processes. This can increase inequalities between different community groups. Public bodies need to invest in capacity building with communities, particularly in those who are seldom heard or who are disengaged with public services
- there are poor relationships and a lack of trust between communities and the public sector. This can affect the willingness and capacity to share power and work together towards a shared goal
- continued financial pressures and austerity measures adversely affect how community empowerment is implemented by public bodies
- too narrow an approach is taken to tackling the underlying causes of poverty and the impact on reducing inequalities is limited. It requires the implementation of broad social, political and economic policies and interventions
- leadership does not clearly demonstrate the attitudes and behaviours to embed cultural change and make it relevant to the whole organisation.





# Principles for community empowerment



Principles for community empowerment





# Principle 1: Community control

Support communities to successfully take more control over decisions and assets



**Good practice**  
Public bodies support communities to successfully take greater control over decisions and assets. Effective processes are in place and public bodies support a fair and sustainable approach.

## What does this involve?

- ✔ Enabling communities to meaningfully take part in key decision-making processes, such as setting priorities, making budget choices and designing services.
- ✔ Supporting communities to take a stepped approach to taking greater control, for example delivering services or taking on management, lease or ownership of public assets.
- ✔ Putting in place effective governance processes as greater control is shifted to communities to promote a strong and sustainable approach.
- ✔ Being clear about the level of influence communities have over decisions and managing expectations where there are genuine constraints.
- ✔ Building capacity among communities, particularly seldom heard groups, or those who feel they do not have a say, so they can fully participate and are supported to do so. For example, through community and learning development approaches in councils.
- ✔ Recognising that communities are varied, diverse and rarely speak with one voice. Community empowerment processes should include a cross-section of the community, not just the most vocal, articulated or resourced.
- ✔ Providing a range of support to communities to promote a sustainable approach. This includes financial support, help with governance arrangements, professional advice and judgement.





# Principle 2: Public sector leadership

Strong and clear leadership on community empowerment sets the tone and culture of the organisation



**Good practice**  
Leaders provide a clear and consistent message, set clear objectives and priorities, encourage ideas and innovation, community leadership and support communities to develop sustainable approaches.

## What does this involve?

- ✓ Leaders understanding and being committed to community empowerment, understanding the types of decisions at corporate and service level that need community empowerment at the heart of them.
- ✓ Promoting a culture across the whole organisation of trust, equality and collaborative relationships with local communities and partners.
- ✓ Clearly and consistently embedding community empowerment in organisational and partnership objectives and strategies.
- ✓ Linking related strategies on poverty and disadvantage, being clear about how community empowerment can help achieve wider objectives and support a preventative approach.
- ✓ Involving local communities, including seldom heard groups, in plans and decision-making.
- ✓ Supporting appropriate capacity and resource at staff level to facilitate community empowerment processes. Encouraging new ideas and innovative approaches, valuing the benefits of new ways of working. Recognising there will be risks in implementing new approaches, but being measured and learning from unsuccessful approaches.
- ✓ Investing appropriate resources (financial and non-financial) to build community capacity and encourage community leadership, particularly among seldom heard groups, to empower communities in a sustainable way.
- ✓ Understanding where skilled individuals are in the organisation and deploying them effectively to help support and embed community empowerment across the organisation. Empowering all staff to carry out the expected roles and behaviours.

## Leadership

Traits of effective collaborative leaders  
(Exhibit 8, page 25)

Health and social care integration: update on progress

Audit Scotland  
November 2018





## Principle 3: Effective relationships

Build effective working relationships between public bodies, local communities and local partners



### Good practice

There is a healthy working relationship between communities, public bodies and local partners, marked by reciprocal trust, openness and transparency.

#### What does this involve?

- ✔ Communicating in an open and accessible way. Avoiding jargon and minimising bureaucracy.
- ✔ Recognising and harnessing the strengths and assets in all parts of communities, including those who have been traditionally less involved. This includes focusing on the positive aspects of individuals and communities, valuing their capacity, skills, knowledge and connections.
- ✔ Going at the pace of the community. Recognising it can take time and investment in financial, practical and emotional support for members of the community who are engaging, particularly the most vulnerable.
- ✔ Working effectively with community planning partners, the third sector, social sector and volunteer partners to empower communities with a clear focus on preventative work. Many of these organisations are deeply embedded in the community, have strong relationships and understanding of communities, and staff and volunteers with the right skills.
- ✔ Understanding and managing expectations of different parts of communities and managing conflict effectively. Seeking out consensus, but understanding that consensus may not always be achieved.
- ✔ Appreciating that building relationships and trusts between communities and public bodies takes time. Being open and honest about experiences and using this learning to continually improve community empowerment approaches.



# Principle 4: Improving outcomes

Evaluate whether outcomes for local communities are improving and inequalities are being reduced



## Good practice

Public bodies are continuously improving their approach to community empowerment, evaluating local outcomes and experiences and learning from others. This includes evaluating the impact on local inequalities and understanding and learning from the experiences of seldom heard groups in communities.

### What does this involve?

- ✓ Evaluating the impact of community empowerment from the perspective of communities, understanding their experience of the process and whether they feel empowered.
- ✓ Evaluating local outcomes and whether these have improved, understanding how community empowerment has contributed to these, and how it is helping to deliver national outcomes.
- ✓ Evaluating the impact on inequalities in local communities and understanding and learning from the experiences of seldom heard groups.
- ✓ Evaluating in a proportionate and accessible way so as to encourage participation by individuals or community groups with limited resources and capacity.
- ✓ Sharing experiences of community empowerment processes and outcomes across the organisation and with other public bodies, promoting a greater understanding of what works well and the persisting challenges.
- ✓ Drawing on these learning experiences to continuously improve the organisation’s approach to community empowerment.



# Principle 5: Accountability

Be accountable and transparent



**Good practice**  
Public bodies are clear and open about their approach to community empowerment and provide regular information to communities that is understandable, jargon-free and accessible. Public bodies are responsive to local communities when reaching decisions with a clear rationale for making difficult decisions and provide regular feedback.

## What does this involve?

- ✔ Communicating in a way that is understandable, jargon-free and accessible.
- ✔ Being clear and open about community empowerment approaches. This includes providing information about how communities can get involved, key contacts within the public body and clearly setting out processes.
- ✔ Providing accessible information about the organisation’s strategic direction and priorities, local outcomes and improvement plans and how these aim to improve outcomes for communities.
- ✔ Engaging regularly with communities about what matters to them and being honest and realistic about what support can be provided and timescales to achieve shared goals.
- ✔ Being open about budgets for different services, including proposed budget reductions. Setting out options and opportunities for communities to get involved in having their say about what happens to them or taking more responsibility in delivering them.
- ✔ Putting in place appropriate governance arrangements for effective scrutiny and decision-making about community empowerment, without being overly bureaucratic or risk averse.
- ✔ Clearly demonstrating how decisions have been made, how community views were considered and providing regular feedback.
- ✔ Providing regular feedback on community empowerment developments and the outcome of processes such as participation requests, community asset transfer, participatory budgeting.

# Case studies

 Case study 1. Citizens’ jury ([page 17](#))

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 Case study 2. Community partnership approach to tackling crime ([page 18](#))

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 Case study 3. Participatory budgeting ([page 19](#))

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 Case study 4. Place-based working ([page 20](#))

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 Case study 5. Partnership approach to tackling homelessness ([page 21](#))

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 Case study 6. Community Anchor ([page 22](#))

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# Case study 1: Citizens’ jury

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What is it?

🔍
What were the outcomes and the learning?

A citizens’ jury brings members of the public together to help make important and difficult decisions.

In the autumn of 2018, a diverse group of Scottish citizens considered the question: ‘What should shared decision-making look like and what needs to be done for this to happen?’. The participants were helped by experienced facilitators to make sure everyone had a fair say and that the task was achieved.




## Who’s involved?

Twenty-four citizens, expert commentators, facilitators, Scottish Health Council, Scottish Government.

>>
What did they do?

The citizens’ jury gathered over three days to share ideas, opinions and experiences and question expert commentators before attempting to reach a consensus and list of recommendations.




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Case Studies

### Our Voice Citizens’ Jury


Sometimes it is useful to know how many people say “yes” or “no” to a proposal. Other issues are more complicated and a simple “yes or no” question in a survey doesn’t do justice to the many factors involved. A citizens’ jury is one way to address this.


Many institutions across the world have started to recognise the importance of involving members of the public in helping make important and difficult decisions. A *citizens’ jury* brings together a diverse group of between 12 and 25 members of the public, who are usually randomly chosen. They work through an issue, share ideas and eventually come up with a set of recommendations. The participants are helped by experienced facilitators who help make sure everyone has a fair say and that the task is achieved.



The citizens’ jury presented 13 recommendations to the Chief Medical Officer and other key stakeholders in health and social care, who discussed the implications of the recommendations.

The [Our Voice Citizens’ Jury on Shared Decision-making: Final report](#)  documents the process followed and lists the recommendations in the participants’ own words. The recommendations included: informing and educating patients on their right to ask questions; training for all health and social care staff on shared decision-making; and providing opportunity for advocates to be present in discussions between patients and medical professionals.

The Scottish Government committed to consider each of the jury’s recommendations and reply to them all, either with a commitment to action or an explanation as to why that recommendation could not be taken forward. The [Scottish Government’s response](#)  includes information on work towards the recommendations that is already under way and plans for new work to help address any gaps.

There is a video on the citizens’ jury website with participants talking about their experiences.

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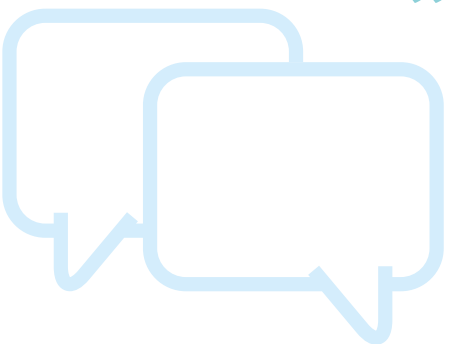
In my 35 years in the NHS this is the first meeting I have attended when it was the public presenting their views and expertise to the professionals present. It is now our duty to give these our respectful consideration.

Chair of the oversight panel for the jury – Erica Reid, Associate Nursing Director, NHS Borders

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[Read Erica’s blog](#)


[Visit Our Voice Citizens’ Jury webpage](#)







# Case study 2: Community partnership approach to tackling crime

## What is it?

In 2013/14, the initial ‘Operation Modulus’ programme involved community planning partners working together with groups of young people to tackle anti-social behaviour and gang crime in the Gorbals area of Glasgow.

## Who’s involved?

City Building, Community Safety Glasgow, Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, Glasgow Life, Jobs and Business Glasgow, One Glasgow, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, housing associations.

## What did they do?

Community planning partners and gang members co-produced a four-week programme of voluntary courses responding to the interests of the young people. Mentors worked intensively with the young people involved, during and after the programme.

## What were the outcomes and the learning?

Better outcomes for the participants and the wider community, including: an 80 per cent reduction in crime by the gang members; gang members gaining trades qualifications and employment; and a significant reduction in complaints about the gang from the community.

Four elements identified as success factors were:

- leadership to instigate the partnership, and a collaborative leadership style to enable the partners to work successfully together
- sustained partnership working
- co-producing the programme with young people and treating the young people as assets
- a focus on outcomes.

The approach and learning has now been implemented in two more areas of Glasgow: Castlefern and Govan. A [report](#) draws further conclusions from this work on public service reform, co-production, the role of anchor organisations, and sustaining outcomes.

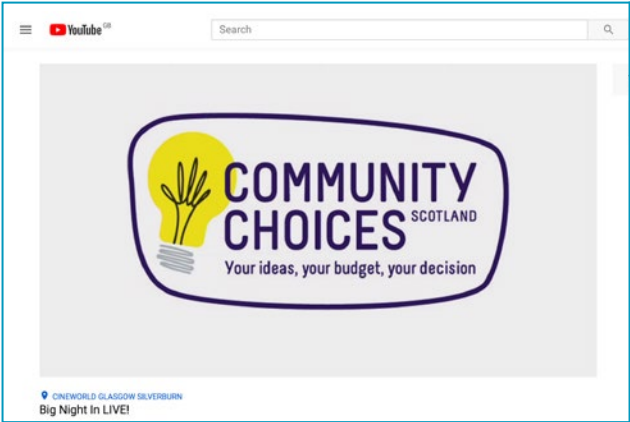
In 2016, the [Govan Voice community magazine](#) provided a summary of the project, including photos and quotes from participants (pages 16-17).

Richard Brunner, Research Associate, What Works Scotland, wrote a [blog](#) explaining why the report on the Gorbals programme was presented as a case study. He describes how telling the story of the actual practices reveals the ‘backstage’ of implementing the Christie principles and provides transferrable lessons.





## Case study 3: Participatory budgeting

<div> ? What is it? </div>	<div> 🔍 What were the outcomes and the learning? </div>
<div> <p>During 2018, Glasgow City Council developed approaches to support different communities across Glasgow to get involved in deciding how some of the council’s budget is spent. This builds on participatory budget work since 2014.</p> </div>	<div> <p>Glasgow’s PB journey is detailed in a <a href="#">report</a> on the PB Scotland website. It summarises learning from the 2018 work as follows:</p> <div> <div> “ </div> <div> <p>Feedback from meetings... has helped GCC refine plans and ensure that as few barriers as possible remain.</p> <p>Issues raised have included: how panels will represent full council wards and their liability for decisions made; ensuring language is inclusive, not off-putting; the sustainability of projects funded through PB after the funding period; how to ensure panels are diverse and representative; how PB fits with current council funding plans; and how the allocation of budgets by the panels relates to democratically elected community councils.</p> </div> <div> ” </div> </div> <p>In 2016, Glasgow City Council developed an <a href="#">evaluation framework</a> in collaboration with a range of community planning partners and What Works Scotland for local authorities to measure effectiveness of PB processes.</p> </div>
<div> 👤 Who’s involved? </div>	
<div> <p>Glasgow City Council, citizens, community organisations including Glasgow Disability Alliance, other communities of interest.</p> </div>	
<div> &gt;&gt; What did they do? </div>	
<div> <p>Glasgow City Council has agreed that at least one per cent of budgets will be subject to participatory budgeting. Glasgow City Council launched a £1 million <a href="#">participatory budget strategy</a> targeted at four of the most deprived areas of the city, and to a community of interest (via Glasgow Disability Alliance). The four areas were: Calton for child poverty; Canal in North Glasgow for work and employment; Pollokshields to address issues of black and minority ethnic population experience; and Pollok to engage with and support work for young people.</p> <p>Glasgow City Council commissioned community organisations with deep roots in the four areas to support people to establish citizens’ panels to test how participatory budgeting (PB) should best work in their community. They were also asked to minimise barriers to participation through providing childcare, transport and other support needed.</p> <p>A council-led PB group was responsible for overseeing the work in partnership with third sector and national PB organisations. The communities and organisations worked with council staff and elected members to co-produce a city-wide framework outlining how they can move towards PB in a fairer and more equal way. The council is working with partners to roll out the approach and inform a shift towards mainstreaming PB. The Glasgow Centre for Population Health is carrying out a short independent evaluation of the 2018/19 PB process.</p> </div>	<div> <div>  </div> <div> <p>This video shows the <b>Big Night In</b> live broadcast which saw over 600 young people vote on the Young Scot website to decide £200,000 of funding in the Greater Pollok area.</p> <p><a href="#">Visit the website</a></p> </div> </div>






## Case study 4: Place-based working

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### What is it?

The [Corra Foundation](#)  launched the People in Place programme in 2014. It identified communities that were not coming forward for funding or accessing support. It supported people from these communities to come together to identify and deliver shared priorities and actions.

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### Who's involved?

Local people, Corra Foundation and a range of partners – including councils, NHS, businesses and the third sector – in nine communities across Scotland.

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### What did they do?

Each community has a dedicated community co-ordinator who brings people together for conversations; helps them to identify shared priorities and supports them to develop locally led actions aimed at improving their local community. The programme is designed to seek out voices that are seldom heard, build capacity within communities and widen community participation.



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### What were the outcomes and the learning?

In [a report](#) , the Corra Foundation has identified several strengths of place-based working in the different areas in Scotland:

- communities have greater power
- anchor organisations improve sustainability
- alignment of local priorities
- a supportive policy environment
- collaborative working and long-term, personal commitment.

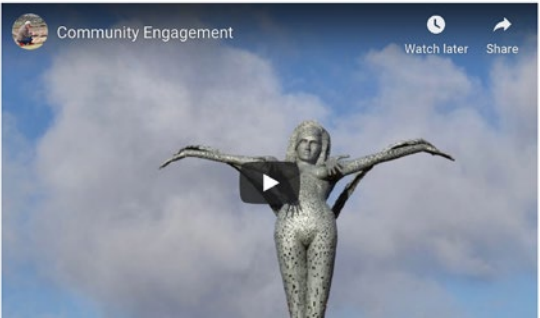
It also made several recommendations for improving place-based practice in Scotland.

#### Frances' video blog: My Carbrain

By Ffiona Taylor | 20th June 2019 | Blogs, Place

Corra Foundation works alongside nine communities, listening to local people and partners, identifying shared aspirations and priorities to support positive change. Corra has been working alongside local people in Carbrain Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire since September 2018.

In this video blog, Frances Parks' shares what Carbrain means to her and inspired her to get involved in her community.



This video is a resident's story of getting involved in the **Getting Alongside Communities** programme.


 [Visit the website](#)



## Case study 5: Partnership approach to tackling homelessness

### ? What is it?

An approach to co-develop a community action plan for people experiencing homelessness.


[Visit the website](#)



### Who's involved?

East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (EAHSCP) works with Community Friends, a befriending project of East Ayrshire Churches Homelessness Action (EACHa). EACHa is a charity set up to help relieve hardship or distress experienced by people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless within East Ayrshire. Approximately 400 individuals per year are assisted by Community Friends, with around 80 attending each week.

### >> What did they do?

EACHa, with help from officers from East Ayrshire Council's Vibrant Community Service, interviewed people supported by the project to identify the issues most commonly faced by vulnerable and marginalised people. This led to a community action plan being published in October 2018.

Four key areas identified were:

- raising public awareness
- access to services
- availability of employment, training and volunteering
- key transitions.

### What were the outcomes and the learning?

Two conferences were held to raise awareness of the issues among professionals and the public in East Ayrshire. The council, NHS, EASHCP and voluntary agencies have agreed to work alongside users of services to improve their experiences of health and social care services and address the key issues in the action plan. During 2019, four theme groups, including service users, have been working to address the recommendations in the action plan and report to an overall governance group. This is co-chaired by a local elected representative and the Scottish Health Council.

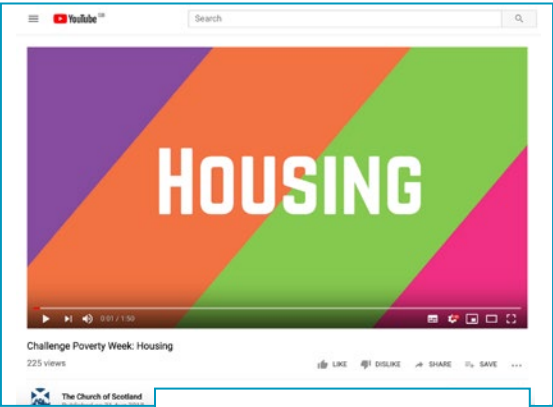
Progress so far includes:


- a pledge from health and social care services to increase peer workers
- a new East Ayrshire front-door service, where service users have access to a range of professional advisors in one location
- an information day, where training and volunteering organisations will advise service users about opportunities.

A further conference is planned for October 2019.

The approach has highlighted the importance of fostering co-operation with statutory services, voluntary organisations and service users.

Key areas for success included: involvement of service users at all stages of developing the plan, at the conferences and in the theme groups; involvement of third sector organisations in influencing and shaping policy; and an elected representative taking an active role in leading the work and providing a link with the health and social care partnership.



Users of the **Community Friends** project talk about how it has helped them in this [video](#) .

Case study 6:
Community Anchor

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What is it?

A community-controlled housing association in one of the most deprived areas in Scotland aspiring to make East Castlemilk a safer, better place to live.

Who's involved?

Ardenglen Housing Association (AHA) run by volunteers, over 35 partner organisations and the local community.

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What did they do?

What Works Scotland identified AHA as one of six community sector organisation exemplars of strong community anchors. AHA staff work with partner organisations to deliver a wide range of community-based activities aimed at addressing issues identified by their community under its 'The Only Way is Up' (TOWiU) development and regeneration programme.

Courses include: money and welfare rights advice; employability and practical skills training; energy advice; IT skills training and English language lessons; youth activities; positive parenting and intergenerational activities. The AHA's Community Committee delivers these services from its community hall. Anyone in the Castlemilk area can participate.

Low aspirations, arising through decades of deprivation, were highlighted as a challenge by AHA:

“ It’s the community mind-set which takes longer... the negative perception of things that comes through a fourth generation, lacking skills and confidence and self-worth in some cases.

AHA interviewee

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What were the outcomes and the learning?

Ongoing training opportunities helps equip volunteers with skills and confidence that are often lacking. Several of the volunteers on the Management Board have come through their TOWiU programme. This has helped to give them the new skills and confidence to think that they are ‘good enough to get involved’.

What Works Scotland reported that AHA as a community anchor illustrates:

- a highly participatory approach to the development and running of wide-ranging community learning and regeneration activities that community ownership and control can bring.
- how a multi-purpose, locally-committed body can support the building of strong, trusting relationships, which can empower local people – helping to mitigate some of the impacts of welfare reform, sustain tenancies and embed community cohesion.

“ Ardenglen HA and the community they serve have taken a highly participatory approach to the development and running of their regeneration activities. They have taken the time to build trusting relationships with local residents and empower them to engage via the Housing Association with other partners and agencies to develop and deliver real and targeted support for those most in need in their community.

CPP partner




Read the report

# Other key references and ongoing work

[Scottish Community Empowerment Action Plan – Celebrating Success: Inspiring Change](#) , Scottish Government, March 2009.


[Christie Commission on the future delivery of public services](#) , Scottish Government, June 2011.

[Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) .

Scottish Government [National Performance Framework](#)  – National outcome: We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.

[Democracy Matters](#)  – Scottish Government and Cosla local governance review.

[Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#) .


[Gunning principles](#)  – rules for public consultation and implications, Consultation Institute.


[National Standards for Community Engagement](#)  – Scottish Government and Scottish Community Development Centre.

[PANEL principles](#) , Scottish Human Rights Commission.


[PB charter](#) , PB Scotland.

[Participatory budgeting – Elected member briefing](#) , Improvement Service, 2017.


[Place Standard – How good is our place?](#)  – a framework to structure conversations about the physical and social elements of a place.

[Place Principle](#) , Scottish Government, April 2019, The Place Principle was developed by a wide range of cross sectoral partners to help partners, public, third, private and community to develop a clear vision for their place.

[How good is the learning and development in our community? Evaluation resource](#) , Education Scotland, September 2016.

[Health and Social Care Standards: My support, My life](#) , Scottish Government, June 2017 (Standard 1.10 is particularly relevant ‘I am supported to participate fully as a citizen in my local community in the way that I want.’).

[Local Outcomes Improvement Plans Stock-take – Emerging Themes](#) , The Improvement Service, NHS Health Scotland and Audit Scotland, June 2018.

[A quality framework for care homes for older people](#) , Care Inspectorate, July 2018 (Key question 1: How well do we support people’s wellbeing? – quality indicators support resident empowerment and set out what good looks like).

[Hard to reach’ or ‘easy to ignore’? Promoting equality in community engagement](#) , What Works Scotland, December 2017.

[Community Planning after the Community Empowerment Act: The Second Survey of Community Planning Officials in Scotland](#) , What Works Scotland, April 2018.

[Support for CPPs – Leadership development](#) , Improvement Service and SCDC, May 2018.

[Empowering People and Places: What Works?](#) , What Works Scotland, November 2018.

[Training for facilitating collaboration and participation](#) , What Works Scotland, November 2018.

[Place-based working resources](#) , Corra Foundation.

# Appendix

## Advisory group members

The Community empowerment advisory group has representatives from the Strategic Scrutiny Group, plus:	
Scottish Government	Development Trusts Association Scotland
COSLA	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
Health Scotland	What Works Scotland
Inspiring Scotland	Scottish Health Council
SURF	Forestry and Land Scotland
North Ayrshire Council	South Ayrshire Council
Scottish Community Development Centre	Improvement Service
Scottish Community Safety Network	The Consultation Institute



# Principles for community empowerment

This report is available in PDF and RTF formats,  
along with a podcast summary at:

[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk) 

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