



Community Partnership



Working Together for Local Action

Mid Ross Community Partnership

Dingwall Academy 29th of March 6-8pm

The Mid Ross Community Partnership will be working with the community to produce a Locality Plan for Dingwall during 2018. This meeting was a chance to find out more and get involved at the start.

Apologies: were received from Debbie Milton Highland Council, Fiona Richardson Highlife Highland and David Ogilvie Police Scotland

- **Dingwall Locality Plan - The What, Why, Who :** Ann Clark, Chair of the Partnership gave a presentation about the purpose of the Locality Plan and why the Community Partnership was devoting a whole meeting to planning the plan. The main agencies delivering public services are required by the Community Empowerment Act 2015 to reduce inequalities in their area by working better together, involving communities in planning and delivery of services and putting more effort into prevention of problems arising. The nine local community partnerships in Highland have been asked to: listen to what people want to change in their community to make it a fairer place for everyone, share with communities information about outcomes within the area, across Highland and Scotland – Area Profiles and produce Locality Plans for those areas where it is agreed that there is most opportunity to improve quality of life. Public agencies are expected to do more with people rather than to them and to enable communities to do more for themselves. All the partners are feeling the effects of increasing demand for and costs of services, without an equal increase in budgets. However public agencies still spend a lot of money in total in Highland and we all need to work smarter to get the best value from the resources we do have. Public agencies still need to get better at community engagement and so the Partnership wanted to start the process of producing a Locality Plan in Dingwall by: looking at what we already know from previous consultation exercises to reduce consultation 'fatigue', getting ideas about what engagement methods would work best from people and organisations living and working in the town.

The full presentation can be downloaded separately from the website.

Working Groups: We then looked at

- **Who Do We Need To Engage?:** we asked who are the main 'stakeholder' groups with an interest in the Locality Plan and who can help us get in touch with them. The longest list was of community/voluntary/third sector organisations but also mentioned were faith groups, Ross County, local employers, youth organisations, armed forces groups.

- **Overcoming Barriers to Engagement:** The working groups were asked to come up with ideas to engage people who might find it more difficult to participate in the engagement methods normally used by public agencies. A wide range of ideas were suggested but the main message was that we need to go to where people normally meet – at work, taking part in leisure activities and hobbies, playing sport etc. and not expect people to turn out to extra meetings. Engage at a time and place to suit the people we want to talk to, not ourselves. Also important will be producing information in different formats using video, easy read versions, possibly translations.

-**What Methods of Engagement Should We Use?** We worked our way through a list of different engagement methods and listed the pros and cons of the different approaches. **A summary of the comments is available to download separately.**

The Good, The Bad and The Ugly? What do we already know about our community? : Chris Arnold circulated some statistics about life in Dingwall and also circulated were the outcomes of a consultation meeting held in Dingwall in 2017 to input to the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan which also focuses on tackling inequalities across the region. **A separate document with highlights from the data and the output from the Highland LOIP consultation can be downloaded from the website.** The discussion focused mainly on whether or not people will understand what we mean by inequalities and how we can balance the conversation by emphasising the positive aspects of life in Dingwall and the many community strengths which can be built upon. A number of issues with the statistics were also raised, for example some of the information was collected some time ago and may now be out of date. Also we need to be aware that some data may be a reflection of local services rather than the local population. For example the school has a special unit for deaf children which may attract families to the area.