

Local Action Partnership Handbook

Local Decision Making in Perth and Kinross

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Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance and examples, in order to support Local Action Partnerships to operate effectively and efficiently.

In all cases, it is for Local Action Partnerships themselves to decide how they wish to run their business. This guidance can provide a useful reference point and support staff will be happy to advise and assist where possible.

Local Action Partnerships in Perth and Kinross

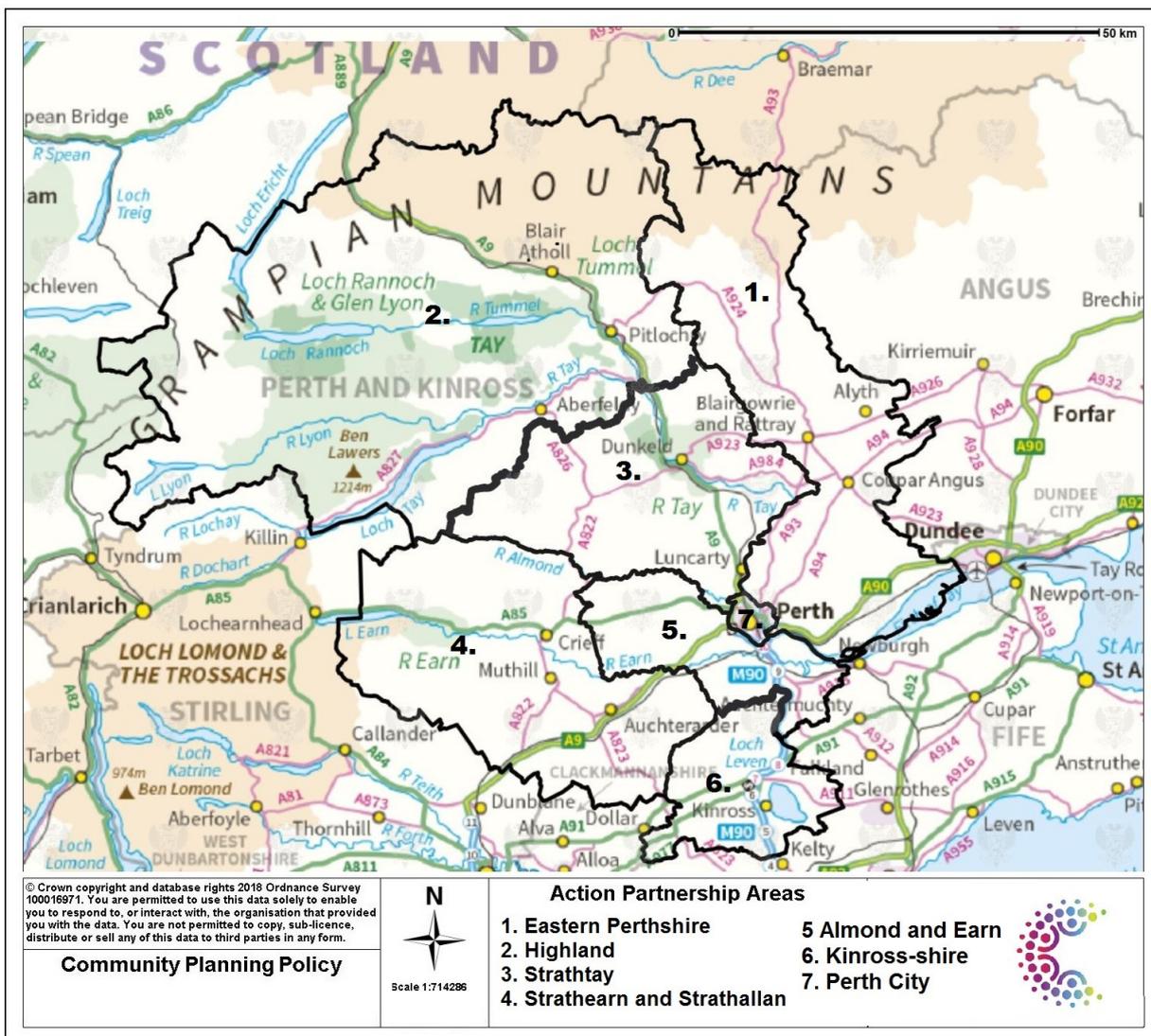


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1 Local Action Partnerships and Local Action Plans

1.1 Local Action Partnerships

Local Action Partnerships (LAPs) have been established across Perth and Kinross in order to bring services and communities together, to tackle local issues and inequalities. They offer services a better understanding of local people's needs and priorities, and offer residents the chance to better understand and influence the services that are important to their community.

Five LAPs were set up in 2016, covering all parts of Perth and Kinross. In 2018 two LAPs decided to split to better reflect local circumstances, meaning that there are now seven across the local authority area.

LAPs are made up of councillors, community representatives, and representatives from public services. LAPs complement and support the activities of other community groups in their area.

Each LAP publishes a Local Action Plan to help guide their work, and typically reports once a year on progress against their Plan.

1.2 Local Action Plans

Local Action Plans identify inequalities experienced by people in the area, and set out how these will be tackled by services and communities working together. The Local Action Plans are short and action-focused, setting out a small number of key priorities and the actions to be taken to address them.

Each LAP developed their initial Local Action Plan using their locality's [Stories of Place](#), local knowledge and information from previous consultations with local communities. A Local Action Plan is a live document and LAPs will be offered support to review and update their plan on a regular basis.

2 Community Planning

Community Planning is about how public bodies work together and with local communities to design and deliver better services that make a difference to people's lives.

The Community Planning Partnership in Perth & Kinross consists of:

- Perth and Kinross Council
- Perth and Kinross Association of Voluntary Services (PKAVS)
- Job Centre Plus
- NHS Tayside
- Scottish Fire and Rescue
- Police Scotland
- University of Highlands and Islands – Perth College
- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Skills Development Scotland
- Tayside and Central Transport Partnership (TACTRAN)

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) works to a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (known as the [Community Plan](#)) which covers the whole Perth and Kinross area.

The Community Plan sets out the top priorities for tackling inequalities across Perth and Kinross, and identifies the key actions that partners will take forward in order to do so.

3 Role of Local Action Partnership Members

3.1 All members

Community representatives, councillors and services representatives will be supported to work as equal partners in order to:

- Identify issues in their community that result in inequalities;
- Understand what local communities and services are already doing to address inequalities;
- Develop and implement their Local Action Plan;
- Involve the wider community in tackling local priorities and decision making processes;
- Communicate with other members of the community about the work of the Local Action Partnership and broader community issues; and
- Determine how Local Action Partnership funding should be allocated.

In order to achieve this, members will be supported to:

- Participate in meetings and other relevant sessions, such as training;
- Be prepared to contribute constructively to the work of the Local Action Partnership;
- Operate in a spirit of openness and collective responsibility

3.2 Operation of the Local Action Partnership

In order for the Local Action Partnership (LAP) to run smoothly, members will be encouraged to nominate a Chairperson to oversee meetings and other business. The Chairperson could be a community representative, councillor or CPP representative. The typical duties of a Chairperson are to:

- Ensure the meeting is a forum where everyone can contribute equally;
- Ensure that decisions are made collectively, with the involvement of all members;
- Ensure the LAP remains focused on delivering their Local Action Plan;
- Guide discussions and ensure that decisions are recorded clearly;

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- Ensure that actions are shared across the LAP and that members are clear on what has been agreed;
 - Create a culture of openness, constructive contribution and transparency; and
 - Set the tone for open, inclusive and engaging discussions.

Perth and Kinross CPP will offer a Lead Officer, to act as the key link between public agencies and the LAP. The role of the Lead Officer includes:

- Co-ordinating between the various groups, services and business operating within the area of the LAP;
- Supporting the Chairperson to ensure that work progresses and meetings run smoothly;
- Co-ordinating input to the LAP from public sector agencies;
- Gathering or requesting information on behalf of the LAP;
- Taking forward relevant actions from the meetings, delegating where appropriate;
- Acting as the key link between the LAP and the broader Community Planning Partnership.

3.3 Support Staff

The Community Planning Policy Team will offer support to the LAP and its members, in order to:

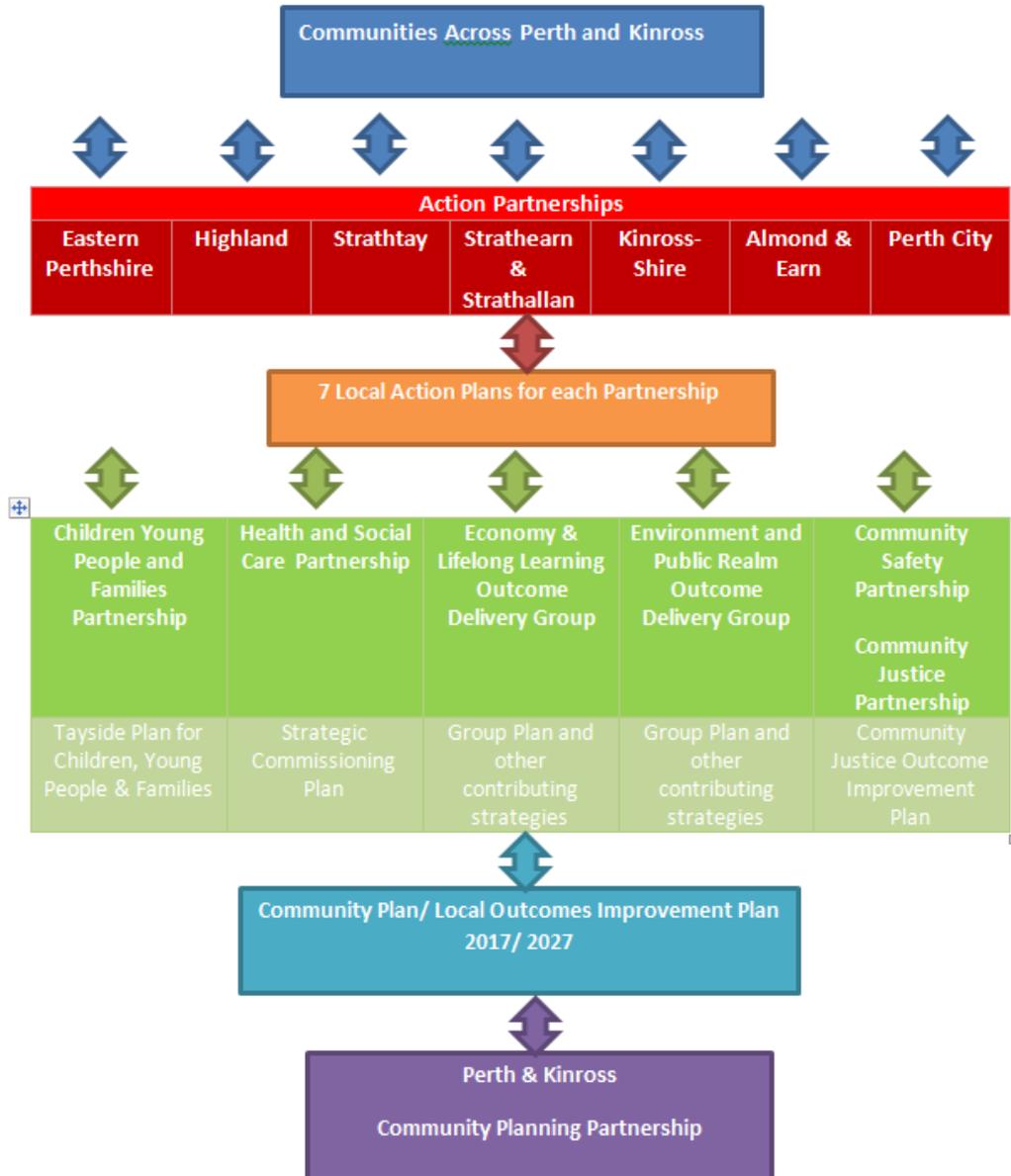
- Enable LAP members to organise and administer meetings;
- Monitor and provide advice on budgets;
- Provide information or research, when requested;
- Review and update the Local Action Plan; and
- Help to organise and provide equipment for meetings and events.

Communities staff, working in localities, have significant knowledge and understanding of community development and how to support communities to do more for themselves.

With that in mind, Communities staff can assist the LAP in order to:

- Enable LAP members to organise and administer meetings;
- Build links between the LAPs and community groups in the locality;
- Regularly review and update the Local Action Plan, with a focus on improving equality;
- Agree how to deliver specific projects or actions in the Local Action Plan;
- Ensure that LAPs have the right skills and experiences around the table to operate effectively and deliver the Local Action Plan;
- Undertake community engagement work; and
- Ensure that meetings and other business of the LAP operate in an open and inclusive environment.

4 Governance



4.1 Relationship to Community Planning Partnership Board

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board has an overview of all aspects of Community Planning in Perth and Kinross. The Board is made up of senior members of staff from across the CPP in Perth and Kinross and elected members.

The Community Plan outlines key priority actions for services to take forward across Perth and Kinross. Local Action Plans provide the local element of this activity, where local priorities and issues can be brought to the fore.

The Lead Officer acts as the key link between the Local Action Partnership (LAP) and the CPP Board. Local Action Partnerships (LAPs) form a key part of the Community Planning structure in Perth and Kinross.

4.2 Membership

As outlined in Section 3.1, membership of the LAP includes community representatives, local councillors and CPP representatives. LAPs will be supported to agree the best way for them to ensure that it has adequate representation from across the local area, in terms of geography and skills and experiences.

LAPs should consider how best to agree this, taking into account that there may be situations where members are required to vote in order to reach a decision. One possible option would be to seek an agreed community representative from each Community Council area within the LAPs larger geography.

4.3 Voting

LAPs will be supported to try to reach a consensus about decisions. Sometimes there can be disagreement between members and a vote is needed to come to a final decision. Typically, the Chairperson will ask members if they wish to vote on an issue and normally a simple majority of members would be required in order for the vote to carry, based on the principle of one member, one vote. If the vote is tied, the Chairperson will typically have a casting vote. The result of the vote should be clearly recorded.

As set out in Section 4.2, LAPs will need to determine how they wish to ensure that they have adequate community representation and agree how community representatives will vote. It will be important to ensure that the voting process is clear, transparent and consistent in the LAP, so agreement on who is eligible to vote is important. The suggestion given in 4.2 around one voting community representative per Community Council area may provide this clarity.

When making financial decisions members should declare if they have an interest in any of the groups or initiatives, which would be impacted by the decision. If members do declare an interest then they would be expected to excuse themselves from the decision making process.

4.4 Quorum

If there is a low turnout at the meeting, LAP members would be advised to only make decisions in principle, subject to them being ratified by the LAP at the next meeting, or via email. A quorum is usually when 1/3rd of the voting members are present.

5 Administration

Effective administration is important to ensure that Local Action Partnership (LAP) business runs smoothly. Each LAP is responsible for its own administration and support is available from staff within Perth and Kinross Council and other Community Planning Partnership members.

5.1 Agendas

The Chairperson is responsible for collating the agenda and all LAP members can suggest agenda items. The agenda and supporting papers should be sent out a week prior to the meeting. LAPs will be supported to organise this for themselves.

5.2 Action Notes

Short action notes can be taken by anyone at the meeting and each LAP should make arrangements in order to ensure that these are concise and accurate. Support staff can offer to help with this if there are no volunteers within the membership; however this can impact on the staff member's ability to contribute effectively to the meeting. At the start of each meeting the Chairperson will lead a review the actions from the previous meeting to ensure that progress is being made.

If LAPs wish to have a full minute taken of their meetings, then support staff can offer help in finding a minute taker. Alternatively a technological solution could be used.

5.3 Technology

Remote meeting technology is available to allow members to take part in meetings and other relevant business if they are unable to attend in person. In order to use this technology, it is recommended that an online meeting is organised by Council staff and members can attend local Council buildings within the LAP area to take part, or seek to join remotely from home. Any member attending the meeting remotely will need to install the relevant technology or app on their own device and be confident in operating it themselves. Support staff can offer some advice on this.

5.4 Communications

If LAPs wish to put out a press release, support staff can offer advice and guidance and can also make sure that the Community Planning Partnership's (CPPs) communication channels are used to send the information out. LAPs can also be supported to use media in the locality, such as a local newsletter or local social media pages and networks.

5.5 Branding

Perth and Kinross CPP has an approved brand, with guidelines on its use. As part of the broader CPP structure, LAPs will also be encouraged to use this branding.

Templates for each LAP have also been developed, including letterheads, PowerPoint presentations, posters and other communications. These can be provided on request.

6 Budgets

6.1 Introduction

Local Action Partnerships (LAPs) have been given a budget to support the delivery of their Local Action Plan. The budget also has to cover the LAPs operating costs such as venue hire, catering, publicity materials and volunteers' expenses, both for regular meetings and for any events the LAP holds.

The LAPs budgets are held by Perth & Kinross Council and each LAP has its own budget code. The Community Planning Policy Team are the key contact for budget management and can offer guidance and advice when needed. The Team also:

- Maintains a commitments sheet for each LAP budget code;
- Can provide a financial statement at every LAP meeting; and
- Can liaise with Council Finance Officers on behalf of the LAPs.

Additional monies have previously been provided by Perth & Kinross Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership and Scottish Government (through the Community Choices Fund) to support participatory budgeting processes.

6.2 Guidelines on Using the Action Partnership Budget

All funds must be used in ways that are transparent, accountable and consistent with the purpose of LAPs. LAPs may invite community organisations to bid for funding to help achieve a particular outcome, or deliver a specific action within the Local Action Plan, and it will be important to ensure that any process like this is fair, transparent and inclusive.

LAPs should engage with their communities about local priorities and the Local Action Plan. These engagements may also consider financial support for specific projects or initiatives. LAPs may decide to run Participatory Budgeting processes and support is available from staff to help to ensure that the process is fair and inclusive.

6.3 Grant Making

As part of the delivery of the Local Action Plan, LAPs may invite local projects or groups to bid for a part of their budget. In order to ensure fairness and transparency, a clear process should be agreed by the LAP in advance. Support staff can help with this and templates and processes for administering grant funds are also available through the Council.

Key points to consider include:

- The focus for any grant funding – what difference does the LAP want to make by awarding money and how will this support the delivery of the Local Action Plan?
- The process and timescales for applying for and awarding money;
- The criteria that applicants will have to meet, e.g. what type of groups or projects will be eligible? Which type of costs will be eligible?
- How applications will be judged against the criteria and how decisions will be made. It is also important to consider how this will be communicated clearly and concisely to all potential applicants; and
- How each successful application will be monitored to ensure that the outcomes they expected to achieve have been delivered and the money is used appropriately.

6.4 Expenses and Costs

Community representatives often incur expenses when attending meetings or other events on behalf of the LAPs. Two forms have been developed for community representatives to complete, should they wish to claim expenses – one is purely for travel expenses and the other for broader costs (receipts should be retained as evidence).

These forms can be access from Communityplanningpartnership@pkc.gov.uk

All expenses claims should be approved by the LAP and will then be processed by the Community Planning Policy Team.