Dear Kristin

FINANCE COMMITTEE
CROSS CUTTING EXPENDITURE REVIEW OF DEPRIVATION

Thank you for your letter dated 17 November seeking further clarification relating to the accountability of Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), particularly what sanctions are available should they not deliver the outcomes of their Regeneration Outcome Agreements (ROAs). I am grateful for the opportunity to provide further details which were originally sought at the meeting by Wendy Alexander.

The allocation of Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) resources to CPPs was on the basis that they were each required to submit an acceptable three year ROA for approval by Ministers. The initial offer of CRF grant offer set out the accompanying Terms and Conditions which include the accountability responsibilities for both grant recipients and the CPP. A full copy of the Terms and Conditions of Grant can be made available if you are interested.

The Terms and Conditions set out the broad principles of the performance management for the CRF and ROA. Each CPP has subsequently received detailed guidance on the Performance Management Framework which accompanies the fund.

The Terms and Conditions (point 6) require each CPP to nominate a grant recipient to receive and distribute the grant. This partner, which in all 32 CPPs is the local authority, is required to ensure that the grant is 'properly accounted for and used for the purpose intended'. In addition each CPP is required to put in place 'appropriate systems to monitor performance, measure progress and review and evaluate the impact of the grant and ROA' (point 7) Full details of the roles and
Responsibilities of both the accountable body and CPP is contained at schedule 1 of the Terms and Conditions.

Importantly, the Terms and Conditions clearly set out that Ministers are in the position to withhold or recover grant payment as set out in the default section point 40.6 where ‘the grant recipient and/or partnership was shown to be seriously or systematically failing in their responsibilities or in delivering the ROA’.

You also seek written responses to the following questions:

1) Can you explain in detail how, in the context of the ROA process, CPPs are required to demonstrate community engagement?

The National Performance Management Framework (PMF) for Regeneration Outcome Agreements (ROAs) has a specific, mandatory section on community engagement.

Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) are required to complete a self assessment template covering a number of key aspects of effective community engagement. The focus of this template is very much on providing evidence of effective engagement and it seeks to embed the National Standards for Community Engagement in this process. Crucially, the template requires CPPs to record whether engaging with communities has led to improvements in public services. This seeks to move discussion of engagement beyond structures and processes to outcomes in the improvement of people’s lives.

The guidance on the Performance Management Framework makes it clear that all partners must be involved in the self assessment process and that where different partners disagree about the effectiveness of engagement this must be recorded in Annual Reports. CPPs are also required to put in place Action Plans to address perceived weaknesses in their community engagement performance. The detailed template is attached.

Communities Scotland has a National Target in its Corporate Plan 2005/2008 to “Ensure, as part of the ROA assessment process, that by the end of March 2008 that Community Planning Partnerships demonstrate the effective engagement of communities in regeneration”. The information received via the PMF process will be analysed at national level and will form a major plank in meeting this target.
2) What are some of the key difficulties partnerships are facing in engaging communities? How are you supporting them in this process?

Each CPP will face its own particular challenges in engaging with communities depending on their local circumstances. Factors which will affect this might include: the previous history of engagement and community activity; issues to do with geography, e.g. engaging with more remote communities in rural areas; and issues of scale in terms of the numbers of people and groups to be engaged.

In general, the issue of engaging with traditionally more excluded groups, like minority ethnic people or disaffected youths, is perceived as a key challenge. We will have more detailed intelligence on specific challenges after we receive CPPs’ annual reports.

Communities Scotland is supporting CPPs to engage with communities in the following ways:

Providing resources through the Community Voices Programme

This programme provides around £3 million per year to specifically resource the involvement of communities in the ROA process. It is largely used to provide practical support like expenses, access to development support and IT and training for community representatives. Allocations take into account the numbers of people living in the most disadvantaged communities in each Local Authority area.

The National Standards for Community Engagement

The standards are designed as a practical, flexible tool to help improve community engagement practice. They were developed through a ‘bottom up’ approach with over 500 people involved in the process, the majority of them from communities. From piloting the standards we know they can be used in a number of different ways. For example, they can be used to plan community engagement processes; to evaluate existing work; or as a set of ground rules that communities and agencies agree to in order to improve engagement practice. The standards are underpinned by the principles of equality and inclusion.

Communities Scotland are providing support to each CPP via independent consultancy to help them work through how best to use the standards to suit their circumstances. This type of initial support was found to be important during the piloting of the standards.
The Community Engagement How to Guide

This web-based tool brings together a wide range of tools, research and reports on how to engage with communities. It gives access to material that describes a wide range of methods and approaches to engagement; this includes information on how to engage with more excluded groups like young people and LGBT people. We are in the process of developing a specific guide on how to engage with minority ethnic communities. The site is designed to be used by both communities and agencies and it is updated every month with new material being added.

Community Learning and Development (CLD)

We provide support to CLD Partnerships across Scotland to develop activity based on Working and learning together to build stronger communities, the Scottish Executive’s guidance on CLD. The guidance stresses the key role that CLD can play in building the skills, confidence and abilities that local people need to get play a part in their communities and influence service planning and delivery through Community Planning.

Many CLD Strategies specifically feature the need to build engagement by young people in decision-making in their local areas. Many have focussed on the development of youth forums and other means of engaging young people and bringing their views and aspirations to Community Planning Partners.

For example:

North Lanarkshire CLD Partnership has consulted with over 1000 children and young people to establish the issues that are important to them and has committed to further developing youth forums and e-democracy to include them more. This builds on local work recognised by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) as good practice, such as the Caldercruix Youth and Community Development Project, where local young people have made a significant contribution to changing perceptions of the area.

Angus CLD Strategy also recognises the key role that CLD can play locally in building involvement by young people. Based on the commitment to “provide a range of opportunities for young people to learn about and participate in representative democracy”, HMIE has identified the work of a local group of young people from Forfar (the “Custard Team”) as being particularly effective in
organising a youth involvement day, which was successful in bringing the concerns of local young people to MSPs, Councillors and Community Planning Partners.

The Dundee CLD Strategy links directly to the local Regeneration Outcome Agreement - which includes as an outcome to “Increase influence of children and young people in decision-making”. This includes the commitment to involve young people in Ardler and Kirkton in developing a local youth strategy, with the aim of providing constructive opportunities for 1000 young people in the area.

I hope this information is useful for the Committee. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if further information is required.

Yours sincerely

Ian Mitchell
Director of Community Regeneration
### Template 2.1 (required)
#### Community Engagement Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Score (1-5)</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>What evidence is there for the score you have given? You will find the indicators for the National Standards for Community Engagement useful in providing evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CPP uses the National Standards for Community Engagement to underpin its work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CPP engages with a broad range of representative structures within the community including the most excluded groups <em>(Involvement Standard, Working Together Standard, Working with others Standard)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CPP uses a broad range of approaches to engage communities <em>(Methods Standard)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Include a range of examples for different groups, including covering equalities dimensions and hard-to-reach groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CPP provides relevant information needed for effective engagement <em>(Information Standard, Feedback standard)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Include, for example, making information available in translations or alternative formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CPP monitors and evaluates community engagement in the ROA <em>(Sharing Information Standard; Support Standard; Feedback Standard; Monitoring and Evaluation Standard)</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CPP identifies resources for community engagement and continuous improvement (*Improvement Standard; Support Standard*)

CPP improves public services in response to community priorities (*Planning Standard*)

CPP refers to Community Learning and Development and Tenant Participation strategies to show how it understands these can support engagement

**Template 2.2 (required)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Engagement Action Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key barriers to having more effective community involvement in delivering the ROA</strong></td>
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</table>