

**Strathearn and Eastern
Perthshire
Perth and Kinross Council
15 July 2008**

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1. Introduction

HM Inspectors gather evidence and make professional evaluations using the quality and performance indicators in the publication *How Good is our Community Learning and Development? 2 (HGIOCLD?2)*. They provide answers to the high-level questions:

1. What key outcomes have we achieved?
2. How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?
3. How good is our delivery of key processes?
4. How good is our management?
5. How good is our leadership?
6. What is our capacity for improvement?

Published reports address some of these questions, based on evaluations of the evidence gathered, and summarise the key strengths and main points for action to secure improvement. All reports on community learning and development (CLD) address the outcomes and impact that provision is having on participants and include an evaluation of the provider's overall capacity for improvement. Any self-evaluation which has recently been carried out locally contributes to the inspection process. Most inspections of CLD sample provision within more than one geographic area. The selection of areas for inspection takes account of local circumstances, previous inspection coverage and the priorities for improvement of the local authority.

2. Context and background

The context for CLD in Perth and Kinross Council

Perth and Kinross has a population of 140,190. It is ranked fifth largest in Scotland in terms of area and fourteenth in Scotland in terms of population. It is a diverse area comprising many discreet communities, from the city of Perth to rural areas such as Kinloch Rannoch. The Council area is experiencing one of the fastest and highest population growths in Scotland. There is an ongoing increase of people moving into the area, taking employment in the agricultural, construction and service sectors. Alongside this there is a growth in elderly and migrant populations and an increasing number of younger people. The population growth is uneven with certain areas, such as Kinross and Highland Perthshire experiencing rapid development. As a result, communities are changing rapidly and becoming increasingly diverse, placing increasing demands on services and infrastructure, particularly in the rural areas. As a response to this, in many of the smaller communities, there are a growing number of community development trusts and social enterprises. The CLD inspection focused on the communities of Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. These areas cover the larger communities of Crieff, Auchterarder and Blairgowrie, as well as the smaller settlements such as Comrie, Alyth and Braco.

The local economy is based on many of Scotland's priority industries such as tourism, food and drink, financial services, energy, construction and forestry and is comprised of mostly small businesses. Service sector jobs account for 80% of jobs in Perth and Kinross and many of these jobs are seasonal.

The unemployment rate for Perth and Kinross for October 2007 was 1.4% which was below the Scottish average of 2.4%, with fewer long-term unemployed than Scotland as a whole. Twelve percent of the working age population is/are claiming benefits. This group is concentrated in a few communities in the Council area.

Who delivers CLD in the authority?

CLD is located within Cultural and Community Services which in turn is a core part of Education and Children's Services (ECS) which also includes Schools, Children's Services and Support Services. ECS had developed a Statement of Intent and a Policy Framework which supported Integrated Working across its Services.

Community planning arrangements and the CLD strategy

Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership published its Community Plan for 2006-2020.

The plan has three key aims. These are:

- vibrant and successful area;
- safe and healthy communities; and
- nurtured and supported people.

Each of the three aims has its own outcomes and these outcomes are delivered through the strategies and action plans of the various partnerships, including the Perth and Kinross Lifelong Learning Partnership. In 2007, Perth and Kinross Council published its Corporate Plan which outlined five key objectives and associated strategies which link to the Community Plan. These are:

- a safe, secure and welcoming environment;
- healthy, caring communities;
- a prosperous, sustainable and inclusive economy;
- educated, responsible and informed citizens; and
- confident, active and inclusive communities.

One of these associated strategies is the CLD strategy. The CLD strategy contributes to the aims of the Community Plan and in particular to the development of 'safe and healthy communities' and 'nurtured and supported people' through its three key priorities of:

- achievement through learning for young people;
- achievement through learning for adults; and
- achievement through building community capacity.

The CLD Strategy is one of the three operational aims of the Perth and Kinross Lifelong Learning Partnership.

3. What the inspection team evaluated

Decisions on which localities and aspects of CLD provision to inspect were made after considering information from previous inspections, information supplied by the authority, and discussions with senior officers of the Council.

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) undertook to evaluate the impact of aspects of provision in relation to all three national priorities for CLD in Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. The authority also submitted a self-evaluation report.

HMIE issued questionnaires to participants in CLD activities, CLD staff and staff of partner agencies. They collated and analysed responses from 16 young people, 23 adult learners and 17 from staff and partner agencies.

Quality indicators were identified within the overall *HGIOCLD? 2* framework and were used by the team to evaluate key aspects of CLD as follows:

- improvements in performance;
- the impact of CLD provision on young people and adults;
- the impact of capacity building activities on communities;
- the impact on paid and voluntary staff of arrangements for their training and support;
- how well CLD provision promoted inclusion, equality and fairness;
- the effectiveness of operational planning for CLD;
- the effectiveness of partnership work in CLD;
- how well CLD developed people and partnerships at local level; and
- the effectiveness of management of the CLD service.

During the course of the inspection, the team of inspectors held 23 focus group meetings with participants and active members of the communities and seven focus group meetings with staff. They carried out 31 observations of practice and interviewed 24 full- and part-time staff and 13 staff from partner agencies.

4. Key strengths

HM Inspectors found the following key strengths:

- positive, motivated staff and volunteers who demonstrated high levels of commitment to their local area;
- a range of projects and activities that enabled young people and adults to gain confidence and progress to further learning opportunities;
- the community link workers and their work in local schools that made a significant difference to the lives of learners;
- the community capacity staff and their work in regeneration of rural communities;
- the range of partnership work in Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire that included employers, community groups, schools and the college sector;
- high quality leadership of partnerships; and
- the sector leading work with social enterprises, community development trusts and cultural organisations that now provided local communities with a range of innovative services.

5. How well did CLD provision meet the needs of Stakeholders?

How well did CLD impact on young people?

The CLD staff in Perth and Kinross Council had developed effective approaches to youth participation that enabled young people to regularly air their views on issues that mattered to them in a range of fora. As a result, young people were included and made notable achievements in a variety of activities relating to citizenship, regeneration and the arts. There were good examples of projects that offered support for young people at risk of being excluded that made very effective use of national awards and which offered progression to further study.

CLD staff had developed very effective structures of youth consultation and participation. There were now over 300 young people involved in local youth fora and a council-wide Youth Council. Well designed election processes and a constitution were in place across the inspection area to ensure inclusion of young people from a wide range of backgrounds. Young people clearly understood these processes. The Youth Council had conducted elections for Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP), and as a result the

numbers of MSYPs from the inspection areas had substantially increased. All members of the Youth Council were completing Millennium Volunteer awards and some participants had now achieved this. Young people identified a range of benefits including increased confidence and a strong sense that they could make a difference and that their voices would be heard, listened to and acted upon. For example, the Youth Council had met with the elected members and senior managers of Perth and Kinross Council and had made extensive contributions to the Youth Strategy. However, while Pupil Councils were in place in all secondary schools, the links with the Youth Council required further development.

At local levels, CLD staff supported a wide range of events across Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. This included *Battle of the Bands*, discos, and Under 18s music nights in local venues. Young people in local youth forums and community-based youth organisations clearly identified positive outcomes from their work. The *KFlip skaters' forum* had worked effectively to get litter bins and lights in the skate park. They had now progressed to working towards extending the skate park and building youth shelters. In other areas, such as Auchterarder and Crieff, young people identified their forum as contributing to a reduction in youth crime. In Crieff for example, the youth forum was successfully engaging with events locally, contributing to the organisation and running of a Blue Light disco working with the local police. CLD staff had also developed extensive work in cultural activities. Young people from Comrie participated in both the *Comrie Youth Theatre* and the *Click* project. Both of these activities built their confidence and technical skills. As a result, the *Click Film* project had presented its films on youth issues to Perth and Kinross Councillors. In Rattray, CLD staff had effectively developed the *Rattray Arts Teen Scheme (RATS)* to work with the small numbers of local young people who were at risk of being excluded from school. Participants gained in confidence and successfully re-engaged with learning through this project.

CLD staff worked very effectively with both school staff and Community Link Workers in Crieff to develop an effective citizenship project in the local secondary school. The project targeted all S2 students focusing on national identity, ecology/environment and democracy. Topics were organised over six sessions. The sessions were jointly delivered by a teacher and youth worker. The project successfully linked the work in the classroom with wider issues using the Pupil Council, current local issues such as the new high school, renewable energy, and the Young Scot web site. Young people engaged in the activities very quickly, the discussion was well informed and the policies produced by the working groups were a balance between personally focused issues, such as school uniform and broader issues, such as community regeneration. Most young people reported that through their involvement they felt able to attend and contribute to meetings more effectively. CLD staff had worked with a group of S5 pupils in Blairgowrie in the local school on a global citizenship project. This group had made several presentations to school assemblies and identified that this activity had increased their confidence and public speaking skills. Members of the group also used a national Children in Need event to raise awareness of local issues such as rural poverty. However, this activity had not yet led to young people becoming more involved or represented in local regeneration bodies or social enterprises. This was an area for further development.

CLD staff including Duke of Edinburgh's Award workers worked effectively in Blairgowrie with school guidance staff and the Community Link Workers to identify small groups of young people with poor self-esteem, low confidence and school

attendance issues. This targeted approach had significant benefits for the young people involved. The school had identified improved attainment and a significant positive impact on attendance from almost all those involved.

The young people had a clear understanding of the reasons why they had been put forward for the group and had found the experiences interesting and rewarding. The young people involved had progressed to college. However, in The Duke of Edinburgh open award group, there was no system in place to effectively track participants' progress.

Areas for improvement

Inspectors identified steps that local managers and staff should take to improve the impact of services for young people.

- Improve links between Youth fora and Pupil Councils.

How well did CLD impact on adult learners?

The CLD staff in Perth and Kinross Council had developed a range of programmes to address a variety of needs of adult learners in the communities of Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. In many ways these met the educational and social needs of rapidly changing communities. There was a strong focus on literacy work both with families and with migrant workers. These programmes resulted in significant gains in learning, qualifications and self-confidence for learners. Staff had developed innovative programmes of learning that linked well with community regeneration projects in Crieff, Blairgowrie and Alyth. These were having a significant impact for learners and had substantially increased the range of learning opportunities on offer. As a result, numbers of adult learners had increased. However, the planning of learning programmes with learners, including monitoring and tracking of progress, required further development.

The CLD Staff in Perth and Kinross Council had developed a range of programmes to meet the variety of needs of adult learners in the communities of Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. This had resulted in increased levels of participation with many new adult learning programmes and opportunities being delivered for the first time in the area. Participants in the *Inspirations* project in Rattray noted significant gains in their learning and self-confidence. This project had enabled some learners to progress to college and university or to gain entry to employment. Adult learners in the *Visions of Rattray* community regeneration project gained new skills in writing, photography and film-making. This project brought together learners from the community and involved a range of ages from young people in their twenties to residents of a local old people's home. The project had enabled participants to display and discuss their findings in a public festival. This project had led to increased demand for, and uptake, of courses in information and communications technology (ICT) and multi-media.

CLD staff working in literacy and numeracy had developed strong links with other agencies such as the local college, employers and community-based organisations to deliver a wide and varied programme. As a result, the number of literacy learners and literacy programmes had significantly increased. Literacy learners in the library in Crieff had produced their own informative newsletter entitled '*One in Eight*' to publish their

stories of learning and the difference it had made to their lives. Learners in the adult learning centre in Blairgowrie focused on numeracy and this enabled some to find part-time employment in the centre café. CLD staff had worked closely with local employers to deliver classes in English for migrant workers in rural hotels. Learners in these classes from Poland and Lithuania noted major gains in their language and confidence as a result.

Staff in CLD had developed strong partnership links with nurseries, primary schools, libraries, the college sector and the Community Link Workers. There were now increased opportunities for adult learners to enter learning through local schools and other community facilities in Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. Staff delivered an effective '*Return to Learning*' class for mothers within local childcare facilities. This resulted in several learners gaining access to qualifications as learning assistants in schools that suited their needs and the time commitments of their young families. These programmes were being supported by family literacy programmes in local libraries to encourage parents to read with their children. CLD staff and Community Link Workers were now delivering parenting programmes in Blairgowrie for parents whose children displayed challenging behaviour. Parents welcomed these classes and noted significant improvements in their child's behavior and in their confidence in addressing challenging behavior. Parents also stressed that attending these classes had lessened their sense of isolation in their community.

CLD staff had also developed a range of learning opportunities to meet the needs of changing communities. Staff had developed and delivered an effective course in ICT for older learners in both Crieff and Rattray. Learners had significantly improved their skills in computing and multi-media and were now progressing to further learning at a local college. These courses were closely linked to, and supported community regeneration projects in both Crieff and Blairgowrie. CLD staff worked closely with arts workers in Alyth to deliver a range of adult learning opportunities linked to the *StART arts festival*. Many learners in the *StART* programme had made significant advances in their learning that led to entry to University and Art College as well as setting up their own businesses in textiles, music and forestry.

While the majority of programmes offered adult learners a range of high quality opportunities, there was a need for more systematic approaches to marketing of programmes and the monitoring and tracking of participant progress. There was a lack of clear targets and specified outcomes in many learners' plans. This meant it was difficult for staff to record the impact of their work. There was a need for staff to learn from the clear and systematic work of the literacy tutors in this respect. Many of the programmes offered high quality learning opportunities but were also dependent on short-term funding for community regeneration projects and had limited sustainability beyond the lifespan of these specialist funds. There was a need to develop better promotion and make more use of joint marketing with other council services, for example, the libraries.

Features of good practice: *StART Festival*

The *StART Festival* in Alyth offered a range of learning opportunities relating to the arts and the environment as part of its programme of events. Learners from a variety of backgrounds had the opportunity to engage with learning through the medium of visual arts, film, multi-media, textiles, environmental art and sculpture. Learners from the programme had progressed to higher education and some had found employment in their own art or environment related businesses. The Festival also used learning to bring together small and isolated communities in the rural areas of Eastern Perthshire.

More detailed information is available at www.hmie.gov.uk.

Areas for improvement

Inspectors identified a number of steps that local managers and staff should take to improve the impact of services for adults.

- Improve target setting, planning and monitoring of learner progress.
- Expand and further develop the links between adult learning and community regeneration projects.

How well did CLD build the capacity of the community?

CLD staff worked with a wide range of community organisations in Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. Staff had worked closely with community organisations in regeneration areas such as Rattray and parts of Crieff. There was also developmental work to support Community Development Trusts in the small towns of Comrie, Braco and Auchterarder. This work was leading to significant benefits in terms of increasing levels of community activism, community ownership of local assets and the re-development of existing community facilities. Staff had also usefully supported a range of local organisations in developing community festivals. However, there remained further work to do in terms of increasing the involvement of young people in their local community organisations and in monitoring, evaluation and training generally.

CLD staff and partners had worked effectively together to engage the community in a number of initiatives in the inspection area. This included working with Community Development Trusts, area-based regeneration partnerships and an innovative social enterprise programme. Members of local community organisations reported increased confidence, growth in activity and a stronger sense of community through working together to improve the quality of life within their local areas. This had been demonstrated and celebrated in well planned community events in Eastern Perthshire.

CLD staff provided very effective support to a range of community groups and organisations. Almost all community representatives spoke highly of the support provided by local capacity building workers. The *Young Women's Christian Association* (YWCA) was helpfully supporting young people to engage with the *Coupar Angus Regeneration Trust* (CART). A useful community questionnaire had been used to identify

residents' priorities for improvement. As a result, an annual Horse Fair had been developed as a means to improve community engagement in regeneration plans. In Auchterarder, CLD staff had supported local groups of adults to develop a well attended community festival entitled '*Lang Toon in June*' and also to seek to buy the community hall. In Blairgowrie, the *Rattray Regeneration Partnership* had significantly increased the level of community activity. The organisation had re-developed a community hall and the *Visions of Rattray* project and public exhibition had helped to engage more local people in regeneration activities. The Community Council produced a useful and regular bulletin to keep people informed of developments. Local groups in Alyth made good use of the funds from the local wind farm to develop and support the *StART Festival*. However, weaknesses in systematic planning, recording, monitoring and evaluation made it difficult to track trends in performance of the community organisations. A local CLD action plan was at an early stage of development and did not yet include specific measurable targets for community capacity building activity.

In Braco, a group of parent volunteers from the *Ardoch Development Trust* (ADT) had secured external funding to enhance the playground as a local community resource. The initiative had involved pupils in all stages in the design and planning of the playground improvements and this had been used by teachers as part of the learning process. The pupils had enjoyed this experience and were actively using the new equipment. Parental involvement in the school had been enhanced. The ADT had brought together members of the village hall committee and the community council. The trust had recruited 146 members in its first year and was now actively pursuing opportunities for funding arising from local wind farm development. There was now a need for relevant training to support trust members to consider future community needs, including growth and change in the local population.

Whilst the majority of Community Development Trusts had high levels of membership, young people generally were under-represented on the trusts and other community organisations. There was now a need to engage young people in membership and planning. The potential to enhance planning by community representatives through sharing experience, knowledge and training between local areas had not yet been sufficiently developed. The authority recognised the need for a more planned and systematic approach to training and support for community organisations but had not yet implemented its plans for a community activist training programme. Evaluating outcomes and measuring the impact of community capacity building support was insufficiently developed.

Areas for improvement

Inspectors identified steps that local managers and staff should take to further build community capacity.

- Implement plans for improved community activist training, including young people, and ensure that these are relevant to both the long-term needs of community development trusts and the emerging demographic, social and economic needs of the communities of Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire.

How well did the CLD service impact on the wider community?

CLD staff and their partners effectively supported creativity and innovation in the communities of Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. CLD staff, Community Link Workers and teaching staff were working in new and innovative ways to support young people in their schools and in the community. There was a strong focus on citizenship and parenting in this work. CLD staff worked effectively with international organisations to foster social enterprise development in rural communities. The Community Development Trusts in Braco, Comrie and Alyth were well organised and had already purchased land, buildings and community facilities as part of their regeneration activities in these communities. CLD staff were working closely with many of these organisations to respond flexibly and creatively to changing and developing communities.

CLD staff, Community Link Workers and teaching staff had responded creatively to the opportunities offered by new school buildings in many of the rural communities. In Crieff and Blairgowrie, these groups of staff had developed new and innovative approaches to deliver citizenship education. As a result, staff crossed professional boundaries to deliver exciting and engaging programmes of learning for young people both within the school and in extra-curricular activities. These groups of staff had also extended these approaches to pupil and family support in Rattray. As a result, work on parenting programmes and family learning produced effective outcomes for young people and their parents. CLD staff also worked with Council Arts Officers and Cultural Co-ordinators to develop the *StART Festival* in Alyth in an approach that combined providing opportunities for learning skills in the arts, with community development and regeneration.

The *Enterprising Eastern Perthshire* project had engaged volunteer local residents and business people in a social enterprise initiative funded by the *Sirrolli Institute*, an international social enterprise organisation. The local group was one of two in Scotland to successfully apply to the *Sirrolli Institute* for grant funding. They had formed a board and advisory panel and had employed a business facilitator to assist local enterprise activity. The group had received training on the *Sirrolli Institute's* methodology, provided advice to business contacts, improved networking activity and were confident and optimistic that their work would result in increased local business StART-ups.

Community Development Trusts had engaged in considerable regeneration activities and were re-vitalising many of the small rural towns. In Comrie, for example, the Development Trust had increased levels of voluntary community activity in a range of projects including local environmental initiatives, a cinema group and a small scale, weekly youth café. Board members were very active and influential and had engaged a significant proportion of local residents as members of the trust. Their community buy-out of former Ministry of Defence land at Cultybraggan had received considerable attention at national level and the Trust had ambitious plans for the development of the community use of the site. Trust members valued the support of the local capacity building worker in providing advice on funding opportunities and links to other departments of Perth and Kinross Council. Members were positive about the support and advice they received from the Council's planning officers. However, they had found it difficult to find positive ways of engaging with and addressing the needs of local young people.

How well did the authority meet the needs of staff and volunteers in CLD?

Full- and part-time CLD staff could access a wide range of training opportunities. CLD staff were generally enthusiastic, motivated and committed to the residents of Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. Staff training and development was systematic and well adapted to the needs of the majority of staff. CLD staff development approaches and training opportunities were now being extended to other Council staff who worked directly with local communities. However, there was room for improvement in relation to training and development of adult learning staff in areas of practice outwith literacy and numeracy.

Full- and part-time CLD Staff and volunteers were motivated, enthusiastic and committed to their work with young people. Staff morale was very high. Training needs were identified through regular support and supervision sessions. Staff annual reviews included discussion on the impact of training on practice. A programme of training was widely available through the Council, including child protection training and ICT to support their work which all staff were expected to attend. A useful child protection training pack had been developed and was used with sessional staff. Staff had developed a training package for sessional youth workers which was delivered across Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. As a result, sessional staff gained a better understanding of the approaches and methods used in youth work and improved their practice.

The CLD team also had access to local and national opportunities funded through their training budget. This included training in literacies and in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). A comprehensive training approach had been taken to develop and implement the new community engagement strategy, leading to greater awareness across services in other parts of the Council. As a result, other council services such as Environmental Services and Housing used innovative approaches such as the *World Café* to consult and engage more effectively with communities. Local community representatives placed a very high value on the quality of support they received from experienced and skilled community capacity building workers. However, there was no system in place to monitor and evaluate impact effectively. Whilst literacy training was well developed, there were fewer opportunities for adult learning staff to develop and refresh their practice in areas beyond adult literacies.

Areas for improvement

Inspectors identified steps the authority should take to meet the needs of staff and volunteers.

- Improve and extend training opportunities for staff in adult learning.

6. How effective was Perth and Kinross Council in key aspects of CLD processes and management?

CLD staff had developed some innovative approaches to working with partners to engage with learners and communities in Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. There was a strong focus on equalities and there were good examples of joint working to address issues of exclusion. Partnership working was effective in both adult learning

and youth work. There were a number of very effective examples in Crieff and Rattray. There were a number of clear and effective Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with voluntary organisations. The work of Health Promotion staff and Community Link Workers was particularly effective. However, there remained scope for further improvement, particularly in continuing to lower barriers to participation in community life in rural communities. Operational planning was not fully effective and required further development. Recording and monitoring of work required further development.

How well did the authority promote inclusion, equality and fairness?

Senior staff directed equalities work. CLD staff were now working with a range of external organisations to develop work with communities of interest such as Gypsy/Travellers, migrants and the elderly. CLD staff training was now focused on equalities. The Adult Literacy and Numeracy partnership worked very effectively with excluded groups such as adults with learning disabilities, prisoners and people with mental health issues.

Over 600 learners from excluded groups were now benefitting from a range of programmes and many were gaining qualifications. Staff had shown good initiative to develop ESOL programmes and these were now delivered to migrant workers in remote communities in employers' premises. CLD staff and school staff worked effectively to support young people at risk of exclusion from school. The Perth Youth Council was fully inclusive and included two members from a Special Needs School and two young people who were looked after and accommodated.

There remained a number of areas for further development. There was scope to further develop work to address barriers caused by living in a rural area. Many residents in Eastern and Strathearn did not have equal access to transport, shops and financial services, despite the initial work of the Community Development Trusts and the *Sirrolli Institute*. However, the focus on equalities in these bodies was still at an early stage of development. Although Perth and Kinross Council had developed some useful and innovative approaches to address these barriers in other parts of the Council through the development of community shops, these approaches had not yet been extended to the inspection areas. There were no community transport initiatives as yet. Work with Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgendered (LGBT) people was in the early stages of development. Although the new school campuses, for example in Auchterarder, had brought high quality facilities to some of the rural communities and small towns, a number of community facilities were not fully accessible for people with disabilities.

Areas for improvement

Inspectors identified steps that local managers and staff should take to promote inclusion, equality and fairness.

- Extend the Council's approaches to addressing equalities to the work of the Community Development Trusts.

How well did the authority plan its delivery of CLD?

Operational plans articulated well with the CLD strategy and the Community Plan. A Business Management and Improvement Plan for the ECS informed the development of operational plans at service and staff team level. Consultation on the community engagement strategy had improved and widened awareness of the standards for community engagement. A *World Café* event on the new strategy had encouraged a broader range of council services to consider their approach to service planning. This resulted in a change of approach by the Council's Environmental Services which had a positive impact on the engagement of local residents in planning environmental improvements to parks and open space areas.

Plans to revise and develop the CLD strategy and the Adult literacy and Numeracy Action Plan for a further three year period were still being formed. Staff recognised that there was a need to re-develop the role of the Lifelong Learning Partnership and to improve communication between operational and strategic partnerships. A draft CLD Action Plan for Eastern Perthshire was at an early stage of development but did not include any measurable or quantifiable targets. Engagement by partners and community groups was effective in area-based regeneration initiatives, where plans had been in place for some time. However it was not clear how the various plans, initiatives and working groups fitted together as a single coherent approach. Relevant planning tools, including LEAP, were used by staff and training had been provided to partners. However, this had not yet resulted in a sufficiently effective approach to setting quantifiable targets and measuring progress.

The majority of staff were involved in monitoring and self-evaluation of their work at local level but the recording and reporting of progress was not yet consistent. In some cases evaluation was limited to informal and unrecorded comments by participants. This weakened the ability of managers and partners to assess progress and take into account the full impact of work at local level in their planning. The service's ability to monitor and evaluate trends in performance over time was still limited. Plans to improve this through the introduction of a new management information system had been identified. However, implementation of the new system was at an early stage of development. There was a need to improve support for Community Development Trusts to build long-term sustainability into their plans in the light of strategic forecasts for population change.

Areas for improvement

Inspectors identified a number of steps that the authority should take to further improve planning the delivery of CLD.

- Implement plans to introduce an improved management information system.
- Improve consistency in recording and reporting on progress.
- Set measurable and timed targets in operational plans.

How well did the authority coordinate partnership working?

There was a range of effective partnership working at local levels. Staff in the *Crieff Learning Centre* and in the *Rattray Area-Based Initiative* worked with the local college and local adult learning teams to provide a high quality learning experience and clear progression routes and referral systems for learners. This had significantly increased numbers of adult learners. This work at local level was well supported by a useful and clear partnership website detailing adult learning opportunities available across Perth and Kinross. There were clear SLAs in place with a number of voluntary organisations working with young people. In Alyth, the *Youth Partnership* supported various activities for young people including *Girls Work*, *Thrillseekers*, youth football and was involved in Strathmore and the Glens youth forum. The SLAs offered the opportunity for different approaches to operate in the same geographic area, while ensuring that service providers were clear about the work each was undertaking. Outcomes for SLAs related to those of the youth work team plan. However, although monitoring processes were in place, the details in the agreements were not fully specific in terms of numbers of people to be worked with or groups developed. There was not yet a management system in place to guarantee that SLAs provided value for money.

The *CLD Partnership Youth Sub Group* had brought together a wide range of partner agencies to share information, network and develop opportunities for young people across the inspection areas. The group offered members good opportunities to share information and network with other professionals. As a result, both the quantity and quality of services to young people had increased. The training sub group had worked to deliver multi-agency access to training and the events group had developed the *Spirit of Youth Awards*. This event attracted business sponsorship and raised public awareness of young peoples' achievements. CLD staff worked very effectively with school staff in Crieff High School where the work with the Community Link Worker and school staff had led to real benefits for pupils and staff.

The Health Improvement Officers and Integration Managers worked effectively together. They had formed a Health Improvement network closely linked to schools and were developing useful programmes to tackle priority health issues including smoking cessation. Community Link Workers had developed an extensive range of partnerships to support an integrated approach to achieving the positive outcomes for children, families and young people. Their work had positive impacts on attendance, raising achievement, parental involvement and family support. Community Link Workers applied a very comprehensive approach to planning. Evaluation took place using monthly statistics and information on activities. The Active Schools coordinator had recruited 50 volunteers across the inspection areas to deliver an effective programme of active schools work.

Features of good practice: Partnership in the Area Based Initiative in Rattray

After consultation and feedback from an employment event set up through the local area learning partnership the adult learning and literacy's staff set up a job club in the area. This resulted in local people entering employment. Participants welcomed that they were able to access help and information from local Jobcentre Plus and Volunteering Centre in a non threatening environment.

More detailed information is available at www.hmie.gov.uk.

Features of good practice: Partnership work between CLD staff and schools staff in Crieff High School

The project targeted all S2 students focusing on national identity, ecology/environment and democracy. Staff worked with 150 students in total, with sessions jointly delivered by a teacher and youth worker. The project linked the work in the classroom with current local issues such as community regeneration and debates on renewable energy. This had enhanced partnership work within the school and had refreshed the curriculum to make learning more meaningful for young people.

More detailed information is available at www.hmie.gov.uk.

Features of good practice: Community Link Workers

Community Link Workers provided a strong example of partnership working and the benefits of an integrated approach to achieving the positive outcomes for children, families and young people. Senior school staff reported positively on impact in terms of promoting a partnership ethos in the schools. The Community Link Workers provided very good links between social work, schools, community organisations and CLD.

More detailed information is available at www.hmie.gov.uk.

Areas for improvement

Inspectors identified a number of steps that the authority should take to further improve partnership working.

- Extend the effective approaches in local partnerships to strategic partnerships.
- Review SLAs to ensure that they provide good value for funding.

7. How effective was Perth and Kinross Council in key aspects of leadership locally?

Senior staff were able to demonstrate a clear and articulate vision of CLD provision that was firmly focused on equalities. Senior staff were highly involved in building and sustaining partnerships at both local and strategic levels. This was now starting to produce some effective outcomes for young people and adults through joint work with health, schools, colleges and the voluntary sector. This work now required to be further developed and extended. Senior CLD staff were in the process of leading their service in a period of significant social and demographic change for the communities of Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. This work was being fully supported by senior management within ECS and in the Council through the provision of training, staff development, compliance with relevant legislation relating to equalities and investment in local facilities. As a result, the culture of the service conveyed a sense of challenge and a willingness to innovate that led to progress for all residents in local communities. Staff were being well supported by elected members. As a result, the extensive range of staff talents and abilities in areas such as youth work, arts, adult learning, and music and community engagement were increasingly being put to best use in communities and resulted in innovative approaches and programmes. This work required to be sustained to meet the opportunities of, and challenges posed by, enhanced community control of local assets and facilities. However, senior CLD staff had not yet developed a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the work of all parts of the staff team, particularly in community capacity building.

Areas for improvement

Inspectors identified steps that Perth and Kinross Council should take to further improve key aspects of leadership locally.

- Ensure that appropriate management information systems are implemented to improve planning.

8. What is Perth and Kinross Council's capacity for improving CLD provision?

With the development of the Perth and Kinross Community Engagement Strategy and associated strategies, there was now an opportunity to continue to improve collaboration and partnership working to improve outcomes and quality of life for all residents in Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire. The work of Community Link Workers and the ongoing development of Community Development Trusts and social enterprises offered significant potential for further joined up working at local level. Whilst there were a number of examples of high quality, innovative and sector leading practice particularly in schools and in the arts, there was still room for improvement, especially with disadvantaged rural groups. The building of new school campuses in many of the communities offered considerable further potential.

Overall, Perth and Kinross Council and its community planning partners had a very good capacity to continue to improve the impact and outcomes of CLD provision. CLD staff and their partners had developed a number of very innovative approaches to engage with

young people and adults. The CLD service and its partners were now at the leading edge of professional practice with social enterprises, community development trusts and arts based community regeneration. The service needed, however, to establish effective information systems to enable them to evaluate, monitor and demonstrate the outcomes of their work. There remained further work to do to improve the extent of involvement of young people in community capacity building, particularly in the Community Development Trusts that were now appearing in their communities.

9. Main points for action

Perth and Kinross Council should take action to address the areas for improvement within this report and the following main points for action.

- Involve young people through their representative forums in community regeneration and social enterprises present in Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire.
- Continue to extend good approaches in equalities work in other parts of the Council area that address barriers such as transport and access to retail and financial services to Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire.
- Develop a more systematic and planned approach to measuring, recording and evaluating the impact of community capacity building support.

10. What happens next?

The authority has been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how it will address the main points for action in this report. The District Inspector and the CLD Link Inspector will continue to monitor progress on the main points for action contained within this report. The authority will be asked to submit a report within two years of the publication of this report outlining progress in meeting these recommendations. HM Inspectors will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.

Philip Denning
HM Inspector
On behalf of HM Chief Inspector

Appendix 1: Quality indicators used to evaluate CLD provision in Strathearn and Eastern Perthshire

HM Inspectors use performance measures and quality indicators when making judgements in their inspections of CLD. The quality indicators used were selected from those published in June 2006 in the publication *HGIOCLD?2*. This publication is available on the website www.hmie.gov.uk.

In the report and this appendix we make clear the judgements made by using these word scale categories:

Excellent	Outstanding, sector leading
Very good	Major strengths
Good	Important strengths with some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Weak	Important weaknesses
Unsatisfactory	Major weaknesses

1.1: Improvements in performance	Very good
1.2: Fulfilment of statutory duties	Very good
2.1: Impact on participants (young people)	Very good
2.1: Impact on participants (adults)	Good
3.1: Impact on staff and volunteers	Very good
4.1: Impact on the local community	Good
4.2: Impact on the wider community	Very good
5.9: Inclusion, equality and fairness	Good
6.3: Operational planning	Satisfactory
8.1: Partnership working	Very good
9.3: Developing people and partnership	Very good

Appendix 2: Glossary of terms used in Perth and Kinross Council

Ardoch Development Trust

A community development trust set up in the village of Braco.

Alyth Girls Work

A partnership between community learning and the Alyth Youth Partnership delivering quality activities for young women and girls in Alyth.

Alyth Youth Partnership

A voluntary group set up to meet needs of young people in Alyth and its surrounding area.

Battle of the Bands

A youth led event to showcase young bands.

CLD Partnership Youth Sub Group

A sub group of the CLD partnership addressing the achievement through learning for young people national priority.

Click Project

A two year project set up to undertake a broad consultation on the demand for youth arts provision across Perth and Kinross.

Comrie Youth Theatre

A community run youth theatre provision in Comrie.

Coupar Angus Regeneration Trust

A community regeneration organisation for the regeneration of urban and rural areas in and around Coupar Angus and the nearby villages, where there is social and economic deprivation.

Crieff Learning Centre

A partnership with Perth College delivering learning opportunities and support to the community.

Enterprising Eastern Perthshire project

A community based project, supported by a panel of local people helping people to start their own business or grow an existing enterprise.

Inspirations project

A personal and social development course for adults.

KFlip skaters' forum

A Kinross based youth forum for skaters.

Lang Toon in June

A week long community led festival in Auchterarder.

One in Eight

A regularly produced magazine written by literacy learners.

Rattray Arts Teen Scheme

A youth based arts project focused on disengaged young people.

Rattray Regeneration Partnership

A rural partnership based in Rattray addressing regeneration for areas of social deprivation.

Return to Learning class

A course for parents of children between the age of 0–3.

Sirrolli Institute

A global, not-for-profit organization of experienced professionals with the mission of introducing Enterprise Facilitation to communities seeking to grow their economies from within.

Spirit of Youth Award

Annual awards given to young people for their contributions to their school or local community.

StART programme

A community arts project based in Eastern Perthshire.

Thrillseekers

A partnership of voluntary, statutory, and private sector partners providing positive alternative activities for young people aged from 12 to 18 years of age.

Visions of Rattray

A community engagement project using photography based in Rattray.

World Café

A method of community engagement based on the premise that conversation is the most natural form of social activity.

Young Women's Christian Association

The Young Women's Christian Association based in Coupar Angus with activities for women of all ages.

How can you contact us?

If you would like an additional copy of this report

Copies of this report have been sent to the Chief Executive of the local authority, the Executive Director of ECS, senior and local staff, Members of the Scottish Parliament, and to other relevant individuals and agencies. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, Directorate 5, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA or by telephoning 01506 600256. Copies are also available on our website www.hmie.gov.uk.

HMIE Feedback and Complaints Procedure

Should you wish to comment on any aspect of community learning and development inspections you should write in the first instance to Annette Bruton, HMCI, at HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to our Complaints Manager, HMIE Business Management and Communications Team, Second Floor, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston, EH54 6GA. You can also e-mail HMIEComplaints@hmie.gsi.gov.uk. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office, by telephoning 01506 600200 or from our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The SPSO is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to the SPSO, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330 (fax 0800 377 7331) or e-mail: ask@sps.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.sps.org.uk.

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