Creating a Constructive Interface between Community Planning and Spatial Planning

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Aims of the presentation

• To disentangle different understandings of planning

• To explain the context, rationale and purpose of community planning

• To present a comparative analysis of community planning models in Scotland and Wales

• To provide a series of discussion points and recommendations to inform how a constructive interface between community planning and spatial planning could be created
Introduction

• Unique opportunity in Northern Ireland to develop a symbiotic relationship between community planning and spatial planning

• Need to assert a longer term, more strategic approach to service delivery and space/land use

• Better integration of these operations have the potential to achieve better outcomes for communities/citizens

• Success will require a new civic infrastructure and culture change
Research Methodology and Framework

The evidence informing this paper has been gathered through a combination of:

1. Individual and collective academic research and review of existing scholarly literature relating to land use planning reform and local government moderation;
2. Analyses of policy documents, strategies and reports, on community planning in Scotland and on community strategies and collaborative working in Wales;
3. Engagement with land use planning reform and community planning implementation;
4. Observation of meetings and other events on local government reform and community planning.
Definitions and themes

- **Land use planning**: the regulation and forward management of land and property development in the broader public interest.

- **Strategic planning**: the territorial management of land use and development with a regional, more comprehensive perspective.

- **Spatial planning**: beyond land use to embrace sector planning, regeneration and local service delivery, and promote connectivity.

- **Community planning**: promotes the social, economic and environmental well-being of their area through identifying long-term objectives for achieving sustainable development.
“there is no single model, or definition, of community – communities are as diverse as their members or residents, which is one of their key strengths”

“capacity of a community to: identify, analyse, collaborate, and solve pressing societal needs and issues through the efforts of engaged citizens and organisations working across boundaries”

Community Planning

“community implies having something in common. Their common interest in things gives them a common interest in each other. They work together. ”

“is the process that councils, other public sector organisations, businesses and voluntary and community groups take to work together with local communities to plan and deliver local services, which can make a difference to people's lives”
Community Planning in Northern Ireland

• New integrative model of collaborative working to mainstream the principles of sustainable development into local governance

• Inform the design and implementation of quality local services

• Offers a conduit to consider:
  1. the ethics and operation of a new civic culture by modernising the state and the machinery of government
  2. democratic renewal and civic renaissance
  3. opportunities for developing social learning

• A laboratory to test how a constructive interface between community planning and spatial (land use) planning might be operationalised
Learning from elsewhere: Scotland

• Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 provides the legislative framework for community planning

• Community Planning Partnerships bring together key players responsible for devising integrated programmes of local service delivery

• Community planning provides:
  1. the over-arching policy and priority framework in a given jurisdiction
  2. vertical connections between national priorities and those arrangements at regional, local and neighbourhood levels of governance
  3. a means to promote community engagement (with respect to public services)
  4. flexibility for different models of delivery
Learning from elsewhere: Wales

• Community Planning initiated by the Local Government Act 2000

• Ambition to: (1) transform local authorities; (2) enhance the quality of life of local communities; (3) achieve sustainable development through strengthening community leadership role of local government and policy coordination to deliver quality services

• Community Planning (Process)
• Community Strategies (Product)
• Local Services Boards (Practice)
• Local Services Agreements (Outcomes)
Learning from elsewhere: Wales

• The alignment between spatial planning and community planning in Wales can be articulated as follows:
  • “the Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) sets the agenda for the long-term strategic development of an area;
  • Community Strategies identify longer term strategic priorities necessary to improve and sustain local quality of life and wellbeing; and
  • Local Service Boards are the focus for joining up critical services to meet the needs of citizens.”

  (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007; 14)

• Dynamic and shifting strategic and local context
  • Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan (WIIP)
  • move towards a model of Single Integrated Plans (SIPs)
  • focus on measuring impact and distinguishing lines of accountability
The interface between community planning and spatial planning

- **Services**: Community Planning, Plan Strategy, Community Plan
- **Space**: Spatial (Land Use) Planning
- **Social**: Services, Space
- **People**: Community Planning
- **Polity**: Services, Social, People, Space, Economic, Environmental

Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)
Conclusions

• Northern Ireland is on a ‘learning’ journey

• Structural, organisational, procedural and cultural change

• Planning enterprises require a robust understanding of the relationship between *people* and *place*

• Councils need to take a more strategic, local authority-led approach that involves citizens in place-shaping to deliver sustainable change

• Develop a ‘spatial fix’ to address barriers that exist in linking service delivery (Community Planning) with spatial management (Spatial Planning)
Recommendation

• Need to create some critical space during the implementation of local government reform to establish strategic agendas

• Introduce a Strategic Statement of Intent for each new Council as an integrative vehicle for regional reporting

• Articulate ways in which land use planning (development plans) and community planning (service delivery) address inherited problems

• Support the performance improvement dimension of the Local Government Bill to monitor the symbiotic exercises of community planning and spatial planning

• Be part of the remit for the Partnership Panel to discuss and disseminate best practice
Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland.