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Consultation Document

Communities First – The Future

Date of issue: 5 July 2011

Action required: Responses by 26 September 2011



communities first **cymunedau yn gyntaf**

Overview

From April 2012, the Welsh Government's Communities First programme will be a Community Focused Programme that will support the Welsh Government's Anti-Poverty agenda. This consultation document seeks views on the changes proposed to the Communities First programme.

In this document, we are proposing new structures for delivering the Communities First programme with a greater focus on evidencing the impact that locally funded activities have toward three strategic outcomes – Prosperous Communities, Learning Communities and Healthier Communities.

The changes proposed strike a balance between delivering the priorities of local communities and those at the regional and national level within the strategic outcomes outlined above.

New structures for the management of the programme both locally, regionally and nationally will provide more consistent governance and financial accountability across the programme, with clear and consistent demarcation of roles and responsibilities. These changes will also provide a greater focus on ensure that Welsh Government and regional priorities are aligned to those of at the local level.

How to respond

Responses can be made online via the Consultation area of the Welsh Government website - www.wales.gov.uk/consultations, Communities First - the Future and an online response form can be found under "housing and community".

We will also accept written responses to this consultation using the questionnaire in Annex B of this document. Responses should be received by the Welsh Government by **26 September 2011**.

Further information on the Communities First programme can be found at www.wales.gov.uk/communitiesfirst.

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language version of this document are available on request.

Following the closing date, all response will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence. We aim to issue an analysis report on this consultation process by 30 October 2011 and a final version of this policy as soon as possible thereafter.

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Data protection

How the views and information you give us will be used.

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

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1. PREFACE BY THE MINISTER

Firstly, I would like to thank all those involved in taking forward the Communities First programme, and making sustained change in the communities you work with, despite these uncertain and testing times. This consultation document confirms the Welsh Government's continuing commitment to the programme in order to tackle the issues faced by our most disadvantaged communities and improve the life chances for the individuals who live there.

I have visited many Communities First areas across Wales in my previous role as Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, and have been impressed by the innovative and high quality work that is being undertaken to support our most disadvantaged communities.

We have had many successes as a result of the programme; however we have also been challenged. For example, the Wales Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee reports on the programme in 2009 and 2010 respectively both recommended a number of ways in which the programme should be improved. We have also taken into account the emerging findings from the Evaluation report on the programme.

As the Minister responsible for this programme, it is my job to learn from what has worked well and what has been less successful in order to ensure that every pound of public money is spent for the benefit of our disadvantaged communities and supports the delivery of the improved outcomes we want to see for the people of Wales. This consultation document aims to ensure that the programme does not stand still. It will build on the successes of the early years as a foundation, capitalise on the capacity that has been built across Wales, and use every avenue available to transform the lives of people living in our most disadvantaged communities

In moving forward, our shared ambition will be to ensure that the Communities First programme, in which the Welsh Government has invested heavily over the last ten years, can deliver agreed priorities - both locally and nationally. The programme must be able to tackle the root cause of poverty and deal with its effects, whilst still retaining what Communities First is all about - community solutions to community problems.

This will be a challenge, as you will see from the renewed focus of the programme, but is one I hope you will help me to meet. I want to move to the new structure of the programme as soon as possible but recognise that detailed discussions will be needed to agree what will work best for each area. Clearly you are placed to tell me what works and what doesn't and I want to hear those views.



Carl Sargeant AM
Minister for Local Government and Communities

2. THE COMMUNITIES FIRST PROGRAMME POST MARCH 2012

2.1 The Vision for Communities First

From April 2012 Communities First will be a **Community Focussed Programme that will support the Welsh Government's Anti-Poverty agenda**. It will support the most disadvantaged people in our most deprived areas with the aim of contributing to alleviating persistent poverty. It will focus on those actions that can be undertaken, with the support of the community, that have the greatest impact on **education/skills, economic and health outcomes**, ultimately leading to the long term sustainability and wellbeing of communities. In relation to education and skills, the focus will be on supporting work that will ultimately improve the employability of individuals.

The programme will aim to contribute, alongside other programmes, to narrowing the education/skills, economic and health gaps between our most deprived and more affluent areas.

The programme will do this by:

- supporting those individuals, families and groups of people who have the poorest education/skills, economic and health outcomes especially in places where deprivation is most concentrated;
- increasing individuals' the life skills, self esteem and self reliance of individuals, including their financial capability;
- supporting and strengthening the local activity which does most to tackle poverty and deprivation, with community organisations and communities themselves as key partners.

In all of this, we will seek to learn from, and build on, experience gained in the first decade of Communities First. Community engagement will continue to be an essential element of the programme. There will also need to be increased collaboration and partnership working between local areas and partners across the public, private and third sectors to ensure that the work implemented at a community level relates strongly to regional and national priorities. For example, the Communities First programme will have a vital role in supporting the implementation of the Welsh Government's Child Poverty Strategy. In Regeneration Areas we will ensure that Communities First complements wider regeneration activity as part of an integrated programme of investment. We will also look to strengthen links with Housing Associations who play a key role in this area.

Also, the future programme will play a key role in taking forward the Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Scheme, One Wales: One Planet. This confirms that sustainable development is the central organising principle of the Welsh Government. The Scheme sets out our vision of a sustainable Wales, and this includes a commitment to *"Safe, sustainable, attractive communities in which people live and work, have access to services, and enjoy good health and can play their full roles as citizens."* The Scheme states that a key aim of our overall approach to sustainable development is *"To empower people in communities through active citizenship to engage with and find solutions for their communities"*. The future programme will have a key role in contributing to this aim.

In order to achieve the aims of the programme, we recognise that there will be a need for geographical targeting to be combined with a focus on interventions that support the most disadvantaged individuals and groups. Evidence about how poverty can best be tackled indicates that some emphasis on geographic targeting remains appropriate, to concentrate limited resources where they can have the greatest impact and improve the living conditions of everyone living in deprived places, but also that greater emphasis is needed on helping individuals and groups with specific needs, wherever they live.

Therefore, whilst geographic boundaries will be a key part of the future programme, we recognise that local flexibility will be needed to ensure that fixed boundaries do not unduly hinder effective working with key agencies to the extent that people who are most disadvantaged lose out.

2.2. Summary of Key Developments

Achieving the programme aims will depend on a range of factors. These are summarised below and developed in more detail throughout the document:

a. Whole Government Support

There will be collective Cabinet commitment to support Communities First areas and activities through all relevant Government policies and programmes. The Welsh Government will also work to ensure that Government Sponsored Bodies (GSBs), Local Authorities and Local Health Boards (through Directors of Public Health) are similarly committed to working closely with the programme. At the same time, the programme itself will need to demonstrate the contribution it is making to key national priorities.

b. Shared Objectives

Striking a balance between the strategic priorities of the programme – principally strengthening communities and tackling poverty – will be essential. Community leadership and involvement will remain crucial but so will effective working with local, regional and national agencies. The objective here will be to ensure that local priorities can be agreed and supported by all the appropriate agencies and funders as well as by the Welsh Government.

c. Effective Partnership Working.

To facilitate the engagement of key partners and maximise resources, the new programme structure will be based on fewer, larger “Clusters”. In many cases this will mean combining existing Communities First areas, though the programme will not necessarily be restricted to those areas – and neither will any of the existing areas automatically be carried forward into the new phase of the programme. Effective partnership-working will still be essential but the programme will be less prescriptive about the particular structures required in each area.

d. Targeting Resources to Support Disadvantaged People

The Welsh Government will expect the actions delivered through Communities First to be based on clear evidence of need. This will need to take full account of the most recent Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), which is due to be published on the 31st

August 2011, and other relevant evidence. As highlighted above, there will be greater flexibility of boundaries to ensure that the programme supports the individuals, families and groups who are most disadvantaged, and also to facilitate closer working between communities and strategic partners.

e. Community Programmes and Hubs

There will be scope for each of the new Communities First Clusters to develop a programme that reflects the needs of that area and the aims of the local communities and their partners. As well as core funding for each cluster, resources will be available to support the appropriate local actions and structures. In many cases local “Community Hub” organisations will play a key role in coordinating and leading this work.

f. Demonstrating the Impact of the Programme

Communities First must be able to clearly demonstrate its contribution to addressing the **education/skills, economic and health outcomes** for disadvantaged people and communities. The programme will also need to demonstrate how much the community itself has been engaged in delivering the programme. A new outcomes framework for the programme will be developed and will include a set of key indicators which will show how the variety of local activity is contributing to strategic outcomes.

g. Supporting the Communities First Workforce

The Welsh Government recognises that there is a skilled and committed workforce working in our most deprived areas and with the most disadvantaged people. This includes both paid staff and community members whose voluntary commitment underpins the whole programme. Work on supporting this workforce is being undertaken through the Community Development Workforce Action Plan. We are committed to ensuring that all those supporting the programme have access to appropriate training and guidance, within a robust framework, so that the overall aims of the programme can be delivered effectively and those who may undertake different roles are fully supported to do so.

h. Simplified Management Structure, Coordination and Support.

A simplified management structure will be introduced to reduce bureaucracy and ensure more consistent delivery of Communities First across Wales. The new Communities First Clusters will be supported by a smaller number of Grant Recipient Bodies who will coordinate at the local authority or regional level. Their role will include engagement with key service providers and statutory bodies; monitoring of outcome and indicators; governance and financial management; sharing and promotion of good practice; and conflict resolution. Unified national support arrangements will also be introduced.

3. PEOPLE AND PLACES: TARGETING UNDER THE PROGRAMME

3.1 Supporting the Most Disadvantaged People

As highlighted above, programme delivery under the current Communities First Programme is restricted to specific geographic areas. We recognise that fixed boundaries have been a cause for concern in many areas. For example, there have been instances where neighbouring areas have faced significant levels of deprivation on certain issues, e.g. health, but have not been able to get support under the programme. There have also been cases where key partners, such as local authorities and health providers, have found it more difficult to engage effectively because their own structures and resources could not easily be aligned to the Communities First boundaries.

Related to this, the focus on geographic areas with fixed boundaries has, in some cases, detracted from the intention to focus activity on helping the most deprived individuals, families and groups. It is clear that not everyone living in Communities First areas is equally in need of support and not all activity is equally effective in reducing poverty. While geography continues to play a significant part in identifying areas with high rates of people in poverty in Wales, it is not the only factor to be considered.

From April 2012, therefore, there will be greater flexibility to determine both the geographic and thematic scope of Communities First in each area through local and regional discussion. This will help ensure that pre-determined boundaries do not exclude people or organisations wishing to participate and allow more support to go to individuals and groups who are most at need, wherever they live. On the other hand, **no area will have an automatic right to receive Communities First funding** without evidence of a realistic and worthwhile delivery plan first being provided.

A key change we are also proposing is that the designated programme areas will be based on larger geographic areas. There are currently over 150 Communities First partnerships covering areas of different sizes – the populations vary between several hundred people and, in a few cases, over 15,000. We are proposing that in future there should be significantly fewer designated Communities First areas, each covering a larger area than the present average. This will also help, in our view, address the concerns expressed by many service providers that it is difficult to “bend” resources to many Communities First areas given the inconsistencies of the populations covered.

3.2 Factors to Determine Where the Programme will Operate

Throughout this consultation period, the Welsh Government will be discussing with key partners in each local authority/regional area how the future programme should be targeted in their locality. The programme will predominantly focus on deprived areas at a community level (as currently) but programme boundaries will then be negotiated locally by community and statutory partners, taking into account the views of local Partnerships and planning processes, for example Local Service Boards. The following are the key factors that should, in our view, help determine where the targeting takes place:

- The **local programme areas will be based on “Clusters” of deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)**. The main focus will be LSOAs which feature in the most deprived 10% as defined by WIMD. Clusters may also include neighbouring LSOAs

which are somewhat less deprived though resources must be concentrated on areas and people with the greatest need.

- The **target population for each local programme area would be around 10,000-15,000 residents (around 7-10 LSOAs)**. We would expect no more than 4 Clusters to be submitted for inclusion in the programme from any local authority area with the expectation that most will have fewer than this. However, consideration will be given to having more than 4 Clusters, should a convincing case be made.
- **WIMD will be one very important tool for identifying local programme areas, but not the only one.** Other considerations will be those with a local relevance, for example such as local school catchment areas, location of local health services, major employment centres – and other aspects, such as rurality, which could be relevant to the local community. It will be a matter for the local areas to undertake needs analysis and provide the evidence.
- **In Local Authority areas which contain very few LSOAs in the “most deprived” ranks, we recognise that the “clustered” approach will not be readily feasible, due to geographical spread.** Whilst the management and delivery structure (below) will go some way to address this, by allowing distinct communities to share resources and supporting flexible arrangements for community representation and involvement, we feel that it is important to promote join-up and sharing of resources with clusters in neighbouring Local Authorities. We recognise that this will pose some practical problems which will need consideration.
- **Recognise that targeting will also be based on considering the needs of specific individuals and groups.** Evidence of this will need to be provided through the domains contained in the WIMD or other evidence, as detailed above. This programme will also have to work closely with others to ensure that these individuals’ needs are supported.
- **It is critical that we continue to support those areas where Communities First has proved a success and had a major impact.** Therefore, in addition to WIMD and other evidence targeting we will need to consider those existing Communities First areas where the operation of the programme has been a success. The Welsh Government does not want to lose the momentum gained in those areas. Other existing areas may also merit inclusion in one of the new Clusters, and in many cases there will be existing Communities First projects, activities or examples of effective community engagement which can demonstrate their contribution to reducing poverty and which should be sustained under the new arrangements.

3.3 Why Communities?

In view of the significant changes proposed in this document, and in particular the increased focus on working with the most deprived individuals and groups in Wales, wherever they live, it is worth reviewing the reasons for the continuing commitment of Communities First to concentrating resources in particular places. These can be summarised as follows:

- The evidence shows that there are particular concentrations of poverty in some parts of Wales. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation reveals that the most deprived areas (approximately the “bottom” 10% of LSOAs) experience a particularly severe combination of negative factors which impact on a high proportion of the people living in those areas. While it is true that not everyone who lives in deprived places is poor, the nature of the physical and social environment can impact on everyone.
- There is broad agreement that it would not be appropriate to spread the limited resources of the programme across every part of Wales. The main objections to the form of spatial targeting used to date have been that the existing programme was based on rigid boundaries and lacked flexibility to allow key partners to engage across wider areas. These issues are addressed by our proposals and it is therefore hoped that there will be greater support for the degree of geographic targeting that will remain.
- The intention is to build on the achievements of the Communities First programme in its first decade, and to sustain the excellent work that is being undertaken in many of the existing CF areas. The challenge to the existing partnerships will be to move to new ways of working and to share resources more effectively with their neighbours, but much of the present work should continue.
- Citizen engagement and community involvement have been key features of Communities First from the outset and this will continue. The programme is both distinctive and effective in this regard and our intention is that we should build on the experience of the past ten years about the particular contributions which community action can make to tackling poverty.
- As set out elsewhere in this document, we recognise that the Communities First workforce is a key resource which should be valued and sustained. This includes staff, many of whom have developed deep knowledge of the communities where they work and who are highly respected and valued by local people. The “workforce” also includes thousands of volunteers and local people whose commitment is primarily to their own community and the work they have built up in the past ten years. The continuing focus on community-based action will ensure that the skills, energy and commitment are not lost.

4. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

We are proposing a new structure for delivering the programme. This aims to strike the right balance between delivering at a community level, in line with local priorities, whilst also ensuring that the work undertaken shows clearly how it is helping to take forward regional and national priorities. The new structure will also provide more consistent governance and financial accountability, providing reassurance and support for everyone involved with Communities First as well as safeguarding public money. It will also provide a clear and consistent demarcation of roles and responsibilities.

The proposed new Delivery and Support Structure is attached at Annex A, with a “Glossary of Terms at Annex C. In summary, the strategic direction will be set by the Welsh Government. The main vehicle for doing this will be a “Programme Board” that will also link to our Anti-Poverty Action Plan as it is developed. Under the Welsh Government Programme Board there will be a number of Grant Recipient Bodies/Central Teams (which will report to Local Programme Boards). They will have a range of responsibilities which will include managing the funding provided by the Welsh Government, and monitoring and reporting on the work undertaken in the local “Clusters” and how they relate to regional and national outcomes. Delivery in the “Clusters” will be led by Local Delivery Teams which will report to the Grant Recipient Bodies/Central Teams and, ultimately the Local Programme Boards.

The proposed roles and responsibilities at each level are explained in more detail below.

4.1 Welsh Government – Whole Government level

Lead responsibility for programme delivery will lie with the Minister for Local Government and Communities. However, the First Minister will also have a role in ensuring cross-Ministerial commitment to achieving the programme aims of improving the education/skills, economic and health outcomes for individuals in our most deprived areas to ensure that the programme’s aims are achieved, we propose that:

- There will be commitment from each Government Minister to prioritise local programme areas within their portfolios (and the work of Government Sponsored Bodies) and monitor them.
- A Programme Board will be established to facilitate collaboration between Welsh Government policy areas in a way that reflects sustainable development as the Welsh Government’s central organising principle. It will also perform a wider scrutiny function to ensure that the programme is meeting the high level national outcomes set out above. Consideration will be given to the areas this Board will cover to ensure that a joined up approach is taken on the Welsh Government’s Anti Poverty Agenda.
- It is important that this programme not only complements other programmes which tackle and alleviate poverty in Wales, but that all programmes with this shared aim work closely together in order to deliver support in a more effective way consistent with our approach to sustainable development.
- There will be a need for coordination where different programmes within the Welsh Government have shared target beneficiaries. The Programme Board will be one way

of ensuring this joined-up delivery, but there is also a need to identify what Government interventions are working with similar beneficiaries, and set out clearly how different programmes can work together to best effect.

4.2 Welsh Government - Programme Management

It is proposed that the overall programme management for Communities First post March 2012 will continue to be undertaken by Policy and Delivery Teams within the Welsh Government's Communities Division.

The Welsh Government's Policy Team's role will be to:

- Work closely with policy colleagues in other Welsh Government Departments to ensure collaboration on working with the programme;
- Provide secretariat for the Welsh Government's Communities First Programme Board;
- Work closely with local Programme Boards (see below) to ensure that national priorities and policy information are shared and cascaded as necessary;
- Set the Guidance and Criteria for programme; and
- Lead on Monitoring and Evaluation Activity for the programme in conjunction with the Welsh Government's Social Research Division.

The Welsh Government's Delivery Team's role will be to manage and oversee the relationship with the local Programme Boards, Central Teams and Local Area Teams. This will involve:

- Appraisal of initial funding applications for local Clusters;
- Managing and monitoring the funding to Grant Recipient Bodies;
- Advising the Minister, Programme Board and Communities Division Policy Team on overall progress and issues affecting the programme in each area and region;
- Monitoring of compliance with governance rules;
- Monitoring the progress being made against the contribution to the Strategic Outcomes;
- Engaging with the Local Delivery Teams and local authority level/regional programme boards on programme development and supplementary project funding bids.
- Liaison with the Communities First Support Contractor to ensure consistency across all areas in respect of programme delivery, training and advice and related issues.

4.3 Local Authority Areas and Co-ordination

The programme post March 2012 will have a much stronger focus on how national priorities and targets will be addressed at a local level. Therefore, it will be important to ensure that there is a clear understanding at all levels of what the key national priorities are, and where communities are best placed to contribute to addressing these.

The current Communities First Programme supports a range of Central Teams across the country and these have been used as an intermediary between government and local communities. They have varied considerably in size and composition and in their roles and responsibilities.

After April 2012, we are proposing that there will be much greater consistency and clarity between these teams, both in terms of the funding provided to them and their roles and responsibilities. The aim here will be to reduce administrative costs while reducing the burden on local teams so that resources can be focussed primarily on serving local people.

During the consultation period, we will enter into discussions with communities and local partners on the appropriate structures to support the new clusters and also the geographic areas that they should cover. We see a range of partners having a role in this, including, for example, Local Service Boards and Local Health Boards. We will seek to ensure a fair distribution of the management of "Clusters". However, we recognise that consideration must be given to wider policy developments, for example how could this link to the findings of the Simpson Report on Local Government and also could/should the Co-ordination Bodies be aligned to the existing boundaries of, for example, Local Health Boards.

Overall we will seek to reduce the number of Grant Recipient Bodies/Central Teams to the minimum number practical to ensure good governance and effective support to local communities.

The Coordinating structures will include Programme Boards at the local authority or regional level which will allow key stakeholders including service providers and local communities to discuss issues relating to the programme. Other functions to be delivered at this level will include:

- Management and monitoring of the contribution to the Programme's Strategic Outcomes of each Cluster and Local Delivery Team .
- Employment of a "Central" Communities First team for the local authority area or region.
- Where appropriate, management of the Local Area Delivery Teams who will work in the Clusters, including in some cases employment of locally-based staff.
- Financial management and governance responsibilities.
- Engagement with local authorities, health boards and other public service organisations to look for opportunities for programmes to work closely with the Communities First areas and "bend" their programmes.
- Promotion of wider collaboration between local Clusters in order for them to have greater influence (critical mass) in "programme bending".
- Engagement with other organisations (national and regional) that operate in the region with the aim of working closely with Communities First areas;
- Collating good practice from the Local Areas
- Management of complaints, conflict and other problems within the Local Clusters where issues cannot be resolved locally.

Links with Local Service Boards

Local Service Boards (LSBs) are key to the Welsh Government's public service reform policy. They have a crucial role in developing ambitious, innovative collaborative working and meeting the challenges for both public services and our communities over the coming years. The Welsh Government's ambition is both for the development and implementation of excellent, citizen centred services and the evolution of an efficient, effective fully integrated and collaborative public service system. In this next phase of the Communities First Programme it is essential that strong links are developed between LSBs and the

Communities First programme's Co-ordination Bodies and Clusters, to better deliver improved outcomes by integrating services, relevant local projects and activity. It is unlikely that any Communities First local programme will be able to deliver on many priorities without close working with their LSB. The Welsh Government has already increased its support to achieve this through the European Structural Funds Priority 4 LSB project in Convergence areas.

4.4 Local Area Delivery – Communities First Clusters

To deliver the programme at a local level, the programme will support Local Area Delivery Teams. These teams could either be directly employed by a Grant Recipient Body operating at the local authority or regional level or sub-contracted and managed through Service Level Agreements by local Community “Hub” organisations.

We propose that Local Area Delivery Teams will be responsible for delivering the programme in each Cluster of LSOAs, in collaboration with strong local community representation – see below. We anticipate that there will be a maximum of 4 Local Area Clusters / Delivery Teams per local authority area. However, the numbers will vary by Local Authority Area, with fewer in many cases. Consideration will be given to more than 4 Clusters should an exceptional case be made in areas with very high concentration of deprivation across many communities.

The geographic areas covered by Local Area Delivery Teams will be significantly bigger than those covered by the great majority of current programme co-ordination teams (circa 10,000 – 15,000 population). As set out above, the focus on ensuring that people most in need of support benefit from the programme will be as important as the geographic boundaries.

The role of the Local Area Delivery Team would be to:

- Manage the delivery of the programme within their “Clusters”
- Provide the Local Authority/Regional Central Team with progress reports against the Outcomes for the programme
- Build links with partners in the statutory, third and business sectors.
- Work with local community representation, putting in place systems to ensure appropriate community representation.

4.5 Hubs

In some cases the Local Area Delivery Teams will be employed directly by a Grant Recipient Body at the local authority or regional level. In others, however, it will be more appropriate and effective for a local organisation to take this role as employer and programme manager at the local level. Such organisations already support the Communities First programme in many areas and we want to see their role continued and strengthened within the new framework of the programme. However, it may not be realistic that such a Community Hub organisation could be found for each of the new Clusters. Alternatively, there may well be more than one key community organisation in Clusters so

that it would not be right to focus resources disproportionately within one. The situation will vary depending on local circumstances.

We therefore anticipate that Community Hubs will play a key role in some Clusters but not in all. All such organisations will need to understand that their role is to facilitate partnership working with the widest possible range of stakeholders in the programme, including statutory partners, other private and third sector organisations and – of course – the communities themselves. The aims of the programme cannot be delivered in any area by a single organisation working alone, but Community Hubs which facilitate genuine partnership working will be welcomed.

4.6 Local Community Representation

As highlighted at the start of this consultation document, the Welsh Government wants to ensure that community engagement is at the forefront of the programme post March 2012. It will be essential that the appropriate community engagement mechanisms are put in place to ensure that there is strong partnership working to deliver the programme. The representation from the community, statutory, voluntary and business sectors in whatever balance must be appropriate to the community.

How this is best managed will be determined locally. This could be through existing Communities First Partnerships (particularly those that have been successful) or other partnership structures such as working groups, or other mechanisms most appropriate to the communities in question including existing community cohesion groups. We want to encourage creativity and imaginative approaches to participation to ensure that the widest possible range of people can play an active part in the programme, in line with their own interests and capacity. Any arrangements should ensure that the community can be very fully involved in deciding how best to tackle poverty in their area and in helping to deliver the agreed programme of work throughout the next phase of Communities First and beyond. We envisage that local elected representatives will have an important role to play in this. Similarly we would expect significant efforts to involve the private sector in the programme at each level.

Particularly important also will be need to accommodate and encourage children and young people to voice their opinions. It will be vital that all efforts are made to engage with all groups within the community, including those perceived as “hard to reach”.

We are proposing that the community representation will not have a direct role in programme administration issues or supervision of staff. In contrast to the current Communities First programme where each of the local Partnerships has a dedicated Communities First Co-ordinator and team, the role of the Local Area Team Delivery team will be to manage the work in the Cluster. They will work with the community to develop local priorities, and the great majority of Communities First staff will continue to be based in the most deprived communities, but they will be directly accountable to their employer organisation, the Local Authority or Regional-level Programme Board and ultimately the Welsh Government.

It will therefore be all the more important that the community representation structures and processes agreed in each area are sufficient to ensure that the community retains a strong stake in the programme. Local Cluster Teams and Local Authority/Regional Programme

Boards will need to demonstrate from the outset and throughout the life of the programme that they have the confidence of the communities involved and that increasing numbers of local people have the opportunity to express their views and contribute to Communities First in a variety of ways.

4.7 National Support Contractor

The current programme has 3 National Support Contracts. These are “Advice and Support” and “Training” which are both undertaken by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action and “Information Services” which is undertaken by Empower.

We are proposing that for the future programme there will be one national contractor employed to provide support to the Local Area Delivery Teams and the Local Authority/Regional Programme Boards.

The broad role of this contractor will be to provide:

- Guidance and support to local programmes and local area delivery teams
- Information services (e.g. annual conference, website, etc.)
- Training – to include mandatory and developmental training, in line with local programme area priorities and taking into account the Community Development Workforce Action Plan (CDWAP). Also, focus will be given on training on the proposed Results Based Accountability (RBA) activity – see section 6 for more information.
- A structure for sharing good practice on the impact the programme has had on an area and individual level.
- Ongoing support on developing outcomes and the monitoring & evaluation of the work undertaken at a local level, through action research.

All of the above work will need to tie in closely with that of the Local Authority/Regional Programme Boards. The contractor for this role will be appointed through a Welsh Government procurement process. We would welcome your views on what other types of support should be provided.

5. FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

As highlighted above, the Welsh Government is proposing major changes to the structure of the programme and how it operates. The main objectives in this regard are to ensure effective delivery of Communities First and maximum value for money so that the programme has the greatest possible impact in the next few years and the longer term. We also want to be as consistent as possible in the staffing and delivery structures and in the funding that is offered to local areas, while continuing to take account of the variety of local circumstances. The following is our proposal on how funding will be allocated under the programme.

5.1 Funding: Local Authority/Regional structures.

We will seek to keep administrative costs for the programme to a minimum while ensuring that the burdens of administration and monitoring are lifted as far as possible from front-line Communities First staff so that their efforts can be focussed on supporting people in deprived communities.

We will do this by reducing the number of Grant Recipient Bodies for the programme and clarifying the roles and responsibilities to be discharged consistently by Programme Boards and Central Teams on behalf of all the Clusters and Local Area Delivery Teams in their areas. These roles are set out at 4.3 above.

We propose the following roles within Communities First Central Teams at the local authority or regional level:

- Programme Manager.
- Deputy Programme Manager
- Monitoring Officer – to lead on reporting to the Government within the Outcomes Based Framework
- Finance Officer– claims to WAG for funding, distribute funding to Local Area Delivery Teams, monitoring, governance and compliance
- Policy and Programme Bending Officer – specific responsibility for exploring and developing programme bending opportunities, working with public sector bodies in the region.
- Administration – supporting all the above functions.

5.2 Delivery Funding: Local Area Delivery Teams & Community Hubs

A Local Area Delivery Team will be funded in each Local Cluster. The team's overall role is outlined above and the core team members that will be funded as follows. :

- Cluster Manager – overall leadership, management of work in the Clusters and reporting on progress to the local authority area/regional programme board;
- Up to five Co-ordinators/Development Workers to lead on engagement with communities covered by the local programme and delivery of key projects and activities.
- Finance & Monitoring Officer – manages and monitors finances and outcomes / outputs at the local level.
- Administrator – supports all the above roles for work in the Clusters.

Where a “Community Hub” organisation has been identified to lead the programme in a Cluster and act as the employer for the core team, funding will be available to facilitate this role. The detail of this would be subject to local discussion.

5.3 Additional Programme and Outcomes Funding

While the Local Area Delivery team in each Cluster will have a central role in delivering the strategic and local aims of the programme, we anticipate that in each area additional funding will be needed to support the particular work that has been agreed for that area, tackle the main aspects of poverty and support the most disadvantaged people.

We therefore anticipate that local Delivery Teams will be supplemented with additional resources which may include specialist staff (such as health or youth workers) and programme budgets to allow delivery of agreed aims and worthwhile local projects. The scope and extent of such additional funding will vary to reflect local circumstances so that not all Delivery Teams will have the same make-up.

The Welsh Government recognises that there is much good work being undertaken under the current Communities First Programme which is of value to local people and contributing to the various regional and national priorities. We will discuss with the local stakeholders how this work can best be taken forward. Posts funded must show how they are contributing to the strategic outcomes of improving the education/skills, economic and health outcomes of individuals.

The Communities First Outcomes Fund, which is embedded in the current Communities First programme, provides funding to support the development of additional services in partnership with other public sector organisations. The Fund has provided money to a number of projects to date across a range of areas and is supporting the engagement of service providers in the programme. We propose that the principles of the Outcomes Fund will continue under the new programme but it will be more fully integrated into the main programme. Wherever possible additional funding agreed to supplement the Local Delivery Teams should fulfil the criteria of the fund in terms of match-funding and support from other agencies as well as strong community support.

A significant change we are proposing is that, in addition to bids generated from local areas, close work will be undertaken across the Welsh Government and with Government Sponsored Bodies with the aim of providing “match funding at source”. This pre matched offer of funding will then be put to Clusters, through the local Programme Boards, to enable them to undertake work to support national / regional priorities in our most deprived areas and with our most disadvantaged individuals. We have already undertaken some work along these lines, for example the work undertaken with Job Centre Plus on supporting Advisors in four Communities First areas across Wales. We will look to explore further opportunities.

Other changes to the Outcomes Fund we are proposing include:

- the lower limit will be increased to £100k in order to encourage more strategic project proposals.

- we will expect clear evidence that match funding has been sought. We will encourage bids which work across a number of local area clusters; the regionalised structure of the programme will support this.

- this fund will be a means by which Local Cluster Programmes can employ additional specific staff, as described above, and provide services to the community for which there is a clearly evidenced need and demand.

5.4 Communities First Trust Fund

The Communities First Trust Fund has been in place since the inception of the programme, providing small grants to local community organisations. We propose that there will be a small grants scheme in the future programme to support community organisations in designated Communities First areas. In future, however, the Fund will be distributed proportionately to each of the new Communities First Clusters. We propose that the Local Programme Boards will have an important role in ensuring that the Fund is allocated appropriately to groups and projects in their area to support local needs and the broad aims of the Communities First Programme, by strengthening communities and tackling poverty. We will consider how best the programme could be managed at National and Local Authority/Regional Level.

6. HOW WILL THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME BE MEASURED?

6.1 Overview

The current Communities First programme has delivered support to deprived communities across Wales, focusing on achieving outcomes in line with the Communities First “Vision Framework”. The Framework outlined the types of activities which Partnerships should focus on, covering the following priority policy areas: Child Poverty; Environment; Community Safety; Health and Wellbeing; Jobs, Business and Income Generation; Education, Training and Skills

We recognise the significant achievements under the current programme in improving personal outcomes and life chances for people living in disadvantaged areas. In the future programme, we will continue to support much of the broad range of work currently undertaken. However, the work supported must clearly show how it contributes to tackling persistent poverty and focuses on those actions that have the greatest impact on the education/skills (particularly supporting employability), economic and health outcomes of individuals, leading to the long term sustainability and wellbeing of communities. As stated earlier in this document, the work undertaken at a local level has to show how it is contributing to regional and national priorities.

We are proposing that, in order to demonstrate the programme’s impact, the Communities First Vision Framework is replaced by three strategic outcomes:

- Prosperous Communities (Economic)
- Learning Communities (Education/Skills, in particular through employability)
- Healthier Communities (Health)

The shift in focus from the 6 themes of the Vision Framework, to 3 Key Outcomes does not mean that work relating to previous themes of Child Poverty, Community Safety or the Environment, cannot take place under the future Communities First programme. On the contrary, work in these areas will be encouraged. However, any work undertaken in these areas, or others, will need to show how they are ultimately impacting on broad outcomes and indicators that we are developing. We have worked closely, and are continuing to work, with other Welsh Government Departments on developing the three strategic outcome frameworks to ensure that their priorities are reflected. During the Consultation period, this will be developed further.

Whilst local Communities First programmes will be expected to evidence how their work makes a **contribution** to these strategic outcomes, it is important to note that these will be the responsibility of a wide range of partners and organisations. Monitoring of these strategic outcomes will be undertaken at a national level by the Programme Board, although we recognise that it will be a substantial challenge in aggregating the impact of the community contribution. There will be clear focus on addressing inequalities in our most deprived communities and the Programme Board will monitor these key indicators at a national level to inform programme bending and the whole government approach.

Similarly, whilst we expect future work to show how it is impacting on the strategic outcomes, all work undertaken must reflect sustainable development as the Welsh Government’s central organising principle and be focused on maximising long term

wellbeing underpinned by the principles of, Social Justice, Equality and Diversity, Participation, Rights and Access and Environmental Sustainability.

6.2 Results Based Accountability

The approach used to show how the programme is contributing to the three strategic outcomes will be underpinned by a new programme monitoring framework. This is based on the “Results Based Accountability” model. This method is increasingly used in planning for many key partners such as Children and Young Peoples Partnerships and Health Boards. By adopting this system for the Communities First Programme we aim to better integrate the programme into strategic planning at a local level and more clearly monitor its contribution at a national level.

Results Based Accountability provides a clear line of sight between the work being undertaken and how this is impacting on outcomes for the local community. It will enable us to show the **positive contribution** that Communities First is making to local, regional and national priorities in tackling poverty, while recognising that other factors which may well be beyond local control also affect the outcomes. Results Based Accountability makes a clear distinction between the overall outcome and the contribution made by the Communities First Programme.

6.3 The Outcomes Framework and Key indicators

Under the future programme, as highlighted above, there will be the three strategic outcomes: improving the education/skills, improving the economic well being and improving the health outcomes for individuals. We are proposing a framework for each of these themes.

In line with the Results Based Accountability Model, we are developing a set of indicators for each Strategic Outcome which will be drawn from the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. We are currently working within the Welsh Government on identifying the appropriate indicators that this programme could contribute to and will also take into account responses to this consultation exercise.

The indicators will be used to monitor the difference in Outcomes for Communities First areas compared to the Welsh average. We have also had to ensure that they are indicators that can be measured at Lower Super Output Area level.

The following are the some of the current suggested indicators:

Prosperous Communities (Economic)

- Percentage of people on unemployment-related benefits
- Percentage of people on Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance
- Percentage of adults & children in Tax Credit households below a low income threshold
- Percentage of children in out-of-work benefit households

Learning Communities (Education/Skills, in particular through employability)

- Key Stage 2/3/4 results
- Percentage of 16 year olds leaving school without a qualification
- School Absence rates
- Percentage of 18-19 year old not entering employment, education or training

Healthier Communities (Health)

- Limiting long-term illness
- All cause death rate
- Cancer incidence rate
- Low birth weights

We propose to develop this framework during the consultation on the future of Communities First and to develop further indicators as reliable data becomes available and evidence shows their relevance to this work. These might include:

- Mental Health
- Substance Misuse
- Smoking Rates
- Adult Skills Levels
- Average Household Income
- Affordable Childcare Places
- Reducing Fossil Fuel Consumption (Carbon Emissions)

6.4 Local Work & Activities – Developing a “Communities First Delivery Plan”

We recognise that Communities First areas undertake a range of work that could contribute to improving one or more of the indicators (and ultimately strategic outcomes). We will therefore develop a “menu” of work/activities that could be undertaken within this framework, drawing on experience gained from the programme to date and advice from relevant agencies in respect of each thematic area. However, anything supported will need to outline the contribution made to tackling poverty and also demonstrate that there is a strong community involvement.

Highlighted below are some proposals for the areas of work that could form part of a Delivery Plan. These will be developed over the consultation period with other Welsh Government Departments and also take into account any responses to this consultation exercise. They are currently:

Prosperous Communities (Economic)

- Development of local organisations into social enterprises;
- Childcare support to help parents back into the work place;
- Work to support benefit take up
- Supporting Credit Unions

- Development of local pathways to employment
- Supporting volunteering both as a route to work and to promote positive lives
- Promoting financial skills and budgeting
- Developing links with local employers, e.g. work placement/shadowing schemes
- “Timebanking” projects

Learning Communities (Education/Skills, in particular through employability)

- Encouraging more community members (particularly from groups perceived as “hard to reach”) into basic skills, ICT and key skills training;
- Improving Parenting skills
- Supporting family engagement in education.
- Supporting young people to achieve their potential at school
- Working with educational facilities to support alternative curriculum activities for young people who are or at risk of not being in education, employment of training;
- Supporting local people to access employment and training
- Learning through arts and culture
- Engaging with young people in positive activities (e.g. to reduce anti-social behaviour)

Healthier Communities (Health)

- Food, cookery, local growing and healthy eating projects;
- Improving mental and emotional wellbeing;
- Promoting sports, play and physical activity;
- Developing and supporting community health forums.
- Support for older people to live positive lives in the community
- Support for disabled people to live positive lives in the community
- Supporting particular groups, for example those that suffer from substance misuse
- Reducing negative influences (e.g. improving the environment or reducing the fear of crime)

Monitoring Activity/Participation Levels

Whilst the main focus of the new monitoring framework will be on measuring outcomes and demonstrating progress against these, we recognise that it will be important to account for activity under the programme. During the current phase of Communities First achieving consistent measurement has been difficult due to the lack of an agreed system and consistent ways to describe the work being undertaken locally. We will work with the new Clusters to address this issue and achieve greater consistency in reporting of both the outputs, effort and outcomes of the future programme. We will also ensure that measures for monitoring citizen engagement are developed along with collecting information how many people are participating in the programme and the extent and nature of community involvement.

We recognise that the new approach will be challenging for many. Our aim will be to lift the burdens of monitoring as far as possible from volunteers and front-line workers while ensuring that key staff are enabled to provide essential information on what is being

achieved. Therefore, we will be establishing new guidance on this process (including developing the menu of activities which will be eligible for funding). Additional training will be provided for all those working on the programme and key posts will be funded within Central Teams at the Local Authority or Regional Level to ensure that the model is applied and supported consistently across the programme.

Ultimately, any funding applied for under the programme, whether for staff or projects, will have to show how it contributes to (at least one of) the education/skills, economic and health outcomes of individuals.

In terms of monitoring, in addition to the work of the Welsh Government's Delivery Teams, the introduction of a Welsh Government Programme Board will be key. This Board will monitor the progress against Population Indicators and also the broad range of work undertaken.

7. OTHER ISSUES

7.1 Branding & Communications

The Communities First name and brand was intended, in part, to convey the communities' primary role in defining and delivering the support required for their areas,

Although under the new programme we are proposing changes in structure and emphasis, we propose that the current Communities First name and brand be maintained.

At a number of events where the Communities First programme has been discussed, some external stakeholders have told us that the current Communities First brand should be kept because:

- The Communities First brand is instantly recognisable by beneficiaries
- It is a useful "shorthand" when trying to broker partnerships with other organisations

Other factors to consider are:

- There are also significant positive associations with the Communities First programme, particularly in terms of the good impacts that the programme has had.
- We recognise that there was a very negative response to the proposal that the programme be re-branded as "Communities Next" when consultation on the 2009-12 phase took place.
- Re-naming and branding the new programme will have significant cost implications, particularly if many of the existing programme resources (staff, premises, etc) are potentially to be deployed in the new programme.

The Welsh Government will be responsible for developing a programme communications strategy which will comprise:

- stakeholder engagement
- press and broadcast media
- web and social media.

The National Support Contractor will be responsible for developing methods of sharing good practice and case studies, for example hosting the Communities First external website.

Strategic Co-ordinators will have a key role in providing "good news stories" and case studies to be promoted and, working with the Welsh Government, communicating stories to regional and local media outlets.

7.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Welsh Government is strongly committed to creating a stronger and fairer society where individuals and groups are not subject to unfair discrimination or victimisation because of age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religious beliefs or disability. The Communities First Programme has always promoted these principles and will continue to do so.

The move to Communities First contributing to the wider Anti-Poverty agenda does not mean any dilution of this commitment. On the contrary, our view is that poverty cannot be tackled fairly or effectively in a context of discrimination or prejudice. This is especially true because minority groups and individuals often experience the impact of deprivation more severely than others. The programme has an important role to play in ensuring that every community is safe for all who live there and in promoting tolerance in a diverse society.

For these reasons Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will remain essential cross-cutting principles of Communities First in its new phase, and all elements of the programme will be required to reflect them. Each funding application will need to show how these principles will be reflected in the proposed delivery arrangements and monitoring arrangements will include provision to ensure that discriminatory practices are challenged and eliminated.

The work that has been undertaken in the past two years to strengthen links between Communities First Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships, principally in relation to the Community Cohesion Fund, will be sustained and further developed. New support arrangements will include training provision for staff and volunteers around issues of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and detailed programme guidance will reinforce the importance of these issues.

Initially an Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken in respect of the new programme arrangements as a whole, which will take full account of Single Equality Legislation and other relevant statutory frameworks. Also, we will ensure that the rights of children are considered given our responsibility under our Children's Rights Measure.

Similarly, the Communities First Programme will remain committed to promoting the Welsh Language and bilingual working in line with the commitment of the Welsh Government.

8. TIMELINE

This document is available for consultation between the 5th July 2011 and 26th September 2011. The proposals contained in this consultation document take into account comments from representatives of the sectors which are currently partners in the delivery of the Communities First programme. These discussions have included: the Welsh Local Government Association; the Wales Council for Voluntary Action; regeneration and poverty specialists; Welsh Government Departments with an interest in the programme; and other representatives with experience and interest. Some issues were also discussed with Communities First Coordinators and programme managers at their regional meetings in June.

This consultation document now seeks to open out the discussion as widely as possible to include all those involved in Communities First and others with an interest in the programme, in order to test out and further develop:

- how the programme should operate at the community level;
- what geographical areas and aspects of poverty the programme should focus on locally; and
- the suggestions for key indicators of success and the “menu” of activities which the programme will support (section 6).

The consultation questions set out in Section 9 which follows are specifically focused on these issues.

Comments are welcome on any aspect of the proposals but, in the interests of transparency, we want to make it clear from the outset that we do not anticipate changes to some of the fundamental elements which are based on key commitments of the Welsh Government and take account of previous reports, such as the Public Accounts Committee’s Report on the programme, and initial findings from the latest evaluation of the Communities First programme.

These elements include:

- the overarching aim of tackling poverty;
- the introduction of key indicators to ensure that the impact and contribution of the programme can be assessed more consistently;
- the move to larger geographical areas and fewer grant recipient bodies, with increased sharing of staff and other resources between communities, and;
- the increased focus on ensuring that Communities First supports the people who are most in need.

We hope clarity about these changes will ensure that best use is made of the consultation period to focus on the issues where there remains considerable scope for determining the practical arrangements and local priorities for the programme in future.

During the consultation period, therefore, we encourage partners who are seeking to continue or develop their relationship with the programme to begin the discussions for moving toward the recommended structures, geography and partnerships set out in this document. Staff of the Welsh Government’s Communities First Unit will be available to support and advice those regional discussions.

Following the consultation period, which will end on the 26th September 2011, we will consider and publish a summary of the responses. Where the analysis of responses indicates that further work is required, that work will be taken forward alongside an immediate move toward setting in place the structures which will be required to deliver the new programme.

Applications for funding under the new arrangements will therefore be formally invited immediately following the end of the consultation period. Initially, expressions of interest will be requested to indicate the proposed geographic coverage and priority issues for the future programme. Separate advice will be provided for the funding provided to existing Grant Recipient Bodies and Communities First Partnerships under the current programme.

SECTION 9 – KEY CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Whole Government Support

1. How can we best communicate the commitments that are made at a national and regional level to partners to the Communities First programme so that all are aware of the opportunities that arise from these?

Shared Objectives

2. How can we strengthen the balance between ensuring progress toward strategic priorities whilst encouraging and maintaining the community leadership and involvement which is a key feature of the present phase of the programme?

Effective Partnership-Working

3. Do you think that the cluster approach would work in the area/s that you work in? Do you have any idea how many clusters there might be in your area and what the most effective management structure might be – based on the local and regional models outlined in this document?

Targeting of Resources to Support Disadvantaged People

4. What other evidence of need (as well as WIMD) do you think might be used to determine the geographical areas which will be the main focus of the programme?

5. How can the programme at the local level balance the geographical targeted approach with the focus on individuals and groups experiencing deprivation?

Demonstrating the Impact of the Programme

6. Is the proposal for distinguishing between the **contribution** of Communities First to national priorities and the **overall outcomes** in terms of reducing poverty (which will be affected by many others factors) clear?

7. Are the suggested Key Indicators set out in Section 6 the right ones against which to measure the impact of local work and what other Key Indicators should we include in the developing three Strategic Outcomes Frameworks?

8. Section 6.4 suggests a menu of activities which could form part of local Communities First Delivery Plans. Are these suggested activities correct and what other local activities should be included?

Supporting the Communities First Workforce

9. How can we maintain the present knowledge and skills base of the current workforce employed within Communities First in moving toward a new structure?

10. What are the additional skills needs of the workforce proposed in section 5?

Simplified Management Structure, Co-ordination and Support.

11. Section 5 sets out the proposed roles for Communities First Central Teams at the local authority or regional level. Do you think that these are appropriate – for example are the proposed activities comprehensive or are there additional activities which would need to be considered.

12. Section 4 sets out a potential role of Community Hubs. Do you agree that in certain areas community hubs could be considered an appropriate mechanism to manage the programme and employ staff at the individual cluster level?

13. What national support would be required by the workforce? Are the items listed in section 4 sufficient support to help communities and the workforce achieve their goals and measure progress?

14. Section 5 refers to the Communities First Trust Fund and the importance allocating funding based on the Cluster Area. What are your views on how this should be managed at a Local Authority/Regional and National levels?

10. HOW TO RESPOND

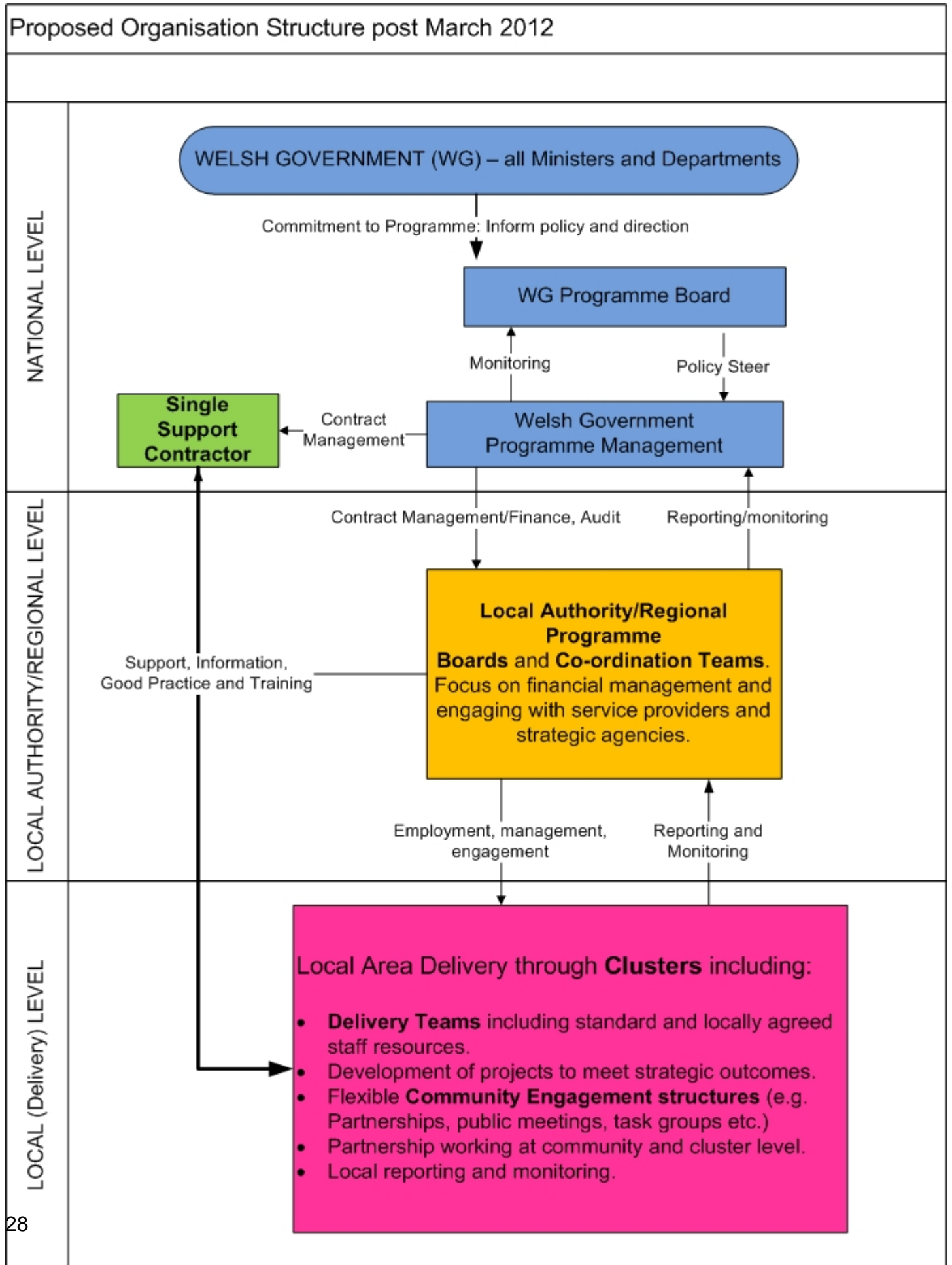
Responses can be made online via the Consultation area of the Welsh Government website - www.wales.gov.uk/consultations, Communities First - the Future and an online response form can be found under "housing and community".

We will also accept written responses to this consultation using the questionnaire in Annex B of this document. Responses should be received by the Welsh Government by 26th September 2011 at the following address. We would also appreciate emailed Word or PDF versions of hard copy responses to the email address below.

Email Address: communities.first@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Postal Address: Communities First Policy Unit, Communities Division, Local Government and Communities, Welsh Government, Rhydycar, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1UZ

ANNEX A - Proposed Organisational Structure post March 2012



Annex B

Consultation Response Form

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable):

email / telephone number:

Your address:

Whole Government Support

1. How can we best communicate the commitments that are made at a national and regional level to partners to the Communities First programme so that all are aware of the opportunities that arise from these?

Shared Objectives

2. How can we strengthen the balance between ensuring progress toward strategic priorities whilst encouraging and maintaining the community leadership and involvement which is a key feature of the present phase of the programme?

Effective Partnership-Working

3. Do you think that the cluster approach would work in the area/s that you work in? Do you have any idea how many clusters there might be in your area and what the most effective management structure might be – based on the local and regional models outlined in this document?

Targeting of Resources to Support Disadvantaged People

4. What other evidence of need (as well as WIMD) do you think might be used to determine the geographical areas which will be the main focus of the programme?

5. How can the programme at the local level balance the geographical targeted approach with the focus on individuals and groups experiencing deprivation?

Demonstrating the Impact of the Programme

6. Is the proposal for distinguishing between the **contribution** of Communities First to national priorities and the **overall outcomes** in terms of reducing poverty (which will be affected by many other factors) clear?

7. Are the suggested Key Indicators set out in Section 6 the right ones against which to measure the impact of local work and what other Key Indicators should we include in the developing three Strategic Outcomes Frameworks?

8. Section 6.4 suggest a menu of activities which could form part of local Communities First Delivery Plans. Are these suggested activities correct and what other local activities should be included?

Supporting the Communities First Workforce

9. How can we maintain the present knowledge and skills base of the current workforce employed within Communities First in moving toward a new structure?

10. What are the additional skills needs of the workforce proposed in section 5?

Simplified Management Structure, Co-ordination and Support.

11. Section 5 sets out the proposed roles for Communities First Central Teams at the local authority or regional level. Do you think that these are appropriate – for example are the proposed activities comprehensive or are there additional activities which would need to be considered.

12. Section 4 sets out a potential role of Community Hubs. Do you agree that in certain areas community hubs could be considered an appropriate mechanism to manage the programme and employ staff at the individual cluster level?

13. What national support would be required by the workforce? Are the items listed in section 4 sufficient support to help communities and the workforce achieve their goals and measure progress?

14. Section 5 refers to the Communities First Trust Fund and the importance allocating funding based on the Cluster Area. What are your views on how this should be managed at a Local Authority/Regional and National levels?

15: We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

Responses to consultations may be made public – on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to be kept confidential, please tick here:

Annex C

Glossary of Terms

Community Hub

An independent community organisation that supports the delivery of the programme in a specific area, including a focus on helping people engage with service providers.

Co-ordination Body

Responsibility, at a regional/local authority area level, for financial management of funds from the Welsh Government. Also responsible for working with service providers on how they can support the programme and, in some instances, managing the Local Delivery Team.

Cluster

The area in which a Local Delivery Team will operate. Clusters are likely to include a number of existing Communities First areas/partnerships and may include other deprived areas in some cases. Clusters should be as geographically rational as possible, but there will be flexibility to include more isolated areas within dispersed Clusters where necessary.

Local Delivery Team

Team that will work in the local Clusters with to develop projects to meet the strategic outcomes. Also responsible for engaging with the community (e.g. partnerships, public meetings, task groups etc.) to develop and deliver priorities.

Local Service Board

Local Service Boards (LSBs) are where the leaders of local public and third sector organisations come together to take collective action to ensure public services are effective and citizen focussed.

Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

The small areas of approximately 1,500 population which are the basis for analysis of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD). There are approximately 1,900 LSOAs in Wales. WIMD assigns a ranking for each LSOA from the least to the most deprived. Communities First will continue to focus primarily on the most deprived areas.

Results Based Accountability (RBA)

Results Based Accountability is a system that can be used to help measure the improvement in the quality of services and outcomes for communities. It distinguishes between the *contribution*

of individual programmes such as Communities First and the *overall outcome* in respect of key issues such as health or education.

Welsh Government Programme Board

The Programme Board will be responsible for facilitating collaboration between Welsh Government policy areas in relation to the programme. It will also perform a wider scrutiny function to ensure that the programme is meeting the high level national outcomes set out above.

Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the official measure of deprivation in small areas in Wales (referred to as Lower Super Output Areas). It is a relative measure of concentrations of deprivation at the small area level. Deprivation refers to problems caused by a lack of resources and opportunities. Therefore, WIMD is constructed from eight different types of deprivation. These are: income; housing; employment; access to services; education; health; community safety and physical environment.