



Communities Scotland
**Survey of management and
performance information systems in
local authority CLD**

FINAL REPORT

March 2006



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Discussions with local authority representatives have been both invaluable and stimulating and we would like to record our appreciation for the time and consideration taken to engage with us.



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1. Introduction

1.1 What we were asked to do

Learning Connections, Communities Scotland, commissioned research / analysis to provide a comprehensive picture of where and how identification and recording of: inputs, outputs and outcomes takes place in relation to community learning and development (CLD) activity in local authorities. This included work in Scottish local authorities relating to community work/community capacity development, community-based learning for adults and youth work.

Learning Connections has developed the performance information project (PIP). This has been based on recommendations from an earlier Scottish Executive investigation into the feasibility of *'developing and implementing a suitable management information system capable of measuring the contribution of the community learning and development (CLD) sector against key public policy outcomes'*. Learning Connections want improved intelligence about the current status of management or performance information use across CLD. This intelligence will be used to:

- Document effective practice in the development of management or performance information systems
- Identify common elements in current practice and provide indications of a possible common core of data definitions
- Indicate future support and development needs in relation to building enhanced use of such systems in community learning and development.

The tender document outlined ten objectives for the survey. These are to:

- Survey a substantial sample of local authority CLD providers;
- Identify how local authority CLD providers currently define, identify and record inputs, outputs and outcomes of CLD activity;
- Identify the current aims of local authority CLD providers in relation to the development of performance or management information systems;
- Report the current stage of development of performance/management information systems in local authority CLD providers;
- Report on the commonalities and differences between the methods and systems used by local authority CLD providers to define, identify and record CLD activity;
- Provide a framework for a possible core set of common definitions and categories for the future development of performance/management information systems;
- Report the extent to which developments by local authority CLD providers include other partners;

- Identify good practice which could be built on by local authorities and across the CLD sector;
- Identify priority support and development needs which, if met, could allow local authority CLD providers to develop and use improved management or performance information systems; and,
- Identify priority support and development needs which, if met, could allow local authority CLD providers to co-ordinate their management or performance information systems more fully with partners.

1.2 What we have done

1.2.1 Methodology

The approach taken by Rocket Science to the completion of this evaluation involved seven stages:

1. **Briefing meeting with Advisory group** - a detailed consideration of the parameters of the evaluation, clarification of respective roles and responsibilities, identification of 'fields of data' to be investigated, agreement of timescales and reporting formats. This Advisory group comprised Learning Connections staff and local authority CLD staff.
2. **Development of interview framework** – initial desk-based research of existing systems, including the format of questionnaires used in voluntary sector survey. Interview schedule was produced and agreed with Learning Connections.

This interview schedule was piloted with two local authorities and appropriate alterations made.

3. **Survey with Lead Officers from local authorities** – telephone interviews conducted with lead officers, or their nominated representative, from 25 local authorities. In some local authority areas the three national priorities are split between different departments requiring more than one interview. A total of 31 telephone interviews were conducted. Each interview was written up and sent to the interviewee to be checked for accuracy. A list of local authorities interviewed is attached as Appendix D.
4. **Second workshop with Advisory group** – presentation of the findings to date, including emerging themes, commonalities and differences in systems. Consideration was given to the criteria for selection of case study examples.
5. **Production of six in-depth case studies** – face-to-face interviews with individuals from six identified local authorities. Discussion and write up of interviews, including inclusion of any additional information and identification of lessons learnt. The case study was written up and sent to local authority to be checked for accuracy.
6. **Production of Draft Report** – A draft report was circulated to Learning Connections staff for comment.
7. **Production of Final report** – This final version of the evaluation report was completed following feedback from Learning Connections.

The next chapter outlines the key findings from our telephone interviews with individuals from local authorities across Scotland. These are based on individual understanding of 'inputs', 'outputs' and 'outcomes'. Therefore this is open to individual interpretation of what constitutes

an input, output and outcome.. As well as presentation of information in graphs, we provide some commentary to illustrate some of our observations.

Chapter three provides information on the opinions and perceptions of individuals regarding performance/management information.

Chapter four provides an outline of the six case studies and outlines any key learning points from this area. These areas were not selected on our evaluation of *'best practice'*, rather, they were designed to be an illustration of range of developments, i.e. one or two areas were selected because they represent *'typical'* level of development. This selection was also based on local authorities volunteering to be a case study. Most said they would be willing but identified a number of contextual factors that impacted on the time they had available, i.e. Best Value reviews, HMIE inspections. To ensure this commission was completed on time we did not approach local authorities who indicated potential constraints to be case studies.

Chapter five provides some discussion on conclusions and recommendations. This analysis is based on the previous sections and will hopefully provide a useful steer for future development. We anticipate these findings being considered in light of the other PIP strands.

At the end of the report we have a number of appendices:

- Appendix A is a list of all local authorities interviewed
- Appendix B is full write up from each local authority spoken to. This write up was sent to interviewees to check accuracy and provide a further opportunity for individuals to input anything missed in the telephone interviews



2. Key findings

As outlined in our methodology, local authorities were interviewed to ascertain the current status of performance information use. The focus of the interviews was to:

- Identify current definitions of inputs, outputs and outcomes of CLD, including how these aspects are recorded
- Determine the current aims of local authority CLD providers in relation to development of performance or management information systems, including levels of commitment to such systems
- Identify the commonalities and differences between the methods and systems used by local authority CLD providers to define, identify and record CLD activity.

As well as an exploration of the current picture the interviews provided an opportunity to ascertain the views of Lead Officers on support and development needs in relation to building enhanced use of performance or management information systems. It also explored individual attitudes to these developments, including willingness to adopt new systematic approaches. The results are outlined in Chapter 3.

This survey was run in conjunction with similar surveys in the voluntary sector. The outputs from this work will inform the subsequent deliberations and decisions about future actions required by Communities Scotland. To assist in these deliberations we linked the key findings with the sections outlined in the questionnaires.

The statistical information presented is based on 30 respondents covering 24 local authority areas.

This chapter starts with some general comments and then follows the format of the questionnaire. As well as presenting the results in graphs each section we will highlight main points from the interviews.

General thoughts on the process of information gathering:

Individuals were asked to focus on 'systematic' gathering of information. Specifically, they were asked to indicate if they were able to aggregate this information at a local authority level. In some cases local authorities systematically gathered the information at a local level but this was not methodically collated at a local authority level. However, they often stated 'they could access it' and so felt it was systematic. Therefore the information contained in this section presents a wide spectrum of perception on what constitutes 'systematic' and 'aggregated'. Although this presents some challenges in relation to conclusions we can draw it still indicates useful starting points and potential areas for development.

Drivers for developing system

There have been significant developments in information collation in CLD in the past few years. The majority of authorities surveyed suggested that the systems they have in place now are vastly superior to the situation in the past. There have been a number of internal and external drivers for these developments:

- Recognition of the inadequacies of previous information collated
- Greater recognition of the need for improved information on CLD, especially to assist with effective planning and decision-making
- Increasing national demands for authorities to be able to provide range of information for different purposes, e.g. developing equalities agenda
- Increased reporting requirements from different departments and even national drive, e.g. HMIE, PIP stats, etc.
- Broader appreciation from staff of need to change and show the impact of CLD activity, partly driven by increased political scrutiny of local and national developments.

Baseline Information gathered

Participants were asked about the general information they collect on individual participants. They were asked to state yes/no for 17 categories and could also provide additional categories using the 'other' option. Figure 1 outlines the responses of the 30 interviewees.

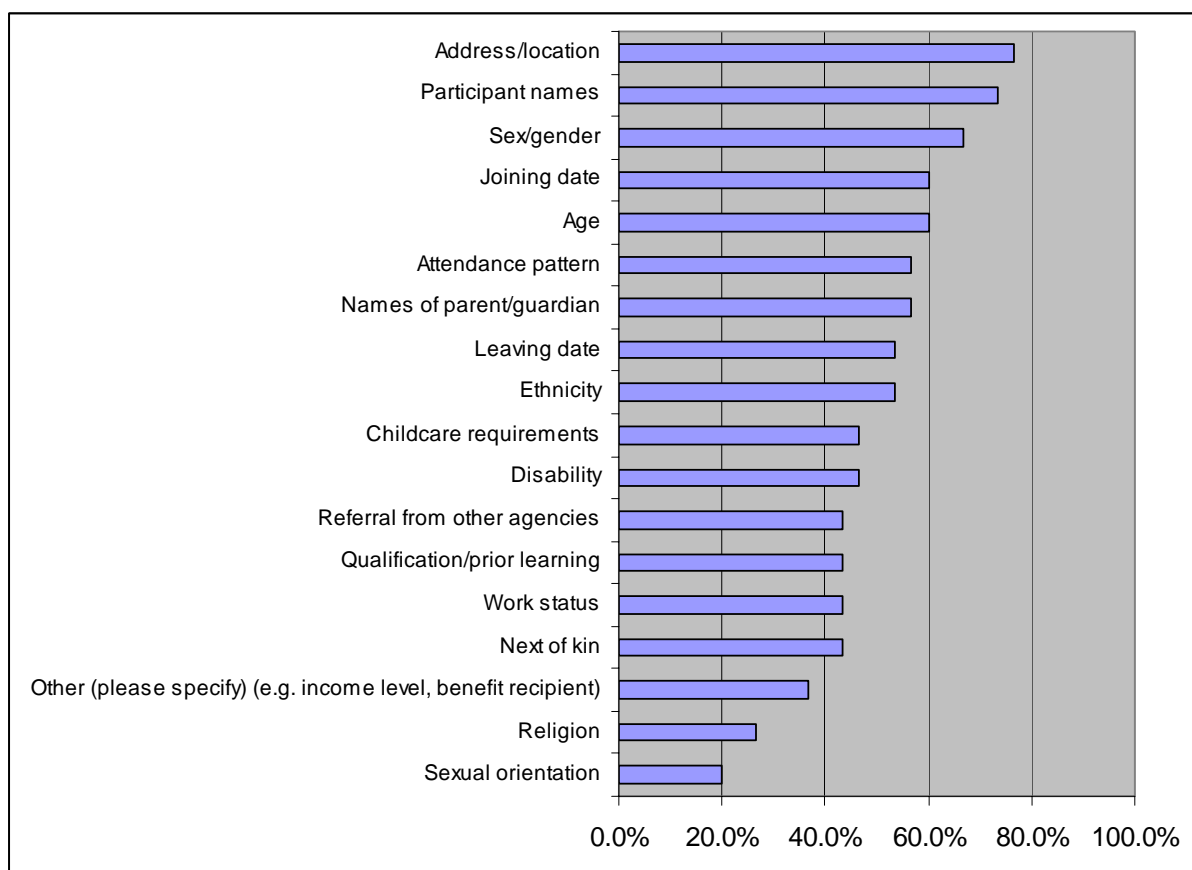


Figure 1 – baseline information gathered

36% (n=11) indicated they gather 'other' baseline information. This included:

- Attendances at Arts and Cultural events
- learning status, specifically fields identifying 'new learner', 'returning learner' 'continuing learner'
- benefit level/type
- social inclusion/disadvantaged area (based on participant address)
- transport needs

- e mail address
- 1st language
- lone parent
- support worker information
- wage bracket
- Contact numbers for under-16s

Commentary

As the graph shows, over half of participants gather information on (in order):

- Address/location
- Participant names
- Sex/gender
- Joining date
- Age
- Names of parent/guardian
- Attendance pattern
- Leaving date
- Ethnicity

Specifically about fields of data:

1. 'Joining date', 'leaving date' and 'attendance' pattern are usually linked.
2. Ethnicity, disability and gender are the only equality categories gathered by the majority of respondents. Providing information in these will continue to become important for local authorities and should be considered in any initial developments.
3. Some categories are more likely to be gathered in one of the national priorities than another, i.e. 'next of kin' and parent/guardian are more usual for youth work, 'qualification/prior learning' more usual for adult learning.

Most respondents acknowledged this is an area of development with more information available than ever before. For some areas this is year zero and will provide the baseline for future years.

Information is mostly gathered at level where activity occurs and sent in to central point at local authority level for input into a database. This is usually entered at the point of enrolment. The method for collation is predominantly paper-based at a local level and electronic at local authority level.

Information gathered is not all collated and even less is used to manage the service. The quality of input data is dependent on level of buy in for individual staff members

Some of those who do not systematically gather information at local authority level have suggested that baseline information is gathered at very local level and they '*could get it when needed*', There is less of a driver for small geographical areas to change from this type of system as it is easy to quickly gather information needed from the small number of staff employed.

In the main, baseline information is based on individuals, less so on groups. Information on groups is most likely gathered by those departments with a community capacity building function. There are variations between the national priorities of youth work, adult education and community capacity building.

Information relating to Inputs

Respondents were asked to provide information on the resources they use to deliver a programme, project or policy (inputs). The following figure outlines their responses regarding which inputs they systematically gather information:

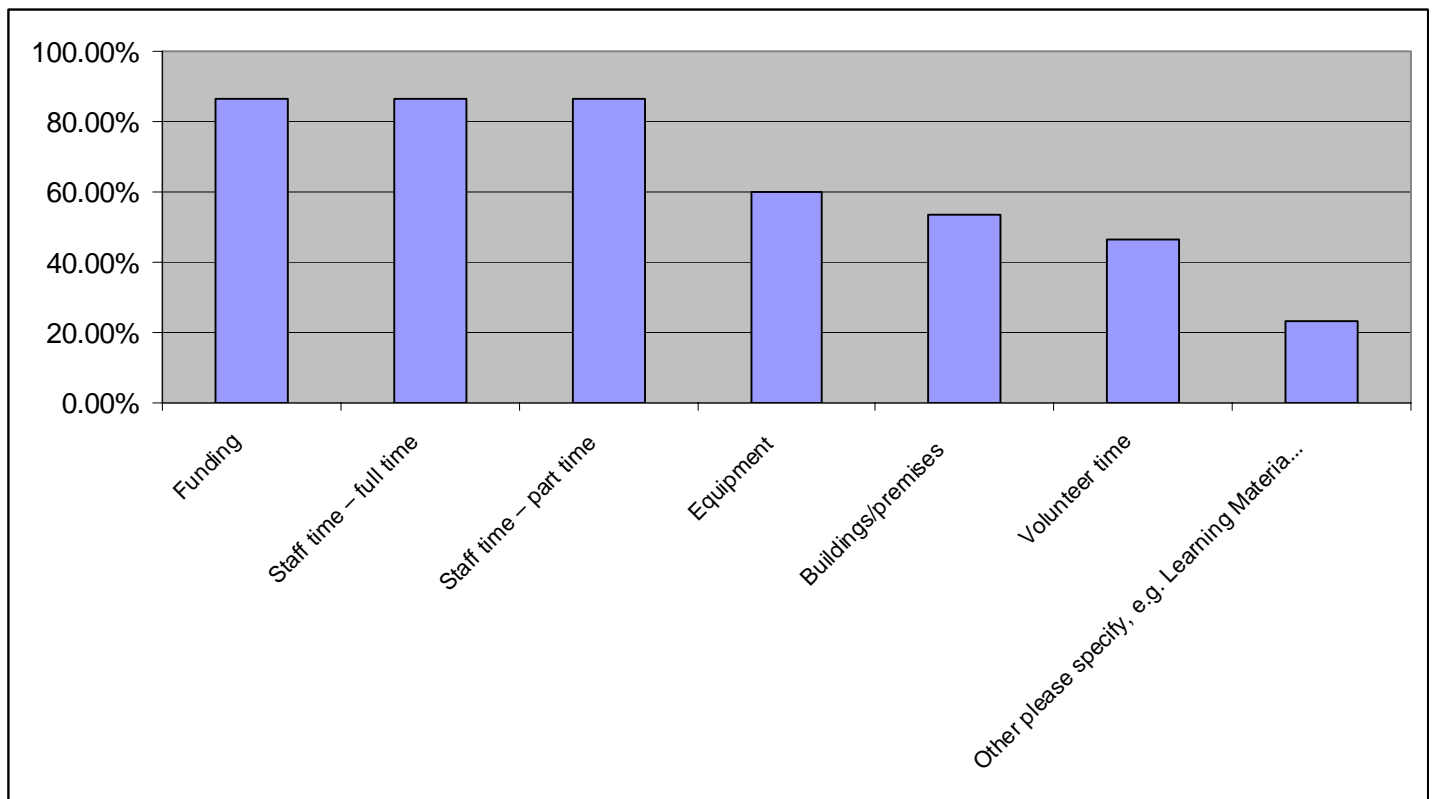


Figure 2 –information gathered on inputs

'Other' included:

- manage a fleet of mini buses
- in-kind contributions and funding from external agencies
- Crèche provision, support required for people with disability
- Number of childcare places available, learning materials for Dialogue Youth and other curriculum development resources
- Admin and office accommodation in relation to matched funding

Commentary

'Funding' and 'staffing' (either part-time or full time) are the main areas where information on inputs is gathered.

Ease of access to this information is dependent on the location of storage of information. For example, information on funding available may be stored in finance section of the local authority, staffing levels in HR/personnel. In this way the information is stored for administrative purposes; e.g. accounting, salaries, etc.

Input information is usually used for reporting purposes and rarely connected with outputs and outcomes. Most interviewees suggested this information can be collated relatively easily in response to requests. In only a few areas is it linked systematically to outputs, or used to correlate levels of inputs with outputs and outcomes.

This information is reportedly used in managing CLD services. Information related to staffing levels, particularly part-time staff, assists in resource-allocation decisions.

Information relating to Outputs

Respondents were asked to provide information on the specific products and activities they produce. The following figure outlines their responses regarding which outputs they systematically gather information:

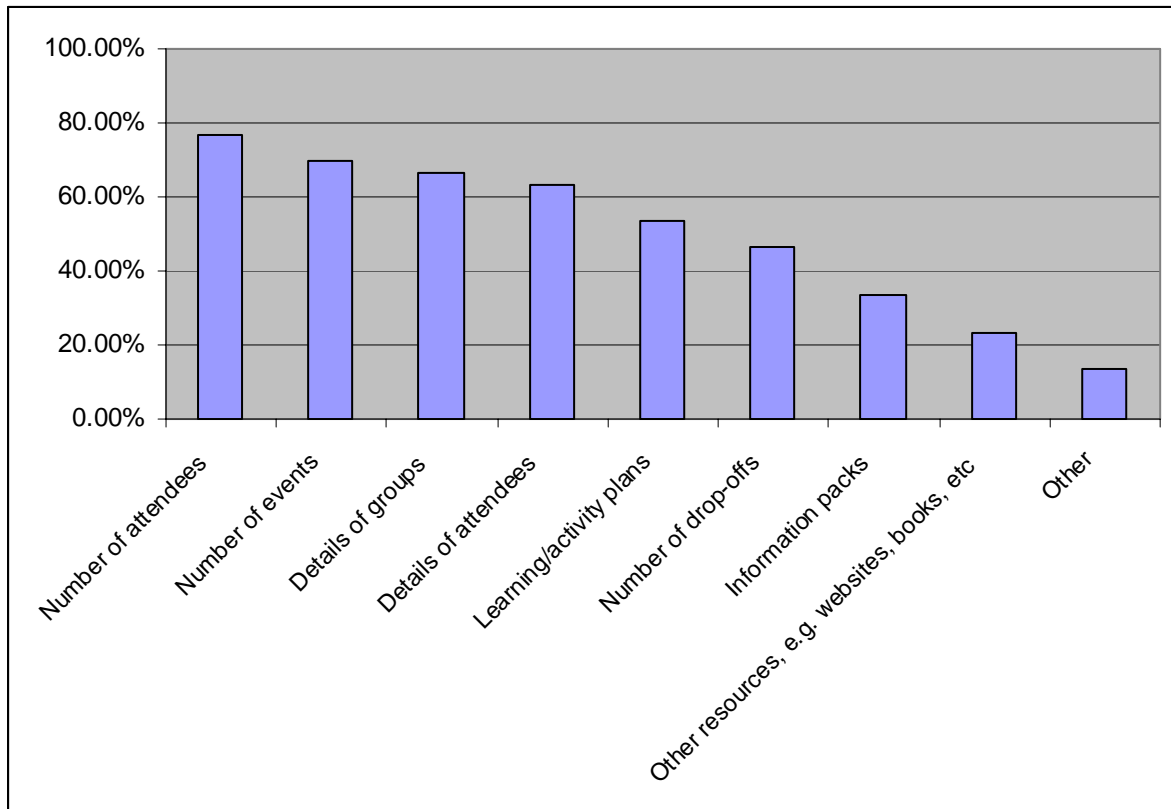


Figure 3 –information gathered on outputs

‘Other’ included:

- youth facilities built, support to voluntary sector
- type of learning option
- Number of management committee meetings and community council meetings held
- Newsletter and website

Commentary

Over half of respondents gathered output information on these categories:

- Number of attendees
- Number of events
- Details of groups
- Details of attendees
- Learning/activity plans

These aspects are very similar to the baseline information gathered and it is easy to see how monitoring occurs.

When asked about how this information was used, for some areas this output data is 'critical to management' as it is used to plan and monitor some aspects and provide annual reviews, such as an FE partnership agreement and 3 year budgeting processes.

Like baseline data, information on outputs is usually gathered a local level and sent in to central point at local authority level for input into a database. This is usually done quarterly with annual reporting.

It was suggested that a key value to gathering this information was for self-evaluation which links neatly in with '*How Good is Our CLD*'

Some areas use output information for annual comparisons. This is not commonplace across all authorities as many systems are in early stages of development.

Information relating to Outcomes

Respondents were asked about systematic gathering of information on the impact of their work and the specific changes that result from CLD activity. The majority of interviewees (83%) stated that they set desired outcomes to measure the impact of their work. Of this group, all stated they set qualitative outcomes and 88% also set quantitative outcomes. 80% stated they had baseline data to measure against. Monitoring of progress against outcomes varies across local authorities with some setting at the beginning and evaluating at the end, others viewing it as an ongoing process of review.

80% commented that they record indicators of outcomes, all recorded qualitative indicators and 80% quantitative. 80% of respondents said they had baseline data available to measure against.

64% of respondents indicated that they use wider community outcomes. Examples of these include health and well-being, closing educational and attainment gap and elements of the local regeneration outcome agreement. There are little commonalities between areas in relation to these wider outcomes.

Commentary

Although a high number of individuals reported they gathered information on outcomes, the systematic nature of this is questionable. It seems that the setting of outcomes for individual CLD activity is now more commonplace and systematic. However, this is less systematic in relation to outcome setting at local authority level with requirement on individual work to link into these local-authority wide outcomes. Some individuals suggested their CLD activities feed into local authority-wide corporate outcomes. Where broad outcomes have been set to cover all CLD, either authority wide or department-wide, individuals find it difficult to measure progress against these. It has been suggested that the broad departmental outcomes that aspects of CLD relate to would alter if the service was in a different department, e.g. more education focus or leisure.

People still do not find outcome measurement easy and point to the tension between local authority-level setting of outcomes versus person-centred work. Therefore, in response to the specific needs of individuals and groups, outcome setting usually happens at local level. In some areas this is accompanied by detailed implementation plans or individual learning plans. Many acknowledged the challenge of pulling this type of information together to measure overall impact.

Many interviewees identified variations in outcome setting dependent on the CLD activity. Literacy work is more likely to set outcomes however this approach is slowly filtering across the service, especially adult learning.

LEAP and self-evaluation frameworks, as required by HGIOCLD, are used by most to set outcomes. However, it was suggested that the quality of the evaluation depends on the professional discretion of staff was therefore subjective.

Most areas suggested they conduct ongoing evaluation of progress against outcomes. This coupled with baseline information gathered should mean that they should be able to measure distance travelled. However, very few areas commented on being able to measure this aspect.

Storing Information

Local authorities store information in a variety of ways. Generally, information on individuals gathered at a local level is stored at this level; either in paper-based format or in a database. Most authorities operate quarterly reporting to local authority level with information usually stored on an IT system. There is less commonality between local authorities for storing information on groups. This is mostly stored at local level with some centralised collation.

Information on tracking learners after they leave

Respondents were asked about tracking learners/participants after they move on from CLD activities. The following shows the response.

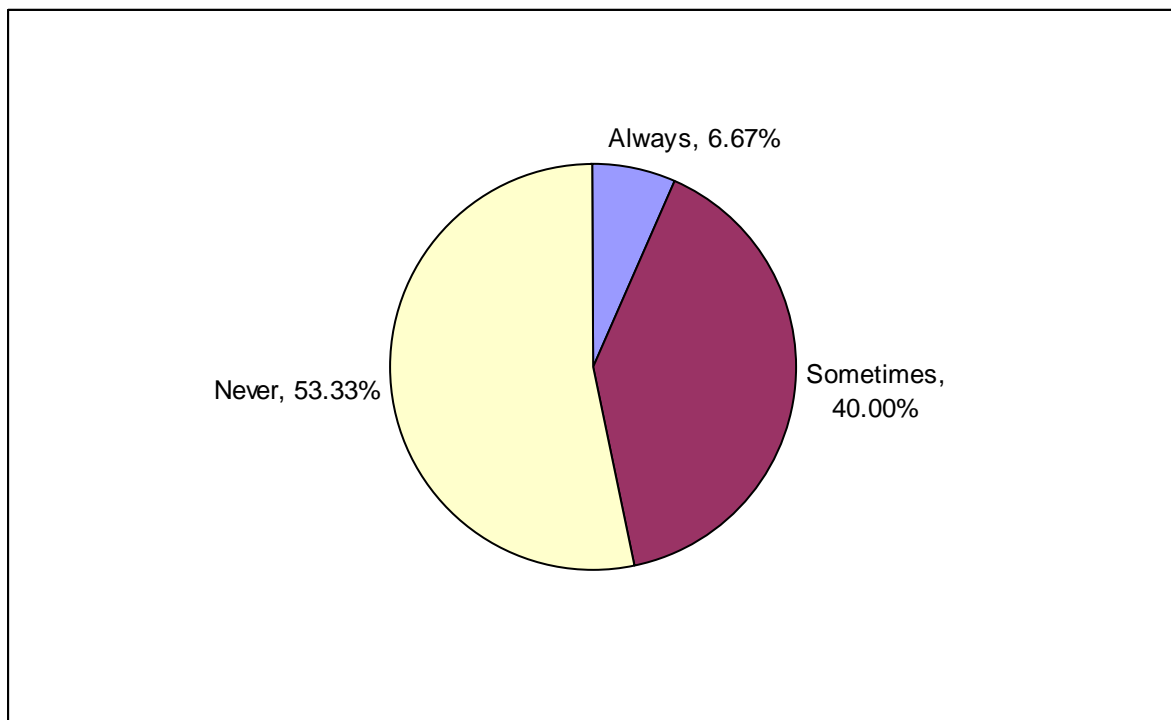


Figure 4 –information on tracking learners

Very few local authorities track learners after they leave. Those who attempt to do so concede this is a difficult task and it is not approached in a systematic way. Attempts to do so are usually connected with adult learning and/or literacy provision. It is easier to track individuals when they move within internal systems. One local authority tried to implement tracking but concluded it did not provide enough value in terms of information provision to justify the costs incurred.

How information is used

Respondents were asked about how they use the information collected. There is no consistent approach to use of information but it is apparent that information gathered is

predominantly used for reporting purposes to range of partnerships and funders. Lack of awareness of the information available prevents it being used more widely for management purposes. There is varying priority given to data collection and dissemination by staff of all levels. This ultimately affects how much the information is used and by whom.

In terms of managing the service the majority of information is used in an ad hoc way in response to requests for updates. It is increasingly used in management of services, such as decision-making about allocation of resources. Some respondents see this function as being 'critical for management' as they now use information gathered for prioritisation of resources.

However, the limitations of many systems means that the information cannot be used extensively for management purposes, i.e. lack of ability to cross tabulate prevents resource allocation being based on aspects such as areas of deprivation or focussed on particular communities.

A significant number of individuals expressed a desire to be able to share information with key partner organisations, particularly agencies that provided key services, e.g. voluntary youth organisations, FE colleges, youth club associations, etc.

Very few systematically share information with community groups and individuals but a few people suggested this is an area they would be keen to develop.

Reporting

The following figure indicates where reports from the system are directed to.

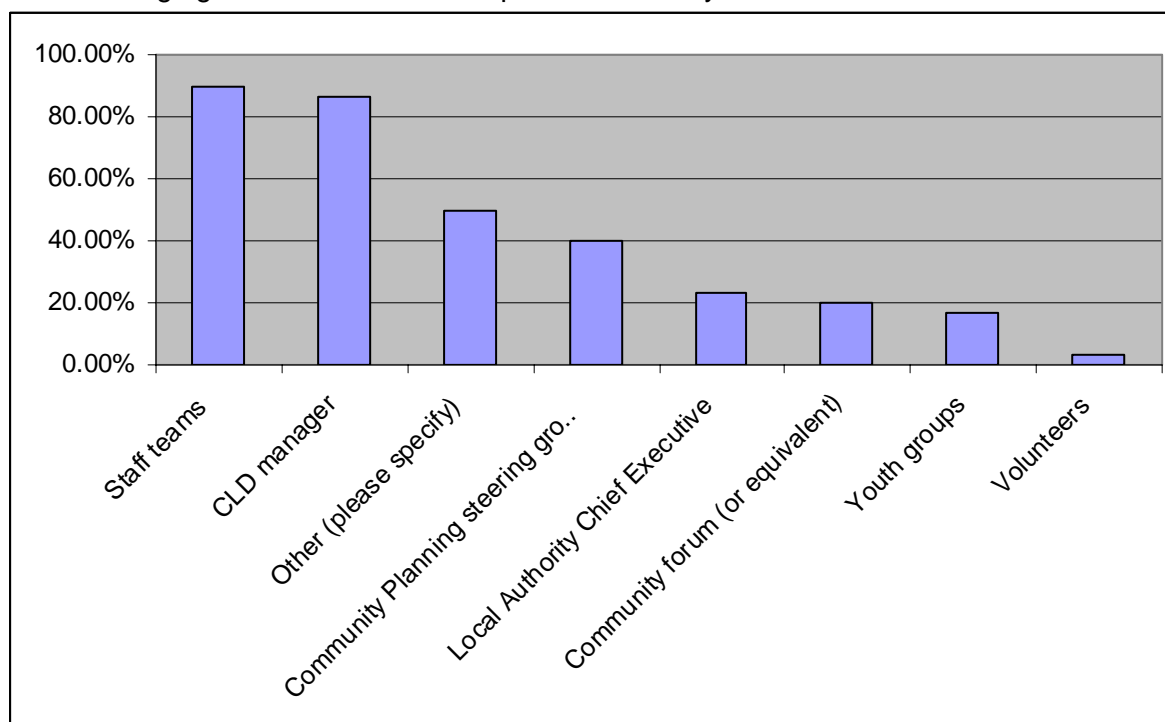


Figure 5 –Reporting on CLD information

'Other' included:

- CLD partnerships or strategy groups. This was the main 'other' with ten respondents explicitly suggesting this information was shared
- a voluntary management committee of local centre gets info
- Children's services plan, community standards and quality services

- Colleges
- Adult Literacy partnerships (reporting data to Scottish Executive)
- SW field managers meeting
- Department management team
- Management committees at local level
- Learners' Voice Forum, Voluntary Youth Work Forum
- Elected members

Support to develop the system

In the main, each system has developed independently of other local authorities. The uniqueness of each system is based on local contexts, resources available, staff experience and local drivers. The following figure indicates the type of support received.

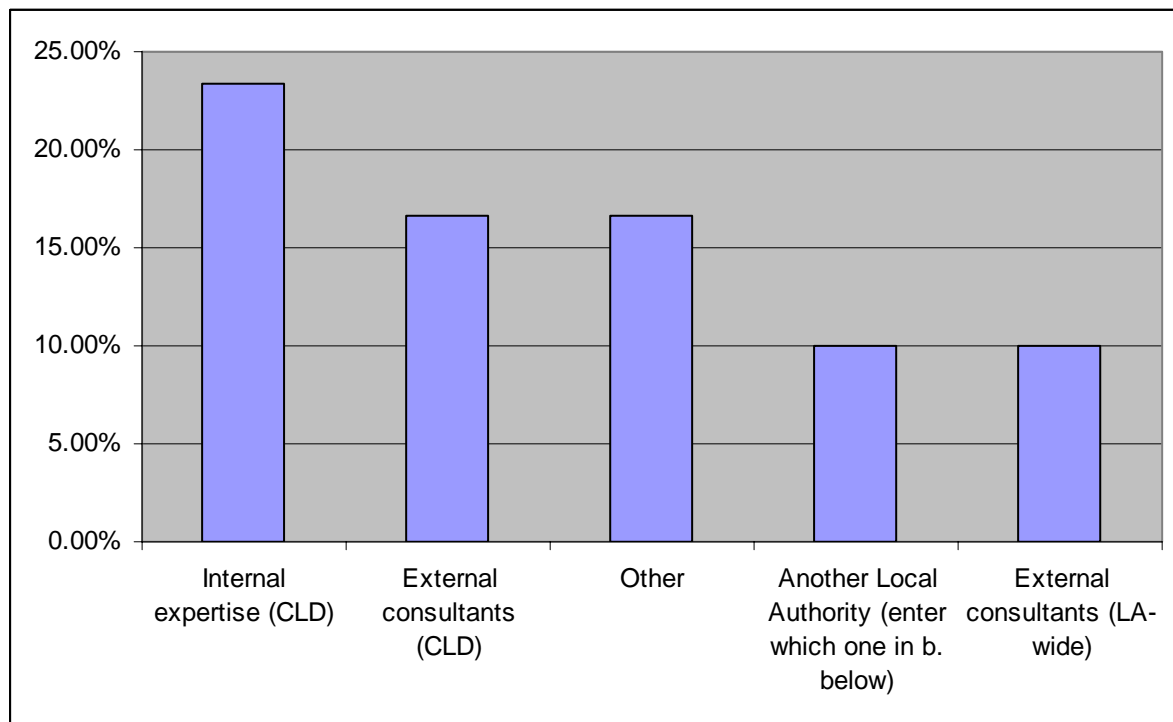


Figure 6 –support to develop the system

'Other' included:

- use others' systems
- researchers
- Seconded Head teacher looking at school system and offered help CLD
- Research officer for literacies with IT background
- Voluntary external expertise

Other local authorities help included:

- Benchmarking group - P&K, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire
- Looked at Fife's LEAP
- Benchmarking group, visited North Ayrshire

There is some effort to share information across authorities and this has supported development of many of the systems. However, in the main, developments have been the result of fortuitous expertise within CLD or their department.

Staff trained to use the system

Participants were asked if staff were trained in using their system and in what ways. The following charts highlight responses.

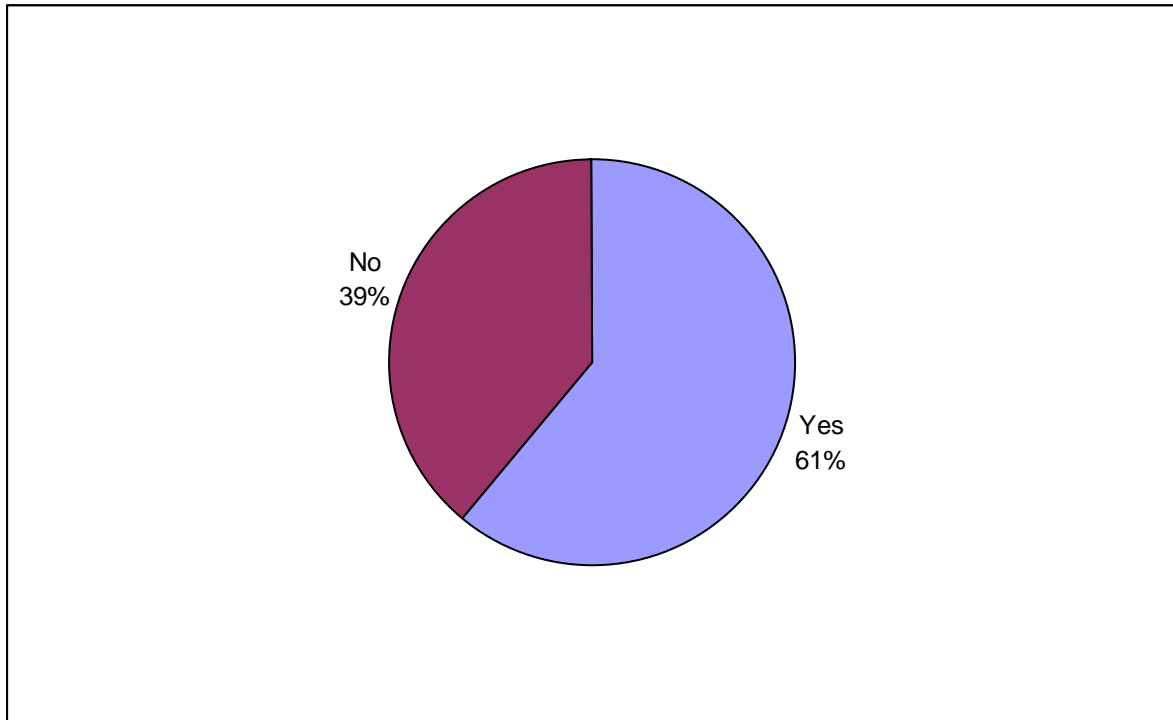


Figure 7 – Staff training

Staff training

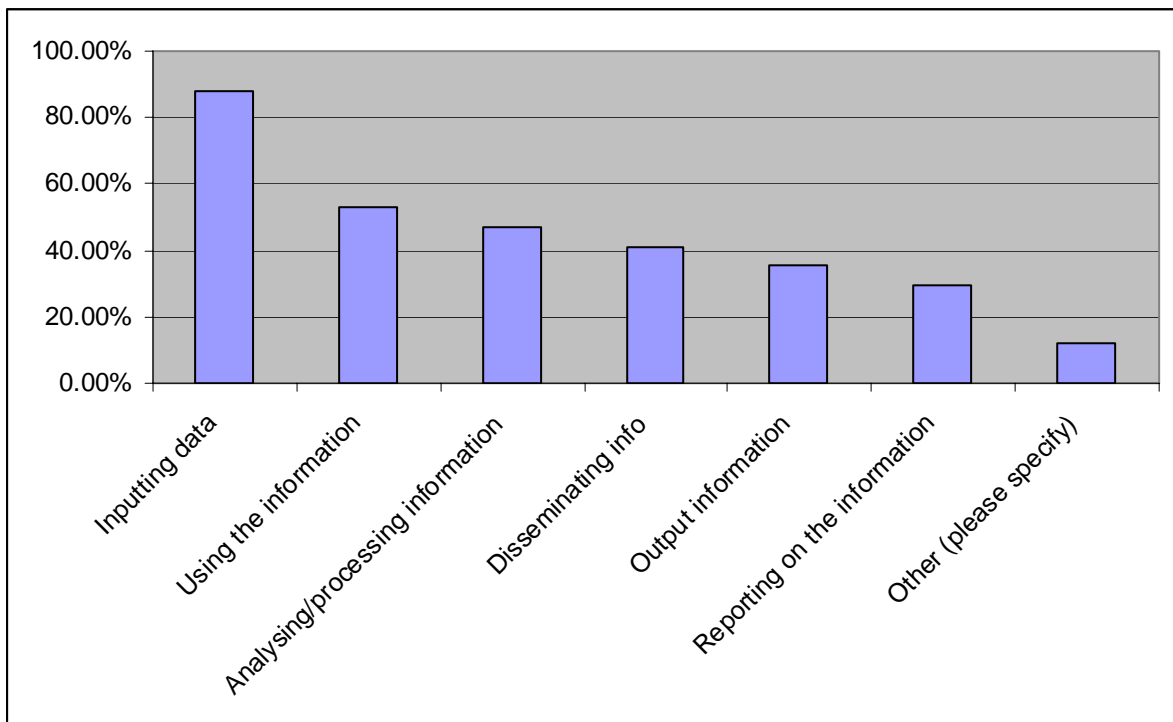


Figure 8 – Staff training delivered

'Other' included:

- Self-evaluation at local project level using LEAP. Clerical staff and adult learning co-ordinators also trained to gather information for submission to CLD

Commentary

It is positive that local authorities have tried to support a shift towards improved data collation by providing training to facilitate this change. This training ranges from briefing sessions and more formalised training inputs. As the above graph shows the main component for staff training is 'inputting data'. This relates to the main function performed by front-line staff. 'Using data' and 'analysing results' are usually tasks and, in this respect, does not require wider staff training.

Resources to support development of performance/management information

Very few local authorities have staff with dedicated time to develop their systems. Only 27% of respondents, from eight geographical areas, said they had staff with dedicated time. Of these eight areas, 75% of this resource is based within CLD. In areas with no dedicated staff time this work has been integrated into the remits of many individual managers. This is likely to affect how far the systems can be developed as individuals have little time available to proactively move this forward.

Assessment of capacity

When asked to assess their overall capacity to manage the information discussed the following responses were noted:

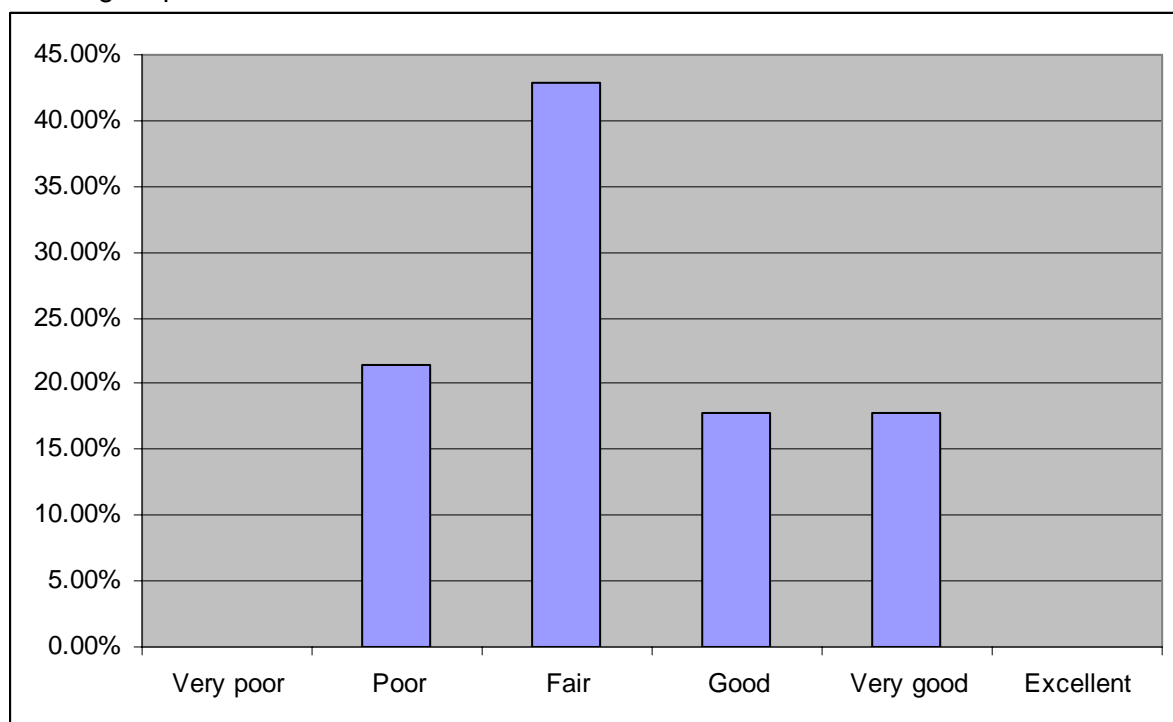


Figure 9 – Assessment of capacity to manage information

Commentary

The majority of respondents assess their ability as 'fair'. Some individuals who also identified areas they would like to make improvements rated their systems as 'fair' with many justifying their rating on the fact that systems have developed significantly in the past year. The very existence of any systematic way of gathering information was seen as a positive progression.

However, many acknowledged that although progress had been made they could identify many areas where they would like to improve before they could describe their system as robust. For many, the lack of IT system was a key weakness of their system. Other development needs are discussed in the next section.

There is varied perception about how to rate own progress across local authority areas. If the local authority has witnessed recent significant improvement individuals were willing to score 'good'. This rating was based on comparison with previous systems, or lack of systems. . *"Positive aspect is that is has been developed in the first place"*. Others would identify themselves as poor even when they may have a system that could be rated on similar basis to another LA who scored themselves as 'good' Therefore, self-ranking does not provide an accurate basis for external identification of individual stage of development.

Development needs

The development needs identified by individual respondents was dependent on the sophistication of their system. Needs identified related to the current stage of development in the local area and what systems they have in place at the moment. Comments ranged from *'we have massive development needs'* to *'we'd like to web-enable our system so people can access it remotely'*. Commonly identified development needs related to a number of areas outlined below:

- For most local authorities 'training' has been provided in the form of briefing meetings. This is due to the fact that most systems are not that sophisticated so individuals do not require extensive training. However, to meet many of their aspirations they recognise that further staff development will be required.
- Many would like basic support to develop their systems to gather and collate information but ultimately be able to analyse it more systematically.
- Staff training is required for various aspects of information flow – from inputting data for frontline staff to how to use information produced for managing the service. One specific suggestion was support to develop a system that allows judgements to be made about prioritisation of resources, e.g. towards the most disadvantaged.
- Training/briefing has been important for buy-in from staff and this will need to be a feature of any new developments. Without staff buy-in there will be a lack of information input.
- Tracking learners in a cost-effective way is an area many would like assistance.
- They identified that integration of information is key and some suggested they would prefer support to ensure any system they have joins up with other services in their own Council.

Other systems being explored

A few areas have been exploring IT systems that can be bought in. The systems looked at are *'Outreach'*, *'Capita'*, *'Phoenix'*, *'Cognisoft'*. Cognisoft was the system most mentioned. *Youth Base* (developed in England) being looked at by Glasgow. Carrying out a pilot and is hoping to expand its use in January and be fully operational by April 06.

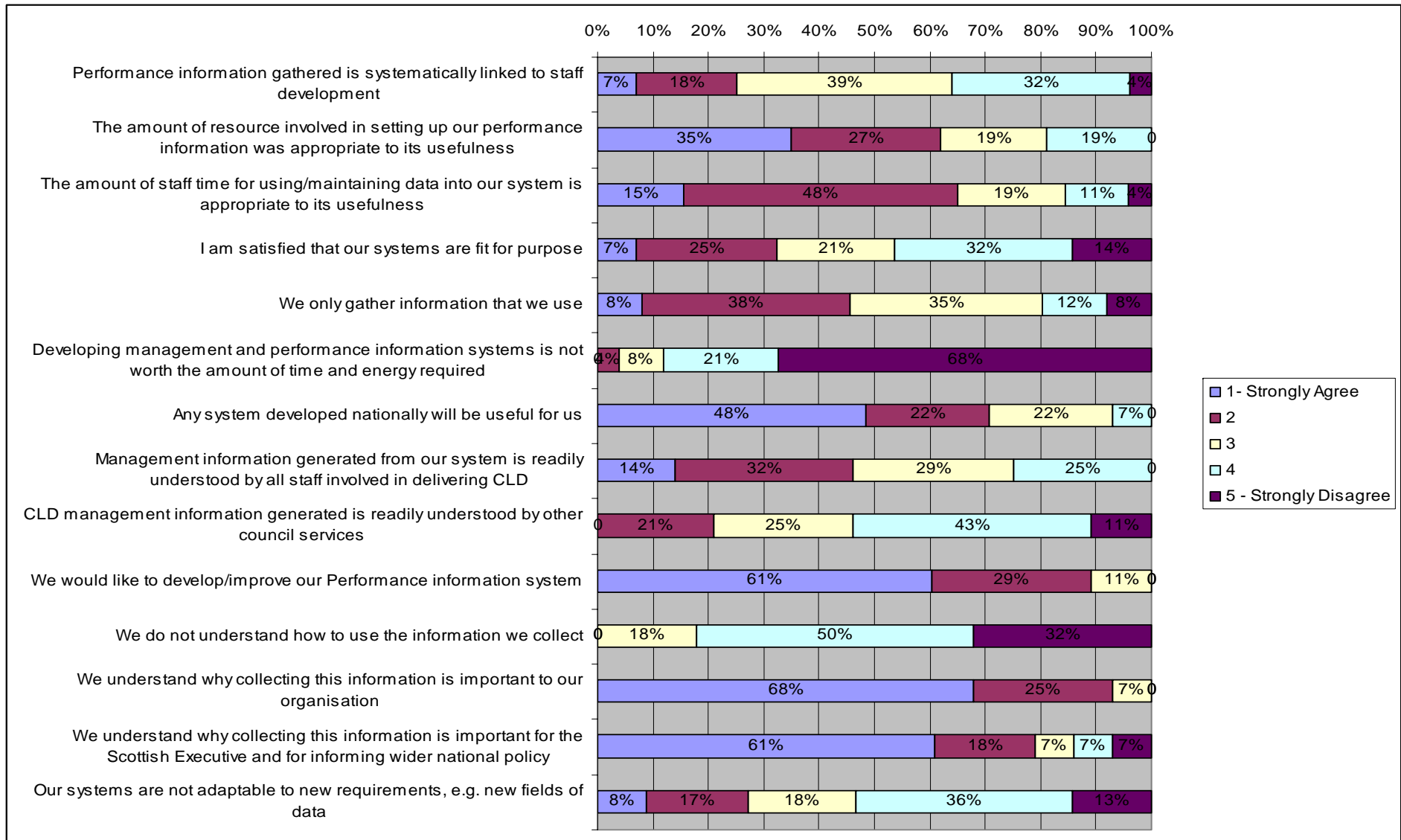


3. Views of Performance/Management Information

The table on the next page shows the results of the attitudes scorecard completed by interviewees. Main points from this scorecard:

- Although authorities are at varying stages of development there is a high level of awareness and appreciation of the need for effective management and performance information systems – the vast majority of respondents strongly disagreed that developing such systems is a waste of time and energy
 - Most authorities are keen to develop their performance information mechanisms and would welcome a system developed nationally
 - Authorities perceive a number of challenges
 - Although the results show a commitment to investing in the development and use of systems, this investment is perceived as slightly high in relation to the benefits. This relates to 40% suggesting their system is not fit for purpose and 25% have systems that are not adaptable
 - 20% of respondents claimed to be collecting data they do not use
 - There are issues in terms of how the data generated is used throughout CLD. Although respondents suggested that they know how to use the management information produced by their system, only around half agreed that this data is understood by all staff involved in delivering CLD. Respondents also suggested that in many cases information is not systematically linked to staff development
 - Whilst the data produced appears to be valued within CLD a high number of respondents believe that it is not understood by other council services.
 - Authorities report a strong understanding of the importance of management and performance information for the Scottish Executive and for informing wider national policy, however some also suggest that their systems lack the capacity to adapt and respond to new data requirements.

Learning Connections: Survey of Performance/Management Information in use in LA CLD





4. Case Studies

This chapter contains a write up of each of the six case studies. These case studies were chosen to explore specific elements of the management information process. They were also selected based on respondents' views on suitability of the time involved, i.e. some areas were in the middle of inspections or Best Value reviews and felt the timing was not appropriate for them. The areas investigated for each geographical area were:

- Angus: showing system at typical stage of development
- Dundee: moving from paper-based to IT system
- Glasgow – focus on outcomes
- North Ayrshire – a fully developed IT system
- Perth and Kinross – involving staff in the process of information collation
- South Lanarkshire – how information is used to managed the system

Case study: Angus

A system at 'typical' stage of development

Angus Council represents an example of the stage that many authorities are at in the development of performance and management information systems. It collects data on paper and some of this is collated centrally on a database. It is currently exploring options for an IT-based system and expects to take this forward soon.

Current situation

Angus has been exploring the collection and use of performance and management information for the past year. Historically the authority has not had mechanisms in place to systematically gather data and utilise this as a management tool. Where data has been gathered this has been for specific one-off purposes at the level of local projects. Around a year ago a group examined the need for a system and in particular the administrative requirements of this. The authority has since been evaluating a range of IT-based systems and expects to purchase one shortly. At this stage an implementation group will be convened comprised of staff from throughout CLD including: managers; local practitioners; clerical staff; and part-time staff. The key, and most fundamental, task of this group will be to identify what information Angus needs to collect and process.

The authority is also using consultancy time with the Scottish Community Development Centre to explore whether and how the National Standards for Community Engagement could be linked into its performance and management system.

Information flow

Data is collected on paper forms by staff in local projects. In relation to adult literacies this is done using an initial referral form that details the type of referral (e.g. self-referral, social work referral etc) along with basic personal details about the participant. It is sometimes necessary for staff to build up a relationship with learners before they are willing to provide personal details so this data may be completed over the course of a few meetings. The

forms are then sent to a clerical assistant within CLD who enters the information onto a central CLD database.

For work not related to adult literacies basic data is collected and submitted quarterly to CLD. This is organised by senior workers each of whom heads one of four geographic localities or one of two Angus wide CLD programmes. Within these areas the information is split into the three CLD priorities. The data shows the number of participants; number of attendances; and what programmes are being provided. Information about individual participants is not collated in the way it is for adult literacies however it is collected at local level using membership or registration forms.

Key challenges

Collecting individual participants' details is not always possible in relation to particular groups. For example much of the authority's work is detached youth work in which it is not feasible to record information on individuals. Angus is however attempting to capture a picture of the level of engagement it is achieving and is asking youth workers to try to gauge this according to a scale based on John Huskin's *7 Levels of engagement*. This has some difficulties, for example the level of engagement of groups or individuals can vary significantly from week to week.

Another challenge is how to record and collate softer indicators. Staff involved in the delivery of services are often aware of subtle but important signs of progress, for example a particular young person may go from never talking to a youth worker to making eye contact or saying hello. This kind of indicator is not easy to record, collate or use as hard evidence of the effectiveness of a service. Similarly it is difficult to collate outcomes in person-centred work where progress is measured in a way that is very specific to the individual.

An issue Angus has encountered in its current exploration of IT systems is that these generally have their origins in recording information about individuals and are not designed to deal with data about groups of participants. The authority plans to try to get round this by recording each group as a 'client'.

Engaging staff in information gathering and using information

A key area of work for Angus has been to begin to foster a more positive culture towards data collection. Historically there has been a more intuitive approach of "knowing what works" and the front line staff who gather the information have skills in CLD and not necessarily in data collection or use. The authority recognises the vital need to have buy in from all staff and especially those who will be relied upon to collect the information. It is addressing these issues in a number of ways:

- Involving staff in the development and design of systems (including testing potential IT-based systems), for example the authority standardised the recording of sessional work and it was a small group of staff who designed the form which was then piloted with others before being finalised
- Listening to and taking on board feedback from service delivery staff
- Demonstrating at every opportunity the benefits of information gathering and collation
- Encouraging staff (through team meetings and supervision) to use the data for their own purposes
- Feeding back on how the information is being used, for example giving a concrete example of where the quarterly information has helped CLD centrally to manage the service

- Attempting (in the ways listed here) to build ownership of the system among staff
- Constructively challenging negative attitudes

Getting it right

CLD management in Angus is aware of the need to ensure that it gets a number of key issues right at this stage of the development of its system. Firstly the authority must ensure that it will be collecting the data it needs and avoids gathering excess information that it will not use. In addition it must identify mechanisms for collecting only information that relates to CLD. This issue was highlighted by discussion among the CLD Partnership which distinguished between those services that deliver CLD and provision that supports and compliments CLD. It is especially important in relation to measuring the impacts and outcomes of CLD that the authority is measuring what it thinks it is measuring.

Another critical and immediate issue for Angus is selecting the right IT system. This will represent a significant investment which CLD has a one-off opportunity to make. This is a challenge as CLD staff do not have particular IT expertise.

CLD Partners

Angus is experiencing a number of issues in establishing a management and performance information system within CLD. However there are further challenges involved in extending this beyond the authority CLD so that it works across the whole CLD Partnership. Angus' CLD Strategy contains a commitment to develop information arrangements in the authority and a multi-agency Quality Assurance group (formed in late 2005) will shortly begin to explore this.

Conclusions

Taking staff with them in the development of a system has been (and remains) a key priority for CLD management. Where the authority has experienced successes in the collection and use of information this has been where the staff have felt true ownership over the process. Related to this is the need to ensure that the information being collected and processed is of practical use. Although it is limited in its scope CLD management makes use of the quarterly data it receives and encourages local services to do the same. The experience of Angus has been that building a system, and a culture that supports it, is best done incrementally over time.

Management and performance information must also be set within the context of the wider authority and be linked to other relevant activities (for example continuing professional development) so that staff view it as part of a coherent structure of continuing improvements.

Case study: Dundee

“Moving from paper-based system to IT based system”

The experience of Dundee demonstrates many of the issues involved in developing a management and performance information system and of progressing from a paper-based to an IT-based system.

Current situation

Dundee is in the process of developing its management and performance information system. This began around two years ago and the system has continued to evolve over that time, most recently with the introduction of an IT-based element. The need for a system was highlighted when CLD joined the Library and Information Department of the council and became aware of that department's high quality information systems. This was coupled with a growing awareness of the need to for CLD to have more and higher quality data.

The newly developed IT aspect of the system is currently being piloted in adult learning and will then be rolled out across all three CLD priorities.

Information flow

In relation to adult learning initial data collection happens when a registration form is completed by a member of staff and the CLD client. This information is then entered onto a central Access database where it can be used to produce reports showing cross-correlations of any of the data in the system. Attendance forms also go to the same team and are used to produce information on numbers of learners according to delivery location. The data is used to feedback to services as well as to report on one of Dundee's Regeneration Outcome Agreement indicators (on informal learning).

Dundee hopes that the roll out of the IT system will reduce the number of steps required in data collection.

Engaging staff in the development of the system

The development of an effective information system has been intertwined with a cultural change with staff throughout CLD growing in awareness of the need to gather data and to use it for service development and accountability. A key part of developing the system in Dundee has been continual feedback to staff and reinforcement of the benefits of improved data. One example of this was the introduction of 'project files'. These provide local CLD services with a template enabling them all to collect, store and retrieve the same information without difficulty. The project files were introduced after an HMIE inspection for which staff had to devote significant time, energy and stress to gather the necessary data. The authority has since undergone another HMIE inspection and the experience of staff was markedly different as they were able to produce information easily and demonstrate clearly the outcomes and value of their work. The feedback from staff on the use of the project files in this context has been extremely positive.

CLD management in Dundee is optimistic about how staff will respond to the roll out of the new IT aspect of the system. The ground work has been laid with the development of the paper-based approach and staff are now used to increased requirements for data collection. The introduction of the IT system may initially appear as an additional challenge but CLD management is confident that staff will quickly realise it does not represent any additional requirements on their time and furthermore that it will begin to simplify the way in which they gather, store and use data.

A few members of staff have gone a step further in embracing the system and have begun to add elements for their own purposes. For example, one community centre now records and reports on not only numbers using its building, but also the types of activities undertaken in the centre.

Minimum requirements of effective system

In the experience of Dundee CLD there are three key aspects about which authorities must be clear from the outset of developing a system:

- Registration
 - This provides the basic information and is of particular importance in terms of measuring progress on issues such as the equalities agenda
 - An obvious point, but which is often overlooked, is that age should be recorded as date of birth and not age categories (as this is only valid for the day the information was recorded)
 - Registration data must include postcodes to enable work to be targeted, for example on regeneration areas
- Attendance
 - It is not possible to use one single method of recording attendance as CLD includes structured and unstructured activities, Dundee will be looking at this as part of its current pilot of an IT-based system
- Record keeping
 - The provision of a template assists the process of record keeping. Previously staff may have perceived this as time consuming and difficult but templates (such as the local project files) have aided this greatly and the benefits are self-evident

Lessons learned

- Developing an effective system takes longer than people would generally expect
- It is better to introduce a system gradually so that instead of being overwhelmed and put off straight away, staff have the chance to become confident in using the basic system before being asked to deal with more complex data
- Continual feedback and involvement of staff is key so that the increased demands on their time are clearly justified by the benefits of better information systems (and the drawbacks of not having such a system such as in the example of the HMle inspection described above)
- It is unlikely that a system can ever entirely remove the need for paper-based collecting and recording. Dundee spent time “going down a blind alley” of aspiring to cutting out paper all together before realising that full direct entry of data onto computer was not achievable (for example many adult learning classes take place in rooms which do not have computers so gathering information on paper forms is more practical)

Key challenges

- There are differences in the perspectives and language of different parts of CLD and by IT staff, for example IT staff in Dundee viewed the information needed for adult learning and for youth work as identical whereas staff in these areas would view their needs as being different and would use distinct terminology
- IT staff in Dundee were familiar with structured learning programmes (for example computing courses for adult learners) and so needed input to ensure that the system would also work for gathering information on unstructured programmes such as some youth work and community capacity building activities

- There is some lack of clarity in terms of how equalities data should be categorised, for example Dundee uses a disability table devised for social work purposes which contains clinical definitions of disability not always appropriate for use with CLD participants. There is also some difficulty in terms of deciding what definitions to adopt for national level reporting
- There are difficulties in identifying what subcategories of youth work and adult learning to use
- There are particular issues relating to the distinct nature of community capacity building compared with youth work and adult learning, for example it is not possible to talk about 'participants' in the same way – one option for Dundee may be to split community capacity building into three categories; department led (e.g. neighbourhood forum), department supported, and independent and the IT system is capable of doing this

Conclusions

Developing an effective management and performance information system in Dundee has involved a long, constantly evolving process in which staff throughout CLD have been engaged. The current pilot of the IT element of the system is beginning to highlight issues for further development and adaptation and Dundee is responding to these before rolling it out across all three CLD priorities. The authority has the distinct benefit of having a member staff with significant time dedicated to developing the system.

Case study: Glasgow, Community Work

“Developing a system for recording outcomes”

The community capacity function of Glasgow City Council is based within the Community Work team of the Social Work Department. The Community Work service consists of 37 staff in the 9 Area Service Teams, and linked to Fieldwork Management at Centre. The purpose of the Community Work service can be summarised as:

‘To promote social welfare by developing effective community [organisations that can]:

- *Contribute to Social Work Services and Glasgow City Councils strategies and obligations;*
 - *Develop initiatives (consistent with SWS and Council policy) as determined by them.’*
- (Glasgow City Council Social Work Services community work strategy 2004-06)

Current situation

Their current recording system is based on LEAP. It was developed after a few individuals took part in LEAP training and felt, with some adaptations, it could be a useful tool for recording work. A Planning & Evaluation Framework was developed and copies of this Pack were circulated to all Community Work staff, and Area Service Managers. The Planning and Evaluation Framework for Community Work requires workers to identify:

- The main and additional **Work Categories** covered by each piece of work (e.g. A - Community Care, B - Children & Families, etc)
- One **Specific Objective** within the Categories, e.g. ‘A 1.1’ (‘To assist informal care and a strong voice for users by developing organisations of users of services’)

An important driver for developing this system was the desire to 'prove our worth' by increasing the understanding of the role, methods used and impact of community work; hopefully preventing community work being the first choice for cutbacks.

The system is based on LEAP and therefore starts with the identification of 'what needs to change' with the community group. This is the basis for outcome identification. These outcomes must be linked with work categories (described above) which link into overall policy direction of the department and Council. A working agreement (proforma attached) is agreed between the group and the community worker. The use of this form is at local discretion, recognising that it may not be appropriate to introduce at an early stage of work with new groups. This highlights the desired outcomes and also the period for review. The short term aims and objectives are reviewed every 6 months with a review form being completed with the group within the agreed timescale. The community worker identifies which work category it relates to.

These forms were adapted from forms supplied by Inverclyde Community Work Department.

Information flow

The community worker agrees the desired outcomes with the community group. These are then reviewed in Support and Supervision. If it is a new piece of work, a work request is completed and the team discuss the appropriate level of support. In many instances the team discuss the outcomes to be achieved and discuss the processes required. The various forms completed for each piece of work are stored within a file in the Area Team.

The Community Development Officer (CDO) in each team provides regular reports on how the system is being integrated at the City-wide CDO meeting. Each CDO produces an Area work plan, outlining the groups worked with and the associated desired outcomes. The Senior Officer for Community Development, based centrally, will gather information on the work for reporting purposes. Any City-wide reporting is made available to the Area Teams. The Annual reporting shows how the individual pieces of work link to work categories.

Implementing the framework

Previous system was not suitable so people were keen for something more useful. There is a recognition that community workers do not want to be office-based or form-fillers, rather, they want to devote their time to direct contact with community groups. However, individuals were aware of the low profile of community work and wanted to address this. The amalgamated forms provide an evidence base for the purpose of each piece of work and how it relates to each work category.

Support and supervision is used for reviewing work and the community work role. This assists staff to consider past developments and the type of interventions required for future progress.

Lessons learned

1. It takes time to implement new systems. They originally planned a year for implementation of a complete Planning and Evaluation cycle but had to extend this to two –years for the first complete cycle.
2. It is difficult to keep momentum going for using the system. It is important that staff at the coalface see how the information is used to appreciate that they are not wasting their time.
3. As the Senior Officer, Community Development, is based centrally he has no direct supervisory responsibilities. This lies with the Area Social Work managers. They should

have involved these managers at an early stage and they could have supported CDOs to quickly implement the new framework.

4. Significant on-going input is required to keep the momentum going. It needs to remain on agendas until fully implemented and then used for regular reporting.
5. This type of recording is further developed than for many other services and people do not plan their individual work on such a systematic basis.
6. Other contextual factors have an impact on these developments, e.g. the development of Community Health and Social Partnerships and the associated decentralisation of services means development of new reporting requirements – will they be ‘required’ to report to Council at all?

Key challenges

The review points built into the system ensures that there is measurement of progress against outcomes. However, this is completed for each piece of work with no common outcomes being set at a Glasgow-wide level. Therefore it is difficult to measure the performance at a City-wide level and the service cannot compare annual performance.

Discussions with a CDO suggested that there are many commonalities between outcomes achieved on different pieces of work, e.g. level of participation, increases in responsibility taken on by the group, increases in confidence, influencing agendas, etc. The challenge is to determine if common identification will provide them with more meaningful information to plan their work. If it is perceived to be of limited value there will be little buy in.

At the moment there is no systematic link between progress made and inputs required. It would be difficult to directly correlate the level of input required to direct progression. This assessment is conducted at support and supervision and as part of the review. Workers make judgements on progress made by the group and how much time is required to continue this support.

Community work does not gather information on individuals within groups. The groups are ‘owned’ by the members and therefore no details on individuals, including number of attendees, are gathered. Integrating into a system that is focused on data gathering on individual participants would present particular challenges.

Conclusions

Community work in Glasgow has developed a system for establishing desired outcomes for individual pieces of work. These are set within a planning and evaluation framework common to all workers across the city and link into work categories set at a Glasgow departmental level. However, the outcomes are not explicitly based on common criteria and, therefore, performance cannot be aggregated at an authority level or be used for annual comparisons. There are opportunities to be explored in this area, e.g. ‘specific objectives’ could be converted into outcomes statements or the LEAP CCB dimensions. This would require excessive reporting and the effort involved would not equate to the information it provided. However, they are looking at identification of a few key ‘topical’ outcomes that all teams can contribute to; providing a fuller outcome-based reporting system.

Case study: North Ayrshire

Case study: Perth and Kinross

Case study: South Lanarkshire

“How information is used to manage the service”

South Lanarkshire provides an example of the way in which information flows through a management and performance information system and how it is used to manage the service.

Current situation

South Lanarkshire CLD uses a paper-based system whereby information is submitted on a quarterly basis to CLD and collated annually. The system produces quantitative reports including data by; postcode, ethnicity, age and disability. It has been developed over the last 18 months and was recently rolled out after a 6-month pilot.

A key element of the system is the identification of “data definitions” in relation to each of the CLD priorities, for example in relation to youth work (an equivalent form is used in relation to adult learning and another for community capacity building):

Achievement through learning for young people Engaging with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence and a place in society	
Outcome	Young people well developed personally, educationally and socially, able to take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences of these and fully prepared for independent living
Measure	Number of young people achieving planned outcomes during the programme
Data definition	Count young people in if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They self assess progress in social and emotional competence using “Step it Up” or • Information obtained through engagement with services or programmes for young people enables the young people to make positive lifestyle choices or • They give freely of their time to work with others (volunteering) or • They are members of the Youth Participation Network or • They re-enter education, training or employment as a consequence of engagement with services for young people or • They achieve a nationally recognised award (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh’s Award, SVQ) or • They complete an organised programme (e.g. Bridges Programme)
Service standards	<p>“Step it Up” is available in youth learning programmes and staff are trained to use it in their work with young people</p> <p>Young people, through engagement with youth workers, obtain information and guidance that enables them to make positive lifestyle choices</p> <p>Young people in youth learning establishments receive</p>

	<p>encouragement and support that leads to their involvement in voluntary activity</p> <p>The Youth Participation Network and young people who are involved in it receive appropriate support</p> <p>Young people receive guidance and support that enables them to re-enter formal education</p> <p>Access to nationally recognised achievement schemes such as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is available to all young people</p> <p>Participation in organised programmes (e.g. Bridges Programmes) is available in youth learning establishments</p>
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Data flow

Information is gathered at a local level using forms that are completed with participants. A range of lead officers across CLD provision collate the information to show how many participants have achieved the data definitions for each individual programme. CLD lead officers use this for their own purposes and collate it further to provide an overview to the central Quality Management group. This shows how many participants overall (within each CLD priority) have met each of the data definitions.

South Lanarkshire is also exploring the use of common guidance referral forms across all services.

Use of information to manage service

The information collected locally and collated by each lead officer enables feedback to be given to learners, practitioners and relevant partners (for example Community Learning shares information with FE providers). It is also used to inform decisions within each of the three CLD priority areas including targeting resources, staff planning, and assessing progress in terms of initiatives such as Data Zones. For example in adult learning the data allows managers to identify post code areas where less work is taking place or client groups that have increased in number and may therefore require additional provision.

Centrally the information is used by CLD and by the CLD Partnership to manage the service across all three priorities. For example recent data showed that a large number of East European residents lived in a particular area and as a result the authority increased ESOL provision to that area.

There can be challenges involved in using data for service management. The information may allow an authority to identify areas where greater input is needed and therefore must allocate resources to respond to this. However there may also be limits on the authority's capacity.

Conclusions and lessons learned

- Authorities should focus on asking themselves "so what?" to ensure they are measuring not only what has happened, but also what the impact and benefits have been for participants
- Distinguishing between outputs and outcomes is essential to using information to manage the service. This may involve a shift in mindset so that staff more readily

recognise outcomes, including those that are less obvious and unplanned for (for example an adult literacy project may lead to unexpected health outcomes such as people going for an eyesight test for the first time)

- Involving staff in the development of the system helps to foster a sense of ownership and a positive view of the need to spend more time gathering and recording information



5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Local authority CLD is beginning to gather more performance/management information. There have been significant developments across local authorities; however the picture is varied across the country. This makes it difficult to draw conclusions and make recommendations that will 'fit' everyone. The following recommendations are based on our discussions with local authorities and from our analysis of what is needed from national level to support future developments. These recommendations are intended to inform future debate and we would expect consultation with local authorities on potential options to be consulted on with local authorities to ensure maximum buy-in. They also must link in with findings from the PIP project as a whole.

There is now a base of information collation that can be used to build on. As previously highlighted this base varies between local authorities and between function. In the main, systems for adult learning are the most developed followed by youth work. Community capacity building has the least investment in systematic performance information management.

As well the systems that are in place and developing, individuals have a positive outlook regarding performance and management information (as demonstrated by the survey outlined in Chapter 3). Many individuals and departments are waiting for national developments before making alterations to their own systems. A lot of areas have developed systems within their capacity and are not able to further progress without external support. Based on the information provided by individuals, the following categories of information – for baseline data and outputs - could be provided by the majority of respondents with relative ease:

Baseline data:

- Address/location
- Participant names
- Sex/gender
- Joining date
- Age
- Names of parent/guardian
- Attendance pattern
- Leaving date
- Ethnicity

We recommend that the other equality categories are included in this baseline information as gathering this information is expected and required for range of purposes.

Outputs:

- Number of attendees
- Number of events
- Details of groups

- Details of attendees
- Learning/activity plans

Information in relation to inputs and outcomes is more problematic.

Inputs:

There are many areas where individuals report systematic collation of information, especially funding and staffing. However, this is not always within CLD departments and most report they 'could access it' if needed rather than it being a key part of their system. Therefore the planning and decision-making is not based on assessments of the inputs required to produce certain outputs or outcomes and associated value gained from outputs compared to inputs. Learning Connections need to support understanding of this connection via outputs from the PIP project.

Outcomes:

The majority of respondents report that performance information on outcomes is gathered. This is rarely systematically collated at a CLD local authority level (with a few exceptions of CLD departments providing information for corporate performance indicators).

Most respondents would welcome clear guidance in relation to national reporting requirements. This national guidance should identify a few common outcomes; leaving flexibility to allow for variances in local context.

Future Developments

There needs to be staged national progressions. The complete PIP project will provide more of a global picture about what is needed. Learning Connections should identify the various developmental stages required to support CLD providers to collate information. This needs to be compared to the current stage of development of each local authority and support provided at that level. There are two types of support that Learning Connections may want to consider:

- Bespoke consultancy support for each local authority with priority given to the least developed areas. Some areas have dedicated staff resource to assist with developments and have made significant progress. Those areas without access to such a resource should be seen as priority.
- Offer local authorities the chance to meet with other local authorities in similar stage of development to share practice and move to next level. This needs to be facilitated by individuals with more experience as many of the early development areas 'do not know what they don't know'. One or two respondents would like clear recommendations from Learning Connections about which IT system to use. However, it may be of more use for some of the more developed areas to work together with an IT supplier to develop a system that will meet a variety of needs, rather than this being done in isolation.

People are not adverse to the notion of a few national performance indicators being set. These need to be clearly linked with outcomes; tailored for each national priority. This would require careful consultation with local authorities. Learning Connections should give careful consideration to the information they require of local authorities. There should explicitly state the purpose of this information and how it will be used and should avoid asking people to amass large quantities of information that will not be used.

Training and Development

Any future plans will require local support and/or training. On-going awareness raising of the importance of collation of performance information is still required. There is a danger that some areas will develop systems to satisfy reporting requirements rather than systems that help improve performance. Learning Connections could offer a few standardised courses. A

few suggestions of courses/seminars are: information development and its use in decision-making, use of support and supervision for information collation, tracking learners and measuring distance travelled. However, people value the localised support provided by Learning Connections in other areas and this needs to be considered in this area.

Ultimately, there is a good baseline to start from and a willingness to develop, as this quote indicates, *'Work on info systems long overdue. We're up for it and by god we need it'* (Local authority CLD manager)



Appendices

Appendix A – Local Authority Aide Memoire

SECTION A – GENERAL INTRODUCTION

- A1. We will ask you to provide a brief description of the system used
- A2. Which of the national priorities are you able to discuss the systematic gathering of information?

- Youth work
- Adult learning
- Community capacity building

- A3. Do you understand what is meant by 'input', 'output', 'outcome' etc.?

We have attached a CLD definitions sheet (provided by Communities Scotland) for your information

General follow-on questions (if answer yes in sections below)

1. How is this information gathered?

- No system for gathering it
- Held within CLD
- Held by Dept (that CLD sits in)
- Held by Council (outwith Dept)

2. How easy is it to collect this information using your systems/processes?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Average
- Difficult
- Very difficult

3. To what extent is this information used to manage the service?

- Never
- On an ad hoc basis
- Regularly when it is available
- It is critical for management
- Not sure

4. How do you use this information?

5. How do others use this information?

SECTION B – BASELINE: the general information collected by your organisation

B1. Does your local authority gather and record baseline information on individual participants or groups (yes/no options)?

- Participant names
- Names of parent/guardian
- Next of kin
- Address/location
- Age
- Sex/gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Work status
- Joining date
- Leaving date
- Attendance pattern
- Qualification/prior learning
- Referral from other agencies
- Childcare requirements
- Other (please specify) (e.g. income level, benefit recipient)

B2 How do you collect and store this information?

B3 How do you collect and store information on groups of learners/participants?

B4 What age range does your youth work cover?

- 0-25 years
- 12-18 years
- 12-25 years
- 16-25 years
- Other (please specify)

SECTION C – INPUTS: the resources you use to deliver a programme, project or policy

C1. Does your local authority gather information regarding inputs? (each of these will have a yes/no option. If the answer is 'yes' then please consider the follow-on questions below)

- Funding
- Staff time – full time
- Staff time – part time
- Volunteer time
- Equipment
- Buildings/premises
- Other (please specify)

SECTION D: OUTPUTS: the specific products and activities you deliver

D1 Does your local authority gather information regarding outputs?

- Number of events
- Learning/activity plans
- Number of attendees
- Details of attendees
- Details of groups
- Number of drop-offs
- Information packs
- Other resources, e.g. websites, books, etc
- Other

SECTION E – OUTCOMES: the impact and changes that result from what you do

E1 Do you set desired outcomes to assess the impact of CLD work in your area? (yes/no)

- Are they quantitative or qualitative or both?
- Is there baseline data to measure against? (yes/no)
- When is this done?
 - Start
 - Middle
 - End
 - All of the above

E2 Does your local authority record measures and indicators of outcomes? (yes/no)

- Are they quantitative or qualitative or both?
- Is there baseline data to measure against? (yes/no)

E3 Do you use wider community outcomes (if yes, which ones?)

E4 Do you track learners/participants after they leave?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

E5 When/how do you measure outcomes?

SECTION F – THE SYSTEM

This section is related to the systems for gathering information

History

F1 What was the driver for developing this system?

F2 How long have you used this system?

F3 How was it created?

F4 What support did you have to develop it (tick all that apply)?

- Another LA (which one?)
- Internal expertise (CLD)
- External consultants (CLD)
- External consultants (LA-wide)
- Council IT
- Other

F5 Are CLD staff trained in how to use this system? (yes/No)

If yes, what aspects are they trained in (tick all that apply)?

- Inputting data
- Analysing/processing information
- Output information
- Disseminating info
- Reporting on the information
- Using the information
- Other (please specify)

F6 What are the development needs in relation to performance and management information?

F7 Do you have an individual(s) with dedicated time to develop/manage this system?

F8 Are they based within CLD? (yes/no)

If, no, where are they based?

F9 If it is IT-based, what type of IT system?

F10 What type of reports can your system produce, e.g. how many young women attend adult learner classes?

F11 Strengths/weakness of this system?

F12 Does your system link into any other system (e.g. SEEMIS, Social work, etc)

F13 What does your system not tell you that would be useful to know?

F14 Have you had any feedback on your system, e.g. HMIE? (yes/no)

F15 How would you rate your organisation's capacity to manage all of the information discussed here?

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very good
- Excellent

SECTION G- Using the Management information generated by your system

G1 Indicate which of the following regularly receive reports from the system (tick all that apply)

- CLD manager
- Staff teams
- Volunteers
- Community Planning steering group (or equivalent)
- Local Authority Chief Executive
- Community forum (or equivalent)
- Youth groups
- Other (please specify)

G2 How do you use the information?

G3 Who else do you think should receive reports from your system?

G4 Any additional comments?



Appendix B – Agree/disagree questions

Agree/Disagree statements (respondents will have the opportunity to 'Strongly agree/disagree and mildly agree/disagree')

		<i>Strongly Agree</i> ←————→ <i>Strongly Disagree</i>				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Performance information gathered is systematically linked to staff development					
2	The amount of resource involved in setting up our performance information was appropriate to its usefulness					
3	The amount of staff time for using/maintaining data into our system is appropriate to its usefulness					
4	I am satisfied that our systems are fit for purpose					
5	We only gather information that we use					
6	Developing management and performance information systems is not worth the amount of time and energy required					
7	Any system developed nationally will be useful for us					
8	Management information generated from our system is readily understood by all staff involved in delivering CLD					
9	CLD management information generated is readily understood by other voluntary organisations					
10	We would like to develop/improve our Performance information system					
11	We do not understand how to use the information we collect					
12	We understand why collecting this information is important to our organisation					
13	We understand why collecting this information is important for the Scottish Executive and for informing wider national policy					
14	Our systems are not adaptable to new requirements, e.g. new fields of data					

Appendix C – PIP Definitions

(provided by Learning Connections, Communities Scotland)

Performance Information Project Definitions – 29/9/05

Performance Information

The set of performance indicators of a particular organisation, used to describe how well it is performing against its objectives. Performance information is used by the organisation to inform decision making, support policy development and monitor progress.

Performance Indicators (PI)

Measures of how well a service is performing against its objectives.¹

Performance Information System

A set of performance indicators for an organisation and the processes for producing that information.¹

Inputs

The resources used to formulate or execute a programme, policy or project. Includes: staff, time, budgets equipment, buildings, policy.¹

Outputs

The specific products of the process activities involved in a programme or project.¹

Outcome

The impacts, or consequences for the community, of the activities of the organisation. Outcomes are normally what an organisation is trying to achieve². Outcomes may follow immediately from outputs e.g. increase in learner confidence. These are intermediate outcomes. They may however take longer to develop e.g. increase the chances of sustained employment for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups – these are end outcomes. The outcome should follow as a consequence from the output.

Process

The manner in which the inputs are applied to achieve the intended outputs – what we do with the resources.¹

Objective

The desired result of some action or process undertaken by the organisation. The objective may be linked to inputs, outputs and/or outcomes. Different groups involved in the same action or process may have different objectives depending on their individual context.

Example

Objective ‘to provide community capacity building (CCB) services’

An associated **PI** linked with the **input** ‘staff’ may be ‘% of vacant posts within the community work team throughout the year’. The associated **performance information system** may include a **process** where the CLD manager reports to the HR department the number of

¹ Taken from Learning Evaluation and Planning (LEAP) Handbook, page 6

² Taken from Choosing the Right Fabric; A Framework for Performance Management, page 8

vacant posts within the team on the first day of each quarter. The **objective** of the CLD manager of this process is secure additional staff to fill the vacancies.

A further **PI** linked with the **output** 'deliver CCB support' may be 'total number of community organisations engaged with in the year'. The **process** within the **performance information system** to collect this information may be that all community workers record on a weekly basis the community organisations they have engaged with. The CLD manager annually collates the total number of organisations from the records of the individual community workers. The **objective** of this **process** may be to display to the chief executive the broad range of organisations being supported.

A final **PI** linked with the **outcome** 'communities influence decision making' may be '% of community defined priorities achieved in the year'. The **process** to collect this within the **performance information system** may be that the community group records their priorities to be achieved within the year and notes them as complete when they have been achieved. At the end of the year they report their performance against their targets to their community. The community worker reads the report and reports back to the CLD manager. The **objective** of this **process** for the community group may be to display to the wider community the benefits they are delivering to them. The **objective** of the community worker may be to monitor their own performance in supporting their community groups.

Appendix D – list of Local Authorities interviewed

The following local authorities were interviewed; some areas had more than one interview as the 3 functions split into different departments with different systems

Total of 31 telephone interviews were conducted with individuals from 25 local authorities

- Aberdeen
- Aberdeenshire
- Angus
- Argyll and Bute
- Clackmannanshire
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Dundee
- East Ayrshire
- East Dunbartonshire – Adult Learning
- East Dunbartonshire – Youth Work
- Edinburgh – Adult Learning
- Edinburgh – Youth Work
- Eilean Siar
- Glasgow – Adult Learning
- Glasgow – Community Capacity Building
- Glasgow – Youth Work
- Highland
- Inverclyde – Adult Learning
- Inverclyde – Community Capacity building
- Inverclyde – Youth work
- Midlothian
- North Ayrshire
- North Lanarkshire
- Orkney Islands
- Perth and Kinross
- Scottish Borders
- Shetland Islands
- South Ayrshire
- South Lanarkshire
- Stirling
- West Lothian