

Local Government and Communities Directorate
Public Bodies & Public Service Reform Division



Community Planning Chair
Local Authority Chief Executive

cc Scottish Government Location Directors
Community Planning Leads

Our ref: Location Director role refresh
22 May 2018

Dear Colleague,

From time to time the Scottish Government updates the focus of the Location Director role to reflect developments in the environment they work within. In recent months SG officials have looked closely at how this role can be most valuable to Scottish Government, to local partners and to Location Directors personally in the next few years within an evolving reform landscape. We've benefitted from the input of several Location Directors and other colleagues within SG, and also a cross-section of local public sector and third sector partners.

The Location Director and their team will continue to provide a bridge between local partners and SG, encourage local reform and improvement activity and act as a critical friend. However, we are now re-balancing the focus of this role in a number of subtle but important ways.

We are shifting the emphasis of the Location Directors role away from how well community planning is operating locally; there is now a clear statutory duty on several public sector organisations to make that happen. We are asking Location Directors and their teams to take a close interest in why and how public services work together and with communities to improve outcomes and tackle inequalities in places across Scotland. This is something a number of Location Directors are already doing. Community and locality planning will continue to be at the heart of this, but we are also interested in how partners work together to make a difference at regional level, for instance to support economic growth.

In keeping with this focus on collective impact, the Location Director and their team can from time to time act as a change agent: facilitating conditions for ambitious shifts in working by local and regional partners, for instance by providing a bridge to colleagues within Scottish Government who can provide assistance. In particular, the Local Governance Review provides an ideal opportunity to test new approaches to working within places to empower communities and support inclusive growth. The Location Director and their teams will also want to understand and share examples of forward thinking practice to shape the way public services work around the needs of the communities they serve; as well as genuine obstacles they encounter.

We expect that Location Directors and their teams will be keen to nurture strong and trusted personal relationships with key local partners at the heart of this approach. They will do this in ways that suit their own circumstances and those of their local partners. However, in many cases it is likely to result in a shift in focus away from attendance at formal CPP meetings; and away from the personal contribution of the Location Director towards a greater emphasis on the role of a Location Director team for a local area.

I am copying this letter to your Location Director, who can discuss with their local partners what this re-balancing might mean for the area they cover. I am also copying it to your CPP manager, and would be grateful if they can ensure it is shared with CPP partners in your area.

David Milne
Community Planning Team Leader