

# Community Learning and Development Progress Visit Report

**Dundee City Council**

12 March 2024

## 1. Context

HM Inspectors visited Dundee City Council to undertake a community learning and development (CLD) progress visit during January 2024. During the visit, we talked to learners and community representatives, CLD leaders, managers, staff, and volunteers, and other key stakeholders. HM Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of local authority CLD partnerships' approach to self-evaluation and planning for improvement, and considered progress made against identified priorities in their CLD plans.

## 2. Findings from the progress visit

### How effective is the leadership of the local authority and their CLD partners in improving outcomes?

#### Areas of positive progress

Leadership of CLD in Dundee is strong and effective. CLD leaders demonstrate robust governance, supported by high quality reporting. The work of CLD practitioners across the city is informed and directed by the shared key priorities in the CLD Plan 2021-2024. There is a high level of ownership of the key priorities and actions amongst CLD partners. At all levels, there is a clear vision for improvement. The City Plan for Dundee links clearly to the Council Plan and in turn to the CLD Plan. The actions in the CLD Plan are delivered through the Executive Boards of the Dundee Partnership and through the Strategic Planning Groups. CLD is held in high regard by partners both within and outside of the council. Community members and young people are active participants in decision-making processes. Their voices are heard and valued by council officers, elected members and key partners.

The CLD partnership approach to tackling poverty and inequality in Dundee is highly effective. Planning for improvement is very well supported and informed by a wide range of data including from learners and community members with lived experience of poverty and disadvantage. CLD partners gather regularly strong evidence of the impacts of poverty and inequality through community profiling. As a result, the use of quantitative and qualitative data is informing the targeting of shared resources and ensures that there are no areas of duplication. CLD staff at all levels are supported well by managers to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Strategic and local partners and community members collaborate very well to co-develop and co-deliver programmes and activities. The focus on identifying and target resources to small geographical areas to support those most in need is starting to benefit local residents. Local people feel listened to and valued. Across Dundee, local Community Planning Partnerships are active and engaged. Each area has a well-developed action plan. Their work is informed well by key data such as the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and other local intelligence. Members of the Community Health Advisory Forum are representing the most disadvantaged communities in Dundee and this is leading to improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

### How well does the performance of the local authority and their CLD partners demonstrate positive impact?

#### Areas of positive progress

CLD partners gather and analyse data systematically. Public Health Scotland locality profiles are used well to inform partners' approaches to tackling deep rooted inequalities. The use of detailed

profiles to inform the Fairness Initiative is enabling partners to drill down to individual community level. This is helping identify key issues across the most disadvantaged communities in Dundee. Amongst CLD partners there is a strong commitment to use data to inform improvement. Joint reporting on key city-wide priorities ensures that all CLD partners have clear understanding of emerging trends. This is ensuring that the best outcomes for local people are at the forefront of partners' work. Feedback from learners and communities is gathered systematically using a range of methods, including the Engage Dundee survey. Annual CLD service key performance indicator data demonstrates a strong level of performance. Over a period of three years, almost all measures are showing improvement. The health inequalities partnership demonstrates effective use of data. Techniques such as poverty sensitive multi agency training supports staff to improve their practice.

The focus on reducing barriers to participation is very well embedded across all CLD partners. In the Ardler community, partners work effectively to reduce inequality. Increasing levels of funding are being secured by partners to develop services such as the highly successful community café. Increasing numbers of local families now use the café to access affordable meals as part of a dignified response to food insecurity. Based on data that highlights a disproportionately high level of the occurrence of cancer in disadvantaged communities, Macmillan Cancer Support provides targeted services in the Ardler area. Strong partnerships with the community café are enabling those affected by cancer to seek support and engage in learning. The Dundee English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and humanitarian partnerships work closely to coordinate delivery of programmes and improve provision across Dundee. Progression pathways are well understood by learners, and partners are clear about their roles and responsibilities. As a result of this approach, New Scots are much more integrated into the community and have an increasing network of support. Claypotts Castle Primary School, in conjunction with the Community Empowerment Team, are embedding a highly collaborative approach to supporting children and families. This is securing positive outcomes across the whole community.

Across a wide range of CLD programmes, learners are improving life chances whilst gaining skills and knowledge. Close partnership working between CLD staff and staff in Craigie High School is leading to positive outcomes for young people. Levels of attainment at the school are starting to improve across some measures. Similarly, the partnership with Braeview Academy is resulting in positive outcomes for many young people. Targeted at those disengaged from school, partners including local football clubs and CLD are working with over 90 young people. Young people are learning new skills and gaining awards. School staff indicate that the attendance of a few young people is improving and leading to better engagement with school. Adult literacy learners are benefiting from one to one or group work support that meets their individual needs. Progression routes for learners are clear and a few are progressing towards qualifications, volunteering or to college. Young people engaging with the Disc project are increasingly recognising skills for learning, life and work and developing their overall aspirations for the future. Almost all young people are gaining accreditation and achieving a positive destination. External funding is used effectively to support improved numeracy skills for adult learners. As a result, learners with a wide range of literacy and numeracy needs have access to an improved learning offer.

### 3. Practice worth sharing more widely

- The asset-based approach to tackling poverty and inequality in Dundee.
- The approach of CLD in developing, promoting and sustaining partnerships.
- The Dundee ESOL partnership which is leading to well-coordinated delivery of programmes.

### 4. What happens next?

The local authority and their CLD partners are making sufficient progress with their CLD plan and have the capacity to continue to improve. As a result, HM Inspectors will take no further action in relation to this progress visit. During the inspection, we identified aspects of highly effective practice which we would like to explore further.

Sheila Brown  
**HM Inspector**  
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