

# North Alliance Partnership Agreement



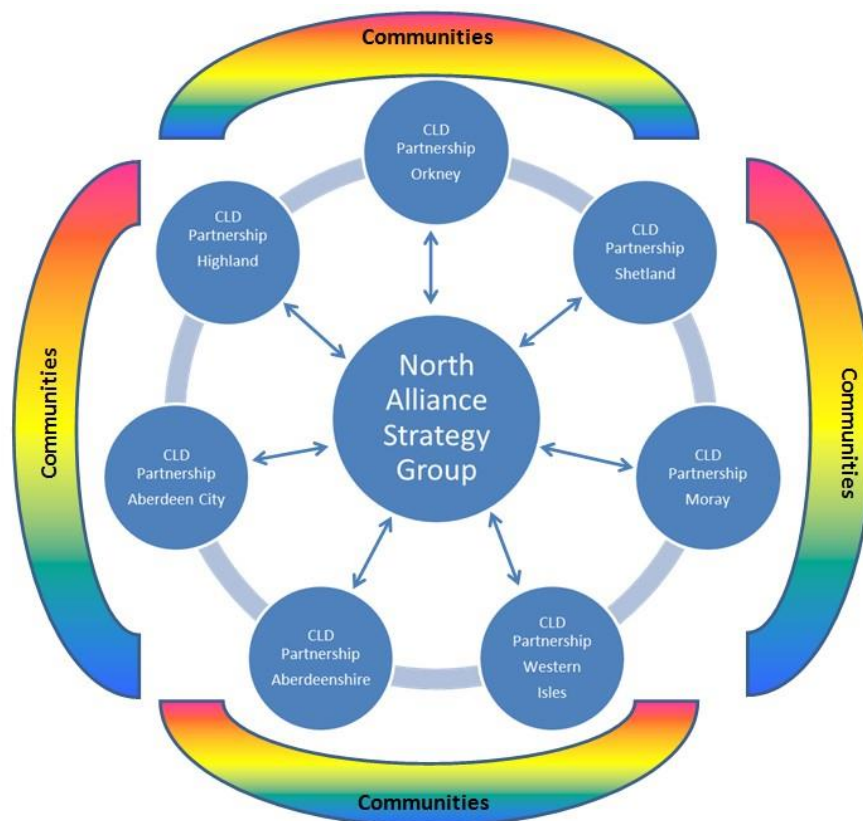
January 2013

## The Partners

The North Alliance is a partnership of community learning and development practitioners from the seven North of Scotland Community Learning and Development Partnerships (CLD Partnership)<sup>1</sup> of:

- Aberdeenshire
- Aberdeen City
- Highland
- Moray
- Orkney
- Shetland
- Western Isles

The North Alliance was established in recognition of the added value of working together to achieve best practice standards across the north of the country by up skilling the workforce.



<sup>1</sup> Each area may have its own version of a "CLD Partnership", but functioning in the same manner.

## Values and principles

The North Alliance reflects the values of community learning and development (CLD). These are:

- **Self-determination** - respecting the individual and valuing the right of people to make their own choices
- **Inclusion** - valuing equality of both opportunity and outcome, and challenging discriminatory practice
- **Empowerment** - increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence issues that affect them and their communities through individual and/ or collective action
- **Working collaboratively** – maximising collaborative working relationships with the many agencies which contribute to CLD and/or which CLD contributes to, including collaborative work with participants, learners and communities
- **Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity** – ensuring that individuals are aware of a range of learning opportunities and are able to access relevant options at any stage of their life

## Aims and goals

The key aim of the North Alliance Strategy Group (NASG) is to improve opportunities and access to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for the CLD workforce in the seven local authority areas to ensure positive learning outcomes in communities.

As CLD practitioners, the NASG shares a commitment to supporting positive change in communities and has a thorough understanding of the CPD needs of staff working in the field.

The CLD Standards Council published “**A Learning Culture for the Community Learning and Development Sector in Scotland: Continuous Professional Development Strategy**”<sup>2</sup> in January 2011. This sets out a strategic vision and underpinning values that inform our work on CPD: that for all CLD practitioners their participation in continuous professional development activities will be a central and established part of their practice. Through this they will demonstrate and enhance their commitment to a culture of learning:

- Where learning is celebrated, recognised and encouraged
- Where learning is reflected on and shared

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/CPD/CPD\\_Strategy](http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/CPD/CPD_Strategy)

- Where challenge is relished and embraced
- Where critical reflection is embedded in practice
- Where individuals can explore learning related to their role throughout their careers

The Scottish Government published in June 2012 its “**Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development**”<sup>3</sup>. This strategic guidance clarifies their expectation of Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), within the broad framework of public service reform, and in line with the Review of Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreements.

They see the purpose of CLD as empowering people, individually and collectively, to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities, through learning. Their guidance outlines the action necessary to maximise CLD's impact, resulting in better alignment of services and optimal use of resources.

By working in partnership with each local CLD Partnership or similar body therefore, the North Alliance aims to:

- **Increase and improve** access to continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for practitioners across the north of Scotland by developing sustainable CPD opportunities
- **Develop innovative and cost effective approaches** to training, learning and CPD across the region eg. e-learning
- **Make effective use of the skills, knowledge and experience** that are held across the region through networking and resource sharing
- **Engage** with other training providers to deliver CPD solutions across the region
- **Contribute to the delivery of outcomes** detailed in the national upskilling programme and in Single Outcome Agreements by ensuring the CLD workforce has the appropriate skills and is confident and competent about its role and purpose.

## Partners’ responsibilities

All local authority areas within the North Alliance geographical area are expected to be actively involved in the Alliance, encouraged and supported by the local CLD partnership or similar body.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/06/2208>

Whilst participation in the NASG is not on a formal representational basis, members of the NASG are expected to be a member of, and/or have a dialogue with, their local CLD partnership or similar body about the work of the Alliance and to reflect the views of their sector within the Alliance.

## Partnership structure<sup>4</sup>

The North Alliance established the Strategic Group to drive forward its aims. It comprises public and third sector interface representatives from each of the local authority areas nominated by the local CLD Partnership. All nominated members bring significant skills, knowledge and experience from each of the three CLD strands i.e. achievement through learning for young people, achievement through learning for adults and community capacity building.

Strategic group members are expected to:

- Participate in 4 Strategic Group meetings per annum and an annual conference, either in person or via Skype or video conference.

Where this is not possible, apologies should be submitted in advance of the meeting and responses/ comments on agenda items forwarded to the Strategic Group Chair in advance of the meeting. Where non attendance at meetings extends beyond 4 meetings, Strategic Group members should consider identifying an alternative representative from their organisation/sector.

- Seek to reflect the views of CLD practitioners within their organisation/sector in North Alliance business. Strategic Group members have a key role in ensuring the North Alliance is kept focused on the needs of the workforce whether paid or volunteer.
- Use appropriate methods to report back North Alliance business to practitioners in their organisation/sector eg staff meetings, e-bulletins, conferences
- Drive forward the priorities of the North Alliance as outlined in its business plan
- Identify opportunities to further grow and develop the aims and priorities of the North Alliance
- Promote the work of the North Alliance to appropriate bodies, networks and agencies

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<sup>4</sup> See diagram on page 2 for clarity.

## Reporting

The NASG will produce minutes of each meeting which will be circulated to each local CLD Partnership and actioned as appropriate. A short annual report will be produced by the NASG and presented at a conference which will take place annually in the Autumn. Additional reporting /presentations will be made to partner agencies and external bodies by arrangement.

## Sustainability

Sustaining both the structure and the work of the North Alliance will be a challenge in the coming years. Funding on a project/specific activity basis is currently available from Education Scotland but may not be continued beyond 2013. Organisations that have representation on the NASG will commit to allocating staff time to continue the work of the North Alliance. This together with external support to assist co-ordination and delivery of the business plan are the best current options for sustaining the Partnership.

## Succession Planning

Membership of the North Alliance is open to any CLD practitioner in the North Alliance area.

Nominations to the NASG will be made by each local CLD partnership and will comprise 1 public sector and 1 third sector interface representative.

The NASG will not exceed 15 members plus a chairperson. Replacement NASG participants will be identified throughout the year by local CLD partnerships.

Co-opted members of the NASG can be drawn from partners or external agencies where their specialist or expert input will be valuable to the North Alliance.

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of the CLD Partnership or similar group in Moray, Highland, Shetland, Orkney, Western Isles, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

N.B. This agreement will be reviewed at the annual conference each year.