



Black Country Empowerment Group Launch of Reference Group 9th January 2009

Using DICE as a planning and evaluation framework

Who came along:

Mark Thomas - Community Safety Team
Paulette Worsey - Hillcrest School
Jody Pritchard - Dudley PCT
Janet Hilken - St Thomas's Network
Janet Lavelle - DMBC, Adult and Community Learning
Ian Johnson - Black Country Learning Academy
Katherine Rogers - Dosti
Lorna Prescott - Dosti
Amanda Kenny - DMBC, Youth Participation Team
Siobhan Lloyd - DMBC, Youth Participation Team
Sheila Gill - All Saints and Blakenhall New Deal, Community Development
Indrajit Bhogal - Dudley College
Saffi Price - WVSC
Jill Bedford - changes
Sue Gorbing - changes
Sue Priest - Wolverhampton Network Consortium
Richard Ashwell - Wolverhampton Learning Partnership
Ian Darch - WVSC
Angela Spence - Wolverhampton City Council

What is DiCE?

DiCE is a planning and evaluation framework, developed by community development specialists, to enable organisations to carry out effective community empowerment which is about (5 dimensions of 'community empowerment'):

- Increasing skills, knowledge and confidence
- Promoting equality and inclusion
- Bringing people together around common issues and concerns
- Building positive relationships across communities and groups and enabling co-operative working
- Encouraging and enabling communities to influence decision making in public services

DiCE operates from the basis that community empowerment doesn't just happen - there are specific things that need to be considered and done to achieve the greater outcomes that community empowerment can offer - for individuals, communities, agencies and wider society.

'community empowerment' is about both processes - how we do things to achieve particular 'outcomes'.

DiCE and BCEG

We are using DiCE as a planning and evaluation framework for BCEG - to ensure a CD approach which is systematic and reviewable. Advantages - this can flag up gaps, keep us on track and we can use to continue dialogue and increasingly clarify what we want to achieve during the pathfinder

DiCE Circle

We introduced the DiCE circle (below) to the group and talked through the process with the group



Reflect and Learn

This part is about reflecting on and analysing the current situation, considering what has gone before, what has been learned and what we are building on. It can reveal existing contacts and information which may be useful for this and future work.

In terms of Take Part, there is a long history that has led to this point and a huge amount of learning that has informed the proposal, the understanding of what works and the potential outcomes. (See attached handout)

Others' Agendas

Other people's agendas are a reality and it is helpful to identify what they are, and 'what other people want from your work' and how it might contribute to their work. What is your organisation's motivation? It may be about meeting a specific organizational target, but what is the target about?

This part is about recognising the opportunities and threats of what you are doing, by considering how it links into the bigger picture: how you can use the influences around you - and how you can use what you are doing to influence other people's thinking, juggle the inevitable tensions and avoid getting too side-tracked from your vision (see.....).

People may have the same vision with different interpretations of what is needed to get there or different visions about what they want the outcomes to be.

Take Part is linked to national agenda around the community empowerment White Paper, Duty to Involve, and National Indicators:

- NI1 percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI3 civic participation in the area
- NI4 percentage of local residents who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- NI6 participation in regular volunteering
- NI7 environment for a thriving third sector

Vision

The following is the vision that the proposal was built on:

'People and communities have influence over the decisions that affect their lives and that this influence is shaped by the values of participation, co-operation, social justice, equality and diversity'

Key priorities:

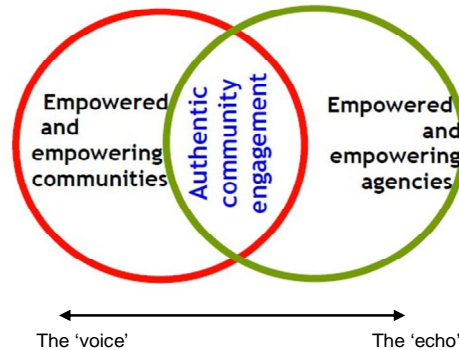
The following are the key priorities identified so far - these can be added to as we progress but currently represent the main themes of the initiative. Key priorities will very likely be about some aspect of community well-being and/or will relate to current social or policy themes. In this instance the generic theme is around participation, governance and local democracy and could be summed up in the following key themes

- Democratic accountability
- Community empowerment
- Active citizenship
- Civic and civil involvement

Community wellbeing outcomes:

The Venn Diagram gives an overview of the Take Part initiative:

Community wellbeing outcomes



These three community wellbeing outcomes take into account barriers to involvement and engagement which derive from different sources:

- Personal barriers
- Cultural barriers
- Institutional barriers

Take Part is clear that by 'empowering' citizens, we do not remove all of the barriers to involvement and participation. While individual citizens might feel more confident, skilled, knowledgeable...they may still face many structural and institutional barriers that they as individuals cannot change. We are not starting with neutral territory and need to be aware of the closed doors and the potential to experience the 'zapper' effect.

Indicators of community wellbeing:

The following are suggested indicators that people felt are meaningful for people in terms of their particular work focus. There was agreement that we need to be realistic about the scale of the initiative and what is realistic in time frame we have.

Empowered and empowering VCS

- Use of voice toolkit with groups
- Level of challenges
- Number of people participating and breadth of participation
- Increase in number of people wanting to become elected members - councillors etc
- Raised expectations/aspirations (?)
- Level of challenge from vol orgs via compact
- Who involved in which decision making processes
- Feel there is appoint us saying something
- More competition of people who want to be councilors
- Aspire to 'play the game'
- Feeling/being able to influence (NI4)
- Collective influence up and across - shift in power structure

Empowered and Empowering VCS - issues

- Vast and hard to measure (NI7)

- ✚ Use of Voice toolkit - more appropriate to community sector (than vol???)
- ✚ Quality not necessarily quantity

Empowered and empowering public sector

Councils, PCT, Schools, Colleges, Police, Fire Service, Youth Services,

- ✚ Networking across sectors
- ✚ Demonstrating listening and feedback
- ✚ Changes of internal processes and 'culture' within statutory organisations
- ✚ Used an audit (echo) to evaluate and respond to community influence
- ✚ Number of projects that are initiated by community groups
- ✚ Number of groups who have been involved in community influence processes
- ✚ Groups reaching out beyond the 'usual suspects' (*note - Some would call these the 'golden nuggets'!*) to those on the margins
- ✚ Setting appropriate priorities around funding
- ✚ Money for community workers and community development
- ✚ Demonstrating they are listening
- ✚ Feeding back - even if NO
- ✚ Cultural change
- ✚ How they respond when challenged
- ✚ Representation at a strategic level is poor
- ✚ Numbers and breadths of groups who have influenced - what about those on the margins
- ✚ Money available for workers to link with communities (shouldn't be affected by funding)
- ✚ Ongoing outreach work
- ✚ Feel safe in 'owning' results of consultation - perhaps free us the consultation process - more independent
- ✚ People in public sector feel empowered
- ✚ See community engagement as a norm - want to do it
- ✚ Everyone is involved and everyone understands what it is about

Empowered and Empowering Public Sector - issues

- ✚ What do we mean by 'public sector'
- ✚ Issues re 'working together' in a 'joined up' way
- ✚ Quality not necessarily quantity

Authentic community engagement:

(Note -The flip chart notes were not in a linear format so apologies if I haven't done justice to the 'story')

- ✚ People see community engagement as the norm - expectation of society/public sector - have to **want** to, not just 'do it'
- ✚ Elected members understand community engagement and see as complimenting their role
- ✚ People in communities identify outcomes as things that they identified and wanted...(when public sector has done something)
- ✚ Not being 'done to'
- ✚ People being given the space to be involved in things they want to be...
- ✚ When surveys are carried out, more people respond and say what they want

- 🚧 People are able to respond because authentic community engagement is taking place
- 🚧 All officers in the public sector understand community engagement
- 🚧 Ultimately about the whole community being engaged - not only 5% - more than a few' - quality has to come into this
- 🚧 Engagement is happening in lots of different places and with lots of different people
- 🚧 Including decision making as part of engagement - not just in council offices
- 🚧 People can't expect that just because they are engaged they can have their way
- 🚧 Collective responsibility for outcomes by sectors and communities
- 🚧 Stuff from feeling able to influence to **being** able to influence - including public sector officers - collective not individual (for an individual this will include many collectives) - requires shift in power structures

Community empowerment outcomes:

The outcomes drawn from the TP National Learning Framework were circulated. Some will be more appropriate to 'empowered and empowering VCS' and other to 'empowered and empowering public bodies' - some may be appropriate to both. See amended outcome table at the end.

These outcomes are based upon the five community empowerment dimensions that put the values and principles of community development into action:

Values of community development (see www.cdx.org.uk)

Learning - recognising the skills, knowledge and expertise that people contribute and develop by taking action to tackle social, economic, political and environmental problems

Equality - challenging the attitudes of individuals, and the practices of institutions and society, which discriminate against and marginalise people.

Participation - facilitating democratic involvement by people in the issues which affect their lives based on full citizenship, autonomy, and shared power, skills, knowledge and experience.

Co-operation - working together to identify and implement action, based on mutual respect of diverse cultures and contributions.

Social Justice - enabling people to claim their human rights, meet their needs and have greater control over the decision-making processes which affect their lives.

DICE offers an interpretation of community empowerment which is about putting the values of community development into practice. There is a clear correlation between the values and the community empowerment dimensions:

Confident - Learning: recognising the skills, knowledge and expertise that contribute, building on these and what has gone before

Inclusive - Equality: challenging discrimination and oppressive practices within organisations, institutions and communities

Organised - Participation: facilitating democratic involvement by people in the issues which affect their lives based on full citizenship, autonomy and shared power, skills, knowledge and experience

Cooperative - Co-operation: working together to identify and implement action, encouraging networking and connections between communities and organisations

Influence - Social justice: enabling people to claim their human rights, meet their needs and have greater control over the decision-making processes which affect their lives

Putting these values into action isn't just about improving experience for communities - it is also about improving your work experience, and what happens as a result of what you do

Each of the 5 dimensions can help you to respond to particular situations, as it puts the values of community development into action:

<p>Confident – working in ways which increase people’s skills, knowledge and confidence – and instils in them a belief that they can make a difference</p>	<p>This is a response to those issues around individuals you are working with, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - not contributing in meetings - not understanding the constraints you are working within - having unrealistic expectations - not understanding, or misinterpreting what you say to – or ask of – them - not believing that change is possible - lacking skills, knowledge, self-belief - preferring to leave things for other people to do - only seeing negative outcomes
<p>By working in ‘confident’ ways you increase people’s confidence to take part, know that they have – and understand - the information being discussed and understand the parameters of the work. People ask questions and play an active role, they recognise their own, and each other’s skills, knowledge and expertise.</p> <p>It is about putting the value of ‘learning’ into practice</p>	
<p>Inclusive – working in ways which recognise that discrimination exists, promote equality of opportunity and good relations between groups and challenge inequality and exclusion</p>	<p>This is a response to those issues around, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - only hearing the ‘usual suspects’ or the ‘same voices’ - people feeling isolated or ostracised within their neighbourhoods

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the loudest voices receiving your attention and response - people feeling that others gain favours at their expense - communities feeling hard done by
<p>By working in 'inclusive' ways you increase understanding and awareness between different local communities. You hear diverse voices and encourage people to find common ground. People understand different demands and understand the rationale for the allocation of resources.</p> <p>It is about putting the value of 'equality' into practice</p>	
<p>Organised – working in ways which bring people together around common issues and concerns in organisations and groups that are open, democratic and accountable</p>	<p>This is a response to those issues around, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - not feeling confident that 'representatives' are speaking on behalf of others - concerns about the accountability of those you are talking to or working with - addressing collective needs rather than individual issues - initiatives or activities being short-term and fizzling out - 'communities' not agreeing on ways forward
<p>By working in 'organised' ways, you encourage people to work collectively, to negotiate and identify 'solutions' that work for more, rather than few. People work together and understand each others strengths, they feel a sense of ownership.</p> <p>It is about putting the value of 'participation' into practice</p>	
<p>Cooperative – working in ways which build positive relationships across groups, identify common messages, develop and maintain links to national bodies and promote partnership working</p>	<p>This is a response to those issues around, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communities competing with each other - Competing demands for your time and resources - Work happening in silos - Duplication of work - Limited resources
<p>By working in 'cooperative' ways, you provide communities with opportunities to benefit from wider social and economic agendas. They understand – first hand –</p>	

<p>the needs of – and resources allocated to – other communities. They learn from each other and see themselves as being part of a bigger picture.</p> <p>It is about putting the value of ‘cooperation’ into practice</p>	
<p>Influential – working in ways which encourage and equip communities to take part and influence decisions, services and activities</p>	<p>This is a response to those issues around, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering the most appropriate services - Forgetting the real intention of your work - Getting beyond the targets - Having a legitimacy - How to prioritise what you are doing - Consultation fatigue
<p>By working in ‘influential’ ways, you are inviting communities to take responsibility for the services and activities you provide. You are fulfilling your role as ‘public servant’ and showing that communities have a very real role to play. Your work has a greater legitimacy with the knowledge that you are working to community-led agendas and you can see things from the ‘community-eye’ – you are much closer to the ground!</p> <p>It is about putting the value of ‘social justice’ into practice</p>	

Community empowerment indicators:

These are to be considered next - probably led by the evaluation task and finish group.

Putting it into action

The 5 key delivery strands were explained - how they meet the sets of outcomes. The initiative encompasses work with individuals and communities as well as public sector organisations and agencies. There are **five main delivery strands**:

- Learning and support that build skills and confidence, within a community context - this would include active shared learning leading to community leadership; increased individual and collective voices, action and influence. This includes courses, support network, buddying scheme, and information on opportunities for civic and civil involvement.
- Initiatives for community and voluntary groups and networks around monitoring and increasing their capacity to influence. This will use Voice, one of the Axes of Influence, which was researched and developed in Dudley.¹ (Voice work)
- Initiatives for public sector agencies to assess their openness to community influence using Echo.² (Echo work)

¹ Previously known as Axis of Influence, now called Voice
<http://www.changesuk.net/axis%20of%20influence.pdf>

- Joint dialogue across sectors and boroughs on themes of active critical citizenship, community empowerment³, involvement and engagement.
- Develop and support a pool of local facilitators through training, shadowing and provision of materials

Notes


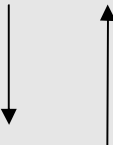
- Task over next 2 months is to generate and articulate indicators
- People may start in an empowering way (working in the public sector) and end up feeling disempowered
- Is there some scope in articulating when people feel disempowered - what it is that disempowers them - I appreciate that we have got lots of evidence but, it might be useful as part of the whole TPPF (trying to drill down so that we can articulate how the blocks and barriers are actually expressed, including quite often through people's disempowering views and ways of saying things, their beliefs, their behaviour etc)
- There was a question about the lack of support for those who want to do something about 'social exclusion' - I think it was someone working in the public sector
- Everyone is involved, everyone understands community engagement and what it is about - and how it relates to 'community empowerment'

² Echo complements Voice as the corresponding Axis of Influence for public agencies



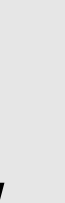
<http://www.changesuk.net/News005echo.pdf>

³ The 5 Community Empowerment Dimensions

<http://www.changesuk.net/what%20is%20community%20empowerment.pdf>

Types of Aspects of Active Citizenship	Citizen learning outcomes: I feel able to.... I know more about... I know how to.... <i>examples are:</i>	Citizenship outcomes: Local, national, European and global dimensions <i>examples are:</i>
<i>Personal Confident</i> 	Value own skills, knowledge and confidence Know where to go to get what you need Communication skills, lobbying skills, negotiation skills Feel able to have a voice	People identify and articulate their own issues and problems People take leadership roles in their community People have the power and will to make choices about their life People voice their concerns
<i>Community relations Inclusion</i> 	Recognise that social exclusion is the responsibility of all This was challenged by people and suggested that it should read 'social inclusion' – we pointed out that it is mean to reflect the fact that we should all recognise that we may exclude' people – knowingly or unknowingly Understand how their behaviour affects others Know the basis of inequality and how power operates Understand more about people who are different to themselves Feel more confident in asking questions and talking to people different to themselves - only if your value base is consistent	Improved relations between diverse groups of people Community projects are inclusive of people with different backgrounds Increased points of contact between different communities Increased networking between communities Challenging power structures and established norms

Lead to

<p>Civil participation Organised</p> 	<p>Understand how groups/ networks work</p> <p>Know how to encourage fair and democratic decision making</p> <p>Understand how to encourage, support and develop volunteers</p> <p>Chairing, facilitation skills</p> <p>Negotiation, campaigning</p>	<p>More VCS active in community led service provision</p> <p>Well run democratic community groups</p> <p>Increased informal community organising</p> <p>Increased volunteering</p>
<p>Civil cooperation Cooperative</p> 	<p>Know the importance of networking for influencing change</p> <p>Recognise and develop skills in critical thinking</p> <p>Understand more about collective working and why it's important</p>	<p>Increased networking between community and voluntary organisations</p> <p>Public bodies can (more easily) reach wider range of groups</p> <p>More collective voices and more critical alliances</p>
<p>Civic engagement Influential</p> 	<p>Knowing how the external world operates</p> <p>Understand your current democratic position and the opportunities for change</p> <p>Understand the rules of engagement</p> <p>Know how meetings work</p> <p>Feel able to contribute and ask questions in a public forum</p> <p>Recognise how to influence policy and practice at a European, national, regional or local level</p>	<p>More people want to and feel capable of having a responsible role in formal democratic structures</p> <p>More people take an active role at a neighbourhood / community level</p> <p>Citizens work with public bodies to set and achieve common goals</p> <p>Improved relations between citizens and statutory agencies</p> <p>More people take part in dialogue with decision makers</p>

		People lobby for change to the way forums and other structures operate
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Red = comment

Blue = addition

take part

pathfinder

The Black Country Take Part Pathfinder project is managed by Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council. It forms part of the Take Part Pathfinder programme which is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government and managed by the Community Development Foundation.