Communities and Local Government

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community, opportunity, prosperity

Community engagement, involvement and consultation

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Communities and Local Government

Community Consultation Conference

19 March 2009

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Coverage

- ‘Working together – public services on your side’
- ‘Communities in Control’
- where next?
- empowerment in the economic downturn

Principles of reform:

- empowering citizens
- new professionalism
- strategic leadership

Empowering citizens:

- personalised services
- greater choice and control
- an information revolution

New professionalism:

- new freedoms for local communities and service leaders
- new freedoms for professionals to lead, run and personalise services
- boosting skills and attracting new talent
- professionals leading innovation and efficiency

Strategic leadership - increasingly, Government's role will be:

- setting standards and entitlements – and then getting out of the way
- driving productivity
- driving innovation

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Local Government White Paper 2006

- Fundamentally rebalance the central-local relationship:
  - national indicators, key targets, improved inspection regime
- More efficient, accountable and responsive services at local level:
  - enhanced right to be heard, involving and consulting service users, better information, improvement and efficiency strategy
- Stronger role for local authorities as place-shapers and local leaders:
  - local Area Agreements, Multi-Area Agreements partnership working
- Stronger and more stable local authority leadership:
  - leadership, elections, restructuring
- Councillors as democratic champions:
  - community leadership, scrutiny, representativeness

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Communities in Control: the vision

The purpose of this White Paper is to transfer power from government to citizens and communities – and so promote more empowered citizens and put communities in control

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Communities in Control: challenging aims

To pass power into the hands of local communities:

- generate a more vibrant local democracy
  - representative and participative
  - make politics more attractive and respected
  - strong third sector role
- give more control over local decisions and services
  - creating a wider pool of active citizens

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Communities in Control: execution

Narrative and evidence base as important as content:

- no “golden bullet” but widespread change in culture and practice

- change terms of debate

- not final word but longer-term process

Make new systems make sense to citizen:

- adapt democracy and government to societal change

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Where next?

- implement the proposals in *Communities in Control*
  - real power, influence, resources and assets to individuals and communities

- build on the strategic leadership role of local government
  - particular focus on building on success of LAAs and join services together around shared aims

- continue to devolve decision making to local government and their partners to build on and improve LAAs and MAAs and at least two city regions

- invest in the capacity of the third sector and promote the role of social enterprises

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Empowerment in the economic downturn

- increase trust in public institutions
- improve the quality and efficiency of services
- take and justify difficult decisions
- promote good community relations
- build resilient community networks

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