

EVALUATION OF COMMON PURPOSE

**Final Report to
Scottish Enterprise Grampian**

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Executive Summary

1. This is the report of a study undertaken by SQW Limited on behalf of Scottish Enterprise Grampian (SE Grampian) to evaluate its support for the Common Purpose initiative. It was carried out during December 2005 to February 2006. The study forms one of a series of 12 evaluations commissioned from SQW as part of SE Grampian's Evaluation Plan 2005-06 and will inform the overall evaluation plan for its activities 2005-06.

Purpose of study

2. The purpose of the study is to provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of support for Common Purpose. In particular the evaluation aims to understand the impact on participants and to determine the nature of any *additionality* in areas such as:
 - leadership skills
 - exchange of ideas
 - learning across sectors
 - awareness of contexts for decision making
 - making new connections
 - networking

Main findings

3. Common Purpose is a most *unusual initiative*. It brings together a selected group for sustained engagement in ways which confront individuals and challenges them to consider their attitudes and behaviours. It is also an ambitious Programme, seeking to create change among individuals, to help them realise their potential more fully.
4. This latter point is critical. Common Purpose is bound up in place. The Programme is delivered in a unique way as it is built around and delivered in, the community. The community is both the subject and the venue, with participants going out into the surrounding area considering society's issues first hand.
5. **Project effectiveness** - it is clear from the consultations that the Common Purpose Programme is meeting its main aims and objectives and helping to develop more effective leaders. The *main impacts* on individuals cited included; a deeper insight into the local environment and infrastructure, increased confidence, an appreciation of 'fit' within the bigger picture, courage to act in unfamiliar situations and strong networking situations. It is evident that participation helps to empower individuals to work outside their usual comfort zones and embrace new challenges and unfamiliar situations.

6. It is clear that the Common Purpose Programme has had a strong, positive impact on consultees. However, this has had little measurable economic impact. But it is fair to surmise that by better positioning individuals as leaders by encouraging them to explore new avenues this will ultimately have a positive effect upon the region's economy by maintaining and developing the current prosperity of the business base.

Learning and development

7. It is evident from the consultations that the main outcomes of Common Purpose, namely, understanding; how Aberdeen and the Shire works, how cities, towns and areas operate, how sectors work and can operate together and developing the ability to work outside's one experience have all clearly been achieved.
8. SE Grampian's support for Common Purpose recognises the weight attached to building stronger local leadership and its essential role in fostering sustainable regional development. It has a limited range of options through which this goal can be furthered. Of these Common Purpose should be considered as an important addition to the leadership development process.

Recommendations

9. This study has highlighted the positive components of Common Purpose as identified by participants and key stakeholders. It has been a valuable pilot initiative addressing an area of regional competitiveness not well provided for by other means.
10. SE Grampian's support for Common Purpose recognises the weight attached to building stronger local leadership and its essential role in fostering sustainable regional development. It has a limited range of options through which this goal can be furthered. Of these Common Purpose should be considered as an important addition to the leadership development process.
11. The Programme is limited by being run in relative isolation from other of SE Grampian's interventions. Although it has provided good value it offers limited scope for scalability- a prerequisite for providing longer term benefit of strategic significance to the region. This is a limitation of its current form. It also makes it hard to judge its contribution and value for money in relation to SE Grampian's wider goals.
12. We do not consider that continuing support for Common Purpose is justified in its current form. SE Grampian has already decided that financial support for the Programme should not continue. The principal reason for this recommendation is that the Programme is not sufficiently integrated into the Network's product portfolio.

13. The Programme is limited by being run in relative isolation from other of SE Grampian's interventions. Although it has provided good value it offers limited scope for scalability- a prerequisite for providing longer term benefit of strategic significance to the region. This is a limitation of its current form. It also makes it hard to judge its contribution and value for money in relation to SE Grampian's wider goals.
14. We would recommend serious consideration to support leadership development among account managed businesses and organisations in the North East. Where it can be demonstrated to form part of strategic development planning and management, its value is likely to be recognised more fully.
15. Should SE Grampian wish to continue to support Common Purpose we propose a small set of recommendations which will enhance the operation and performance of the Programme.
 - **Timing** – timing was highlighted as potentially an issue, as programme effectiveness is dependent on each individual's breadth of experience.
 - **Promotion** – much of the recruitment of individuals is completed through word of mouth referral or account managers nominating appropriate companies. This raises the question, are there potential individuals who would benefit from the Programme that are missing out?
 - **Cross-sector participation** – it was noted that increased representation from the local authority could be stepped up to provide a better balance of participants.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the report of a study undertaken by SQW Limited on behalf of Scottish Enterprise Grampian (SE Grampian) to evaluate its support for the Common Purpose initiative. It was carried out during December 2005 to February 2006. The study forms one of a series of 12 evaluations commissioned from SQW as part of SE Grampian's Evaluation Plan 2005-06 and will inform the overall evaluation plan for its activities 2005-06.

Purpose of study

- 1.2 The purpose of the study is to provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of support for Common Purpose. In particular the evaluation aims to understand the impact on participants and to determine the nature of any *additionality* in areas such as:

- leadership skills
- exchange of ideas
- learning across sectors
- awareness of contexts for decision making
- making new connections
- networking

- 1.3 SE Grampian funded this initiative as part of its role in promoting leadership among local businesses and organisations in the area. An inception meeting with SE Grampian's Project Manager clarified the requirements for the study.

Methodology

- 1.4 A methodology was agreed at the outset with SE Grampian. It consisted of:
- a review of contextual documents
 - face-to-face consultations with key stakeholders
 - face to face and telephone consultations with five participants
- 1.5 All of those consulted were very helpful and constructive in discussing their views on the effectiveness of Common Purpose. We are grateful to all who contributed. A copy of the aide memoir used in the consultations and a list of the individuals and organisations interviewed is provided in two annexes to this report.

2 Background

Introduction

“A powerful educational experience that brings together Aberdeen’s emerging leaders from all backgrounds, disciplines and sectors”

- 2.1 The Common Purpose Matrix Programme is designed to help ***individuals in leadership and decision-making positions*** to be more effective in their own organisations, in the community and in society as a whole.
- 2.2 Specifically, the programme aims to improve the capacity of leaders to lead and for leaders, their organisations and communities to work effectively together. It also exposes leaders to common interests, collective purposes and new opportunities.
- 2.3 SE Grampian hope to achieve the above by trying to improve the way society works by expanding the vision, decision-making and influence of all kinds of leaders. Common Purpose is committed to looking for leaders in unexpected places and then exposing them to the information and perspectives they need to be more effective.
- 2.4 It is important to note that obtaining information on how participation affected performance and productivity and the measurement of economic impact on the wider economy was difficult. Participants suggested three main reasons for this 1) it was considered too soon to demonstrate a change in performance 2) it was difficult to attribute change to one factor alone 3) it was deemed unrealistic to attribute some form of quantifiable economic impact to the initiative. As a result, we have considered impact in a qualitative manner and present the results in this report on that basis.

Delivery

- 2.5 The Matrix Programme is an 11 day programme which is run annually. The participants selected develop their own leadership abilities through collaboration with their peers in other sectors, site visits, panel discussions, expert briefings and exposure to a variety of different approaches to leadership in their area. The Programme is delivered in a unique way as it is rooted in the community. The community is both the subject and the venue, with participants going out into the surrounding area considering society’s issues first hand.

Anticipated benefits

- 2.6 The Common Purpose Programme has long term ambitions to develop better decision making in all sectors, generate more effective solutions to common problems, develop more engaged and active citizenship and ultimately build stronger communities.
- 2.7 SE Grampian anticipates that participating businesses and organisations will benefit from:
- the development of stronger and more inspired leadership skills
 - deeper cross sector understanding leading to exchange of ideas and learning
 - raised awareness of the contexts in which decisions are being made and their wider impact
 - forge new connections and ways of working with people who may not view the world in the same way
 - increased opportunity to network and build productive working relationships
- 2.8 It is anticipated that if SE Grampian does nothing and does not provide the grant support, selected organisations would not be able to participate in the Programme.

Finance

- 2.9 The cost of providing Common Purpose to five SME's, one Social enterprise and one SE Grampian staff member in the 2004-2005 Programme, has been £14,850.

Fit with Smart, Successful Scotland

- 2.10 The Common Purpose Matrix programme contributes to the following themes of Smart, Successful Scotland;
- improving the operation of the labour market
 - increased community awareness and commitment to community development.
- 2.11 The Programme also aims to impact upon the region's economy by maintaining and developing the current prosperity of the business base.
- 2.12 More widely the DTI has stressed the importance of collaboration at regional level is vital in creating regional strength. The right local environment for business success requires strong regional *leadership* to:

- *develop a strategic long-term vision for promoting competitiveness in the region*
- *ensure national support for competitiveness is tailored to regional and local needs*
- *support the development of clusters, networks and other partnerships.¹*

¹ Building the Knowledge Driven Economy, DTI 1998

3 Evaluation evidence

Introduction

- 3.1 This chapter outlines the evidence gathered to provide an assessment of the immediate project outputs. We consider evidence from key stakeholders and participants, outlined in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Common Purpose Consultees

Alison Beddie	Stakeholder
Mary Holland	Stakeholder
Christine O'Hare	Participant
Lisa Farrowfield	Participant
Richard Johnston	Participant
Gordon Shepherd	Participant
Paul Tytler	Participant

Stakeholder Perspectives

- 3.2 In order to fully appreciate the operation of the Common Purpose Programme we spoke with key stakeholders to inform our evaluation. A summary of the points raised are detailed below.

Common Purpose rationale

- 3.3 Stakeholders were asked their perception of the ultimate aims of Common Purpose, these included; encouraging more active leaders in society, engaging with decision making, leading outside authority in different environments and growing in confidence. Specifically, consultees highlighted three main objectives:

- to develop better leaders and individuals
- to develop new and diverse leaders, across Aberdeen and across different sectors
- to understand the societal context; how it works and the linkages.

3.4 In other words, it's a different way to look at leadership, as those on the course may not recognise themselves as leaders. It promotes diverse networking, creating a wider perspective in order to grow, through different experiences.

Anticipated outcomes

3.5 The main outcomes cited by key stakeholders include;

- an understanding how Aberdeen and the Shire works
- a broad understanding of how cities, towns and areas operate
- an understanding of how sectors work and can operate together
- the ability to work outside one's experience

3.6 We consider whether these outcomes have been achieved in the participant consultation process.

Common Purpose ethos

3.7 A strong Programme ethos was highlighted, focussing on a shared common experience and the gathering of leaders. It's a unique experience, with nothing else akin to Common Purpose available locally. The Programme is not about skills development but leadership and individuals go through a strict selection process and are only chosen when considered at the right stage, building upon existing leadership experience.

3.8 The Programme is promoted largely on a face to face basis, through presentations to Scottish Enterprise account managers who consider clients who may be suitable as well as word of mouth recommendations from past participants.

Learning and development

3.9 We wished to obtain key stakeholder views on the strengths and weaknesses of Common Purpose. The feedback is summarised in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Summary of Common Purpose strengths and weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to different environments i.e. prison – experiential learning • diversity of the participant group • unique – there is nothing akin locally to the Common Purpose Programme • it has an impact on a number of levels; personal, organisation and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the programme requires significant time and commitment – thus, it is not an easy sell • the days are long and intense • there do not appear to be any direct synergies and relationships with other SE programmes and initiatives

Common Purpose case studies

3.10 As part of the study we completed four face to face consultations and one telephone interview with participants of Common Purpose. We present the findings of these interviews in the form of short case studies. The aims of the consultations were:

- to understand whether the Programme resulted in an improvement or change in the leadership behaviour of individuals
- to understand what the participants and organisations they represent have gained from the experience
- to examine whether participants had taken any action based on the key learning themes
- what benefits have been gained through new network formation and community development

3.11 The sections to follow discuss experience of the Programme, the impact it has had on them individually and where relevant, their business and their thoughts on future development to enhance delivery and impact.

CASE STUDY A

Experience of the Common Purpose Programme

3.12 *Participant A* became involved in the Programme through word of mouth recommendation from her Line Manager. Prior to this recommendation, she was not aware of the Common Purpose Programme. Her main motivation for participation was one of acknowledgement of the value and benefits that could be gained and considered that it would also be an enjoyable experience. A key driver for participation was also that *Participant A* was new to her employing organisation and this was a fast track way to understand the local environment and key leaders.

- 3.13 *Participant A* stated that she had no particular preconceptions about what to expect from the Programme. However, she was slightly concerned about the title ‘leadership’. Personally, she felt this put the pressure on as she did not consider herself particularly as a leader. However, on reflection, *Participant A* suggested that the Programme is less about leadership and more about active citizenship.
- 3.14 Before engaging with the Programme *Participant A* had considered other types of professional training but nothing akin to the Common Purpose Programme.
- 3.15 In terms of operation and delivery, support from Common Purpose personnel was cited as “superb, with seamless operation and effective facilitation”.

Individual Impact

- 3.16 As a direct result of involvement in the Programme, *Participant A* strongly considers that her leadership skills have improved, demonstrated in a number of ways;
- an increase in confidence
 - a better understanding of her ‘fit’ within the bigger picture
 - the courage to act in unfamiliar situations
 - a deeper insight in the working of her local environment
- 3.17 In addition to the change in behaviour, as discussed, *Participant A* has done a number of things differently as a result of what was learned on the Programme. In particular, she felt more confident in challenging herself professionally. For example, presence at a strategic meeting; prior to this, was considered quite an uncomfortable experience. However, since participation she feels able to embrace this as a challenge, outwith her usual comfort zone.
- 3.18 *Participant A* suggests that if she had not participated in the Programme, she may have undertaken the same activities anyway, through natural growth and maturity as she developed professionally.

Business Impact

- 3.19 In terms of impact on *Participant A*’s employing organisation, she was able to provide more support to colleagues and she was much more aware of the context in which she operates. In addition, she is more comfortable working with other branches of the organisation and liaises more openly, which she may not have done before. *Participant A* also highlighted clear benefits through the networking opportunities promoted through the Programme. She acknowledged that networking takes up a lot of time and she is in a position to happily contact any off the other participants met on Common Purpose.

Learning & Development

- 3.20 On reflection, *Participant A* highlighted a number of strengths of the Programme, specifically; diversity of the programme, its ability to tap into the roots of the city – “uncovering the City warts and all” and the strong network of contacts the Programme develops.

Summary

- 3.21 *In summary, Participant A considers that the course is about personal and professional development or in her words, active citizenship. She has a real enthusiasm for the course citing huge benefits. Participant A considers herself more confident since participation and if she moved city, it's the first thing she would do.*

CASE STUDY B

Experience of the Common Purpose Programme

- 3.22 *Participant B* became involved in the Programme through word of mouth recommendation. She had heard lots of positive feedback about Common Purpose and wanted to participate to broaden horizons and was new to the area. She hoped the Programme would be inspiring and motivating and the experience lived up to expectations, creating an understanding of the community and how it works, influencing personal motivation and developing communications. She did not consider any other specific training before Common Purpose.

Individual Impact

- 3.23 *Participant B* was unable to comment on whether her leadership skills have improved, suggesting that leadership may not be the strongest element of it, with other aspects such as communication, presenting and responding to different situations considered as more pronounced.

Business Impact

- 3.24 In terms of business impact, participation in the Programme has influenced her in the running of the department, helping to develop new clients and make new contacts.

Learning & Development

- 3.25 *Participant B* cited the opportunity to engage with other teams, experience different environments and make useful contacts as strengths of the Programme. In terms of

weaknesses, timing was highlighted as an issue, suggesting that the last session could be integrated into the programme and the days were considered too long.

Summary

- 3.26 *In summary, Participant B considered Common Purpose to be about, "...finding a common purpose in the community, exploring important issues, learning from different perspectives and develop a range of leadership skills, which was very enjoyable and great fun".*

CASE STUDY C

Experience of the Common Purpose Programme

- 3.27 *Participant C became involved in the Programme through word of mouth recommendation and participated to broaden horizons, considered it to be interesting, to enhance problem solving ability and networking. He considered the Programme to have exceeded his expectations and particularly offered "brilliant" networking opportunities. Participant C did not consider any other specific training before Common Purpose.*

Individual Impact

- 3.28 *Participant C suggesting that his leadership skills had probably not improved, as the networking opportunities the Programme presented were much more important. As a result of participation, he hasn't really done anything differently; his company operates in a way similar to the nature of the programme anyway. Thus, participation for Participant C was all about making new contacts.*

Business Impact

- 3.29 *It is clear that participation in the Programme has significantly affected the performance of Participant C's business. As a direct result, seven new clients have been generated. The format of the Programme was considered ideal for networking; a "drip drip" approach, longer term formula, was cited as helpful in building relationships. He considers, had there been no programme, these new clients would not have been generated.*

Learning & Development

- 3.30 *The calibre of speakers/presenters and mix of participants were considered the key strengths of the Programme. In terms of improvements, more in-depth consideration of some key local issues would be useful.*

Summary

- 3.31 *In short, Participant C considered the Programme as “interesting, challenging, good fun, financially rewarding and thought provoking”.*

CASE STUDY D

Experience of the Common Purpose Programme

- 3.32 *Participant D became involved in the Programme to enhance personal development and leadership.*
- 3.33 *The experience met with Participant D’s expectations, although he already had knowledge of the areas covered from a working perspective. However, he considered it useful as it provided a deeper understanding of some of the operational issues and was very beneficial to work with others and experience different perspectives. Timing was highlighted as potentially an issue, as programme effectiveness is dependent on each individual’s breadth of experience.*

Individual Impact

- 3.34 *Participant D is always considering training as it’s in his personal development review but nothing specifically identified. He has participated in several other leadership programmes.*
- 3.35 *As a result of participation in the Programme, Participant D considers that broadly, his leadership skills have improved, however, he does acknowledge that he has experience of the topics covered from his working career and Common Purpose helped to refresh his knowledge of previous thinking, highlighting linkages and connections in the context of the bigger picture. Common Purpose, did not however, result in him doing anything differently as a result of what was learnt on the programme, although it has made him more aware of the wider picture.*

Business Impact

- 3.36 *In terms of participation in the Programme affecting business performance, the contacts he made on Common Purpose have been incredibly useful in a recent piece of work. However, he does add that if it was crucial to forge links with certain people these would have been developed anyway through the natural course of one’s job.*

Learning & Development

- 3.37 *Participant D* cited a number of key strengths of the Common Purpose Programme, particularly the bringing together of different sectors in order to understand how things work and can influence you. Although, it was suggested that if you really wanted or needed to find out what was going on, you could find another way or your job would require it.
- 3.38 In contrast, the Programme does require a high level of buy-in. The programme is too reliant on goodwill and availability of key people and speakers. It was also suggested that the voluntary sector was over represented. In terms of improvement, *Participant D* cites the need for more representatives from the local authority was flagged up.

Summary

- 3.39 *The format of the Programme worked well for Participant D, although he acknowledged that it was a big commitment. The style worked particularly well for networking, as momentum built up and relationships could be developed. However, it was suggested that Common Purpose may be a little detached from realism as it promotes everyone as a leader and everyone has an obligation to make a difference. It was not particularly considered as a challenge for Participant D, based on his breadth of experience, but it was certainly helpful to reinforce his existing knowledge. Overall it was considered enjoyable and a good idea. In short, for Participant D it represented an opportunity to find out what goes on in the public and private sector. Although, he's not sure whether Common Purpose is about leadership but rather, understanding your environment.*

CASE STUDY E

Experience of the Common Purpose Programme

- 3.40 *Participant E* initially heard about Common Purpose when Mary Holland came to speak at the Investors in People Club he was attending and was informed that bursaries were available.
- 3.41 His main objective in signing up to the Programme was to meet others in the business and to network. *Participant E* felt it was promoted as a good opportunity to meet (and get support) from others in the same boat and to experience different perspectives, these expectations were met.

Individual Impact

- 3.42 *Participant E* had not been involved in any similar initiatives would be more inclined to participate in similar initiatives in the future (although not on such a prolonged basis). However, he was unsure as to whether his leadership skills have improved, but he is more

inclined to seek consensus on decisions that are made and to get others view points. In his words, he has learnt that “there is more than one way to shear a sheep”. In terms of doing things differently, he doesn’t feel that much has changed as a result of participation.

Business Impact

- 3.43 In terms of measuring whether participation in the Programme has affected the performance of his business, this is developing slowly. He has been speaking to two people from the programme, in the voluntary sector, about providing services to their organisation and has been asked to submit proposals for a contract. One of the participants was a fireman who informed him that their contract was coming up for renewal and recommended he submit a tender for it. Without the Programme it would have been harder to build up the network of contacts that he has achieved.
- 3.44 We can surmise that without the Programme the networking benefits would have been achieved to some degree anyway, through mail shots and word of mouth, yet this programme allowed him to establish 30 new contacts in one go. There is no immediate impact on company sales but they are in the pipeline. In particular, the networking has been incredibly beneficial as he was able to recruit a fellow participant to his company.

Learning & Development

- 3.45 Overall, *Participant E* considered Common Purpose as an excellent Programme and he thoroughly enjoyed it. However, some days were quite “samey” and there was a feeling that perhaps some of the activities had been arranged for the sake of filling the time, rather than because they were particularly useful. It might have been better just to give the participants an extra half hour to have a discussion amongst themselves, or even just the opportunity to chat informally over coffee. However, there is evidence of strong networking within the Programme with an e-mail network for the entire group and ongoing social events
- 3.46 In terms of improvements, he felt the Programme was possibly a day too long, by the last meeting, there was nothing left to discuss.

Summary

- 3.47 *Overall, participation in the Programme has been “incredibly” valuable to the performance of the company, as it would have been very difficult to make the same level of contacts otherwise.*

Outcomes and impacts

- 3.48 The outcomes and impacts from Common Purpose relate mainly to benefits to individuals. This was an initiative whose aims, described in Chapter two, was focussed on changing attitudes and behaviours among individuals. As a result improved leadership capability among existing and potential leaders will lead to wider economic and business gains. These cannot be expected at this stage, nor can they be readily judged from a Programme which does not form part of the wider support delivered by SE Grampian in pursuit of its Growing Businesses and Developing Skills agendas.
- 3.49 The varied nature of the benefits and their qualitative nature make any assessment of value for money difficult. There was a strong “pilot” element to the decision to support the Programme, to trial and to learn from it. It was, without question, an ambitious and unusual initiative. Its value was well recognised by its beneficiaries in terms of the learning and development they experienced.
- 3.50 The following table provides a summary of the case study evidence discussed in this chapter.

Table 3.2 Summary of case study evidence

<i>Common Purpose experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong word of mouth referral • strong alignment with expectations • active citizenship
<i>Individual impact</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deeper insight into local environment & infrastructure • increased confidence • understanding of fit with the ‘bigger picture’ • networking opportunities • courage to act in unfamiliar situations
<i>Business impact</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing knowledge with colleagues • developing new clients • building business relationships
<i>Outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding how Aberdeen and the Shire works • understanding of how cities, towns and areas operate • individual’s leadership development • the ability to work outside one’s experience
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme diversity • mix of participants • ability to “tap into the roots of the city” • strong network of contacts developed • calibre of speakers/presenters
<i>Weaknesses</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of in-depth consideration of critical issues • reliant on goodwill from presenters/speakers • better representation from the local authority

4 Conclusions and recommendations

- 4.1 There are a number of key conclusions and development opportunities that can be drawn from all of the inputs to this evaluation. These are summarised in the following section.
- 4.2 It is important to qualify all of these. SE Grampian support for Common Purpose was essentially *pilot* in nature. It aimed to trial, experiment, test and assess Network assistance in a challenging and strategically underpinning area – how to build leadership in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Programme characteristics

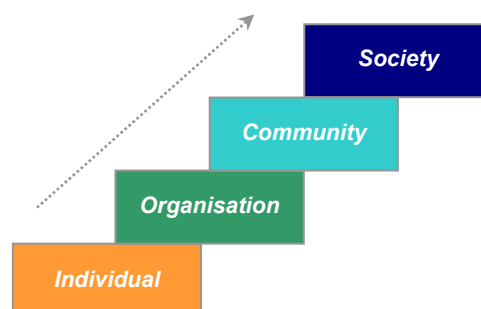
- 4.3 Common Purpose is a most unusual initiative. It brings together a selected group for sustained engagement in ways which confront individuals and challenges them to consider their attitudes and behaviours. Participants are exposed to fresh contexts and circumstances, often outwith their daily experience. A strong element of distinctiveness and difference comes from the Programme aim of helping people new to an area, to more fully understand their local context. It is also an ambitious Programme, seeking to create change among individuals, to help them realise their potential more fully.
- 4.4 This latter point is critical. Common Purpose is bound up in place. The Programme is delivered in a unique way as it is built around and delivered in, the community. The community is both the subject and the venue, with participants going out into the surrounding area considering society's issues first hand.
- 4.5 This aspect of the Programme makes the issue of recruitment, especially identifying those who can benefit most by being new to Grampian, extremely important. It also limits the scope for a larger scale effort.

Programme effectiveness

- 4.6 It is clear from the consultations that the Common Purpose Programme is meeting its main aims and objectives and helping to develop more effective leaders. This is demonstrated with participants having the courage to act in unfamiliar situations, challenge themselves out with their usual comfort zones and developing strong networks of contacts. The Programme is measured in different ways – at an individual level and at business/organisation level. It is important to highlight that the benefits for individuals are wide ranging and dependent on a number of factors; breadth of professional experience, familiarity with local area and personal motivations for participating.

- 4.7 The main impacts on individuals cited included; a deeper insight into the local environment and infrastructure, increased confidence, an appreciation of ‘fit within the bigger picture, courage to act in unfamiliar situations and strong networking situations. It is evident that participation helps to empower individuals to work outside their usual comfort zones and embrace new challenges and unfamiliar situations. Thus, clear benefits were demonstrated by individuals and many were able to share their experience and learning with colleagues within their organisation.
- 4.8 Whilst benefits were different for each individual all participants benefited from the strong networking opportunities that the Programme provided. For some participants, these contacts may not have been developed through other sources.
- 4.9 It is clear that the Common Purpose Programme has had a strong, positive impact on consultees. However, this has had little measurable economic impact. But it is fair to surmise that by better positioning individuals as leaders by encouraging them to explore new avenues this will ultimately has a positive effect upon the region’s economy by maintaining and developing the current prosperity of the business base.
- 4.10 We are able to highlight the likely impact sequence as individuals adapt behaviours and actions. The sequence of impact is reliant on the motivation and ability of individuals to lead and forge new relationships, based on the learning drawn form the Programme. Thus, benefits are first experienced at an organisational level with the sharing of knowledge and the building of business relationships, new contacts and in many cases new clients, therefore leading to community benefits. The following stages indicate benefits at a wider level, through strong networking at community and ultimately society levels. In other words, if the individual fails to take actions the wider benefits will not ensue, as highlighted in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 The sequence of impact



- 4.11 It is important to highlight that without the bursary provided by SE Grampian, selected organisations would not be able to participate in the Common Purpose Programme.

- 4.12 **It is evident from the consultations that the main outcomes of Common Purpose, namely, understanding; how Aberdeen and the Shire works, how cities, towns and areas operate, how sectors work and can operate together and developing the ability to work outside's one experience have all clearly been achieved.**

Recommendations

- 4.13 This study has highlighted the positive components of Common Purpose as identified by participants and key stakeholders. It has been a valuable pilot initiative addressing an area of regional competitiveness not well provided for by other means.
- 4.14 SE Grampian's support for Common Purpose recognises the weight attached to building stronger local leadership and its essential role in fostering sustainable regional development. It has a limited range of options through which this goal can be furthered. Of these Common Purpose should be considered as an important addition to the leadership development process.
- 4.15 The Programme is limited by being run in relative isolation from other of SE Grampian's interventions. Although it has provided good value it offers limited scope for scalability- a prerequisite for providing longer term benefit of strategic significance to the region. This is a limitation of its current form. It also makes it hard to judge its contribution and value for money in relation to SE Grampian's wider goals.
- 4.16 We do not consider that continuing support for Common Purpose is justified in its current form. SE Grampian has already decided that financial support for the Programme should not continue. The principal reason for this recommendation is that the Programme is not sufficiently integrated into the Network's product portfolio.
- 4.17 We would recommend serious consideration to support leadership development among account managed businesses and organisations in the North East. Where it can be demonstrated to form part of strategic development planning and management, its value is likely to be recognised more fully.
- 4.18 It Should SE Grampian wish to continue to support Common Purpose we propose a small set of recommendations which will enhance the operation and performance of the Programme.
- **Timing** – timing was highlighted as potentially an issue, as programme effectiveness is dependent on each individual's breadth of experience.
 - **Promotion** – much of the recruitment of individuals to the Programme is completed through word of mouth referral or account managers nominating appropriate

companies. This raises the question, are there potential individuals who would benefit from the Programme that are missing out?

- ***Cross-sector participation*** – it was noted that increased representation from the local authority could be stepped up to provide a better balance of participants.

APPENDIX A
LIST OF CONSULTEES

Table A: Consultees interviewed to date

Alison Beddie	SE Grampian	Stakeholder
Mary Holland	Common Purpose	Stakeholder
Christine O'Hare	Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce	Participant
Lisa Farrowfield	Aberdeen Foyer	Participant
Richard Johnston	Activitmix	Participant
Gordon Shepherd	Ark Occupational Health	Participant
Paul Tytler	SE Grampian	Participant

APPENDIX B
AIDE MEMOIR

Aide Memoir for participants – SE Grampian Common Purpose Project

A BACKGROUND

B EXPERIENCE OF THE PROGRAMME

1. How did you become involved in the Programme?
2. Why did you become involved in the Programme?
3. What did you hope the Programme would be like?
4. How did your experience of the Programme compare to your expectations?

C IMPACT

INDIVIDUAL IMPACT

5. Did you intend some form of training anyway before engaging with the Programme? If so, what options were considered?
6. Have you been involved in any similar initiatives?
7. As a result of participation in the Programme, have your leadership skills improved? If so, in what ways? *i.e. did the programme help you to address the leadership challenges you cited in your application form?*
8. What have you done differently as a result of what you have learned on the Programme?
9. If you had not participated in the Programme, would you still have undertaken the same activities anyway, at the same time & as effectively?
10. If not, what would you have done instead?

BUSINESS IMPACT

11. Has participation in the Programme significantly affected the performance of your business in Scotland? (i.e. increased sales/productivity, increased employment or reduced costs – *measurable impacts where possible*)
12. What do you think would have happened if there was no Programme?

13. If the benefit would have been achieved to some degree anyway, what resources would have been used to achieve it?
14. Were any benefits evident through new network formation & community/business relationship development?
15. Overall, how important has participation in the Programme been to the performance of your company?

E LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

16. What are the key strengths & weaknesses of the Programme?
17. What else should the Programme have involved?
18. How might the Programme be improved?
19. Have you maintained contained contact with anyone you met on the Programme?