Challenges to the alcohol and drugs agenda in Glasgow:

The Glasgow Game

Date: Wednesday 4th September 2013, The Lighthouse

Hosted by: Glasgow Centre for Population Health & International Futures Forum

Facilitated by: Andrew Lyon and Bruce Whyte
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With thanks to:
All participants - for their contributions on which this report is based
Deborah Shipton - for help with facilitation and writing the report
Carol Frame - for administration support
Ricky Fleming - for the photography
Description of the event

Thirty-six individuals, from a range of organisations, attended the event.

Introductory words

Biba Brand (National ADP Delivery Advisor, Scottish Government) provided some introductory words around the emerging challenges to the alcohol and drugs agenda in Glasgow (see Appendix for a copy of Biba’s slides).

Understanding Glasgow

The Understanding Glasgow website, a resource providing information and insights about issues of importance to Glasgow’s population (e.g. health, poverty, education, environment), was introduced by Bruce Whyte. Participants were given time to explore the site and provide feedback (see Appendix for site-specific issues raised).

Glasgow Game

The Glasgow Game is an interactive way for a group to engage in a conversation about the important issues facing Glasgow. It is based on the World Game, developed by the International Futures Forum. The game works best when addressing a specific challenge or question.

How the game works

- A relevant challenge is identified.
- Participants form 12 groups, each group responsible for one theme of the Understanding Glasgow Mandala.
- Using the Understanding Glasgow website each group examines the key trends in their theme, a possible shock relevant to that theme – such as a deep economic recession, civic disorder, public service collapse – and their key concern should the shock become a reality.
- Connecting the themes: people working on different themes join together with two other theme groups e.g.:
  - Social capital + Education + Health
  - Economic participation + Transport + Lifestyle
  - Community safety + Poverty + Population
  - Cultural vitality + Environment + Mindset

Each group is asked to imagine that each of the shocks they had identified happens simultaneously in Glasgow – for example a deep recession and the collapse of one or more of the public services. Groups...
are asked to discuss the likely scenarios and what wide anticipatory actions should be taken. Making connections between the themes each group identifies:

- The impact on life in Glasgow if the key shocks in all three themes occurred simultaneously.
- What the possible media headlines might be.
- What the group would want to know, and would want to find out.
- What far-sighted actions would need to be taken to address or prevent this outcome.

Participants return to their original themes and identify a declaration.

The declaration is a recommendation to policy-makers about their theme and how to ensure the city can meet the challenge identified at the beginning of the game.
Outcome of the Glasgow Game

The challenge identified: *How can we effectively address the key challenges around alcohol and drugs in Glasgow?*

**Trends, shocks and concerns identified for each theme** (continued on next page)

**Social capital**

- **Concern**: Worsening health
- **Shock**: Widening inequalities
- **Trend**: Welfare reform

**Education**

- **Concern**: Alientation of pre-16s
- **Shock**: Increasing youth NEET: (not in employment, education or training)
- **Trend**: Riots (circa Europe) OR continued increase in unemployment

**Health**

- **Concern**: Low life expectancy
- **Shock**: Welfare reforms – increasing inequalities
- **Trend**: Protecting the most vulnerable
Finding solutions: Working co-productively with communities and learning from what has worked elsewhere, Glasgow is taking advantage of new devolved/independent political powers in Scotland to put resources into working at both the city and community level and is making a real difference in improving the lives of those living and working in Glasgow.

Connecting the themes: exploring scenarios
Supposing multiple shocks happened simultaneously in Glasgow, what are the scenarios and what would wide anticipatory actions be?

Scenario 1: Shocks occur that relate the social capital, education and health.

Summary narrative:
“A lost generation...”: As a result of the impact of welfare reforms there is a continued lack of opportunities for the younger generations and social discontent. Inequalities in Glasgow continue to grow. Communities are blighted by increasing addictions and community and family breakdown. **Finding solutions:** Working co-productively with communities and learning from what has worked elsewhere, Glasgow is taking advantage of new devolved/independent political powers in Scotland to put resources into working at both the city and community level and is making a real difference in improving the lives of those living and working in Glasgow.
Scenario 1: Shocks occurs that relate the social capital, education and health.
Scenario 2: Shocks occur that relate to economic participation, transport and lifestyle.

Summary narrative: “Food banks empty!”: Rising fuel and transport prices take the cost of living to unsustainable levels. Although many more people now walk and cycle around the city the continued strain of trying to make ends meet is evident as more and more of us turn to drinking at home as a way of coping. Glasgow’s people become increasingly isolated.

Finding solutions: Significant investment in sustainable energy in Scotland controls fuel costs and creates much needed jobs. Work to address the wider social inequalities between communities is making a real difference in improving the lives of those living and working in Glasgow.
Scenario 2: Shocks occur that relate to economic health, transport and lifestyle

Papers / Research Committees
- Socio-economic determinants of chaos (in the community)
- Increase fuel costs on price of food + drink products
- Is this revolution or evolution
- Far-sighted action to address or prevent
- Biofuel (Investment)

What is Glasgow like if all three scenarios occur together?

- Fuel Transportation = Cost of Living
  - Home Drinking
  - Home Brew

1. People walking more = Healthy
2. People become more isolated = Healthy

- Headlines in the paper
  - Petrol prices through the roof
  - Increase in food banks
  - Shed explosions on increase
  - Food banks empty
  - Government under pressure
Scenario 3: Shocks occur that related to **community safety**, **poverty** and the **population**.

**Summary narrative:**

*“Communities do it better”:* The high dependency ratios and rising poverty has meant that the public services, such as housing, health and education, are stretched to breaking point. Communities are suffering – crime, addictions, poor health, hopelessness – are on the increase.

**Finding solutions:** The real impact of welfare reforms on the health and wellbeing in Glasgow emerges, galvanising grassroots research. It becomes evident that community action is the only effective way for the city to recover. Central and local government provide effective support for communities, trust between people, communities, services, councils and city leaders grows, further supporting real community growth. Open and honest debate is now possible.
Scenario 3: Shocks occur that related to community safety, poverty and the population.

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**WHAT IS GLASGOW LIKE IF ALL THREE SCENARIOS OCCUR TOG**

- **More People** - More Poverty
- **Less Sense of Community** - Less People of Working Age
- **Less Tax Money** - More Strain on Services
- Strain on Benefit System; Health; Housing
- Poorer Health - More Insular Communities
- **Rise in Crime** Compounded by Lack of Quality in Hidden and Public Spaces
- Increased Drug/Alcohol Use - Ghettoisation
- Loss of Aspiration

**HEADLINES IN THE PAPER**

- Glasgow’s Miles Worse
- Resources Direct to Grass Roots
- Communities Do It Better

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**PAPERS/RESEARCH FOR COMMITTEES**

- Grass Roots Research
- New & Emerging Trends in Substance Use
- Impact of Welfare Reforms
- Community Aspirations

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**Far Sighted Action to Address or Prevent**

- Real Community Input Not Tokenistic
- Good Quality Local Amenities that are Actually Available to the Community
- Trust; Honesty between Leaders/Councils/Services/Communities/People
- Allow Real Debate about Issues Not Only What is Acceptable
- Community Development Workers
Scenario 4: Shocks occur that related to **cultural vitality**, **the environment** and **mindset**.

**Summary narrative:**

“**Glasgow – capital of crime, suicide, hopelessness and rain**”: As the effects of the welfare reforms begin to take hold, areas of Glasgow deteriorate markedly. The day to day struggle to cope with long-term food poverty takes its toll and crime, mental health problems, drug and alcohol addictions all rise. Whole communities lose hope for a different way of life.

**Finding solutions**: Words are converted into action – with both research and policy directed to empowering and enabling people and communities, and a move away from top down prescription. Action on a variety of fronts, from free school meals, practical parenting support, housing, employment creation and restorative justice all combine to improve the lives of those living and working in Glasgow.
Scenario 4: Shocks occur that related to cultural vitality, the environment and mindset.

What is Glasgow like if ALL THREE
Scenarios occur together:
↓ Disposable income, ↑ MH issues (esp. suicide)
↑ coping via substances, ↑ crime, ↓ community safety, ↑ social unrest, ↑ food poverty
(food banks etc resources) ↑ Hopelessness
- Widening inequalities - 'Them+us'
- What would be the HEADLINES
  - "A TALE OF TWO CITIES"
  - "ONE CITY: TWO TALES"
  - "Food banks at breaking point"
  - "Food banks on the bread line"
  - "Social reform beginning to take its toll"
  - "GLASGOW: WORLD WAR'Z"
  - "GLASGOW: CAPITAL OF CRIME/SUICIDE, HOPELESSNESS + RAIN"
  - "THE HUNGER GAMES: GLASGOW 2015"

PAPERS/RESEARCH COMMITTEES
- What support/action is needed
  - ENOUGH WORDS! SUPPORT+HELP
- ENABLING/EMPowering COMMUNITIES
- RESEARCH: OPPORTUNITIES CREATED RATHER THAN A PRESCRIPTION (v STIGMA)
- GET INTO COMMUNITIES - BE PART OF COMM.
  - Far-sighted action to address OR PREVENT
  - Community led regeneration.
  - Change in economic policy
  - Money diverted into opportunities/social change NOT war 
  - Free school meals / cooking for parents
    - Get people involved
    - Eradicate child poverty
  - Prevention not cure
  - Address wider determinants of health - NOT TOPICS ONLY. How can people change? House building, ↑ employ.
  - RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
Declarations to policy-makers in response to the challenge “How can we effectively address the key challenges around alcohol and drugs in Glasgow?”

**Lifestyle**: Change the culture around alcohol; reduce affordability/availability & challenge alcohol ubiquity

**Community safety**: Listen to our communities and act now

**Education**: Focus on a positive life destination for all young people – this requires giving staff new skills

**Transport**: Make the links between transport and the wider economy

**Environment**: Work to achieve equality across communities (physical environment, services, housing, etc) through community capacity building

**Social capital**: Develop shared compassion. Foster a desire to contribute collectively towards the establishment of a flourishing, supportive environment.

**Health**: Develop an environment that values and encourages good health by addressing the structural and cultural environment

**Mindset**: Empower all citizens to be active and valued participants in their community.

**Population**: To enrich communities address polarised communities through promotion of community assets

**Economic participation**: Empower communities and address the wider social determinants. Challenge current economic orthodoxies

**Poverty**: Develop responsive services and responsive communities – to support people to get out of vicious circles of poverty

**Cultural vitality**: Encourage, resource and enable a cultural shift – its ok NOT to drink
What now?
This report is the product of the event participants and, as such, belongs to you to use as you see fit. We encourage you to use the report – share it, discuss it, critique it, take it to the next level.

Do existing policies and practice reflect the declarations, and other ideas, within this report, or is there a disconnect between the two?

How can we move policy and practice closer towards the ideas generated here?

What do we need to do to allow these ideas to be acted upon, to be shared, to be critiqued?

More involvement
Would it be useful to run a similar event in other settings, with other colleagues, on other issues? Would you like more support taking this further in your setting? Please contact Bruce or Andrew.

Feedback
Please feedback to us on how you are using this work – what works well, what works less well.

Many thanks,

Bruce Whyte and Andrew Lyon

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Appendix A: Event programme

How can we effectively address the key challenges around alcohol and drugs in Glasgow?

Wednesday 4th September 2013, 9am – 1pm
The Lighthouse
11 Mitchell Lane
Glasgow, G1 3NU

Programme

9.00 – 9.30 Coffee and registration

9.30 – 9.35 Welcome
Andrew Lyon, International Futures Forum

9.35 – 9.40 Introductory words
Biba Brand, National ADP Delivery Advisor, Scottish Government

9.40 – 10.15 Background and trying out the site
Bruce Whyte, Glasgow Centre for Population Health

Glasgow Game
Facilitated by Andrew Lyon

10.15 – 10.35 Exploring key dimensions

10.35 – 10.50 Feedback

10.50 – 12.00 Making connections between different themes

Refreshments available

12.00 – 13.00 Reporting back

13.00 Lunch
Appendix B: Biba Brand’s introductory presentation

Explore emerging challenges to the alcohol and drugs agenda in Glasgow
GRAND, GCPH Workshop, 4th Sept 2013
Biba Brand, Scottish Government

Tipping the balance
- Greece - upsurge in HIV among IDUs in Athens, following cuts.

Mitigating against Harm
- If we were protecting this group against harm from Welfare Reform, how would that look?

Determinants of Health

Framework Determinants of Health
(Evans & Stoddart, 1990)

Take a wider look...
- What other meetings have you attended?
- What people have you seen?
- What places have you been?

Take a step back from your area of work, life... and connect the dots.

Biba Brand
Scottish Govt.
National Alcohol & Drug Partnership Delivery Advisor
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Appendix C: Feedback on Understanding Glasgow website

After exploring the website (www.understandingglasgow.co.uk) participants provided feedback on their initial impressions – these are welcomed as a way to continually improve the website.

Community section
With low community involvement reported for Glasgow it was suggested comparison with other cities (in Scotland and beyond) would be useful.

Films
These were considered to be an important mechanism for showing and exploring intergenerational relationships and provide a more positive counterbalance to the often negative quantitative statistics.

Social isolation
There was surprise expressed at the reduction in social isolation. Comment on this trend in the website would be useful.

Tobacco deaths
These data are old and would benefit from being updated.

Sharing
Functionality for sharing the website content via social media would be useful.
Appendix D: Detailed declarations

For some themes the declarations on page 15 were condensed versions of those provided during the event. The detailed declarations are given below:

**Lifestyle:** Change the culture of purchasing by reducing the availability of alcohol in community grocers/supermarkets and restrict access to over 18s. Invest in the development of alcohol free and affordable leisure activities of interest.

**Community safety:** Listen to our communities and act now.

**Education:** Train staff to be able to engage effectively with communities. To support young people to develop the necessary skills for a positive life destination.

**Transport:** There are links between transport and the wider economy. Not just the individual service user.

**Environment:** Raise awareness of support available. Equal provision for communities across Glasgow via community capacity building. Ensure housing is of the perceived standard of quality.

**Social capital:** Individuals should aspire to develop a compassionate concern for themselves and their neighbours in the community in which they live and a desire to contribute collectively towards the establishment of a flourishing, supportive environment.

**Health:** Devote resources to creating an environment that values and encourages good health. This approach should be:
- **Structural:** e.g. make alcohol less available and affordable.
- **Cultural:** e.g. question the belief that alcohol has to be so central to Scottish life (example is the cultural change around smoking)

**Poverty:** More responsive services to help people get out of vicious circles of poverty. More direct investment in communities to enable grass roots action.

**Economic participation:** Empower communities and address wider social determinants. Challenge current economic orthodoxies.

**Population:** Move towards the promotion of peoples’ community assets through volunteering activities – this would increase service availability, improve sense of community, improve physical and mental health, and will improve interaction between polarised groups therefore reducing potential for hostility, and misinformation/assumptions.

**Mindset:** Empower all citizens of Glasgow to be afforded the opportunities to be active and valued participants in their community in order to improve and maintain physical mental and spiritual wellbeing. Thereby achieving and sustaining resilient, productive and flourishing communities.

**Cultural vitality:** To encourage a cultural shift in attitude that it is ok **NOT** to drink and **NOT** participate in alcohol-related activities. Encourage planners and entrepreneurs to invest and develop in activities/venues that are **NOT** focused on alcohol.