

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE**PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT****SUBMISSION FROM ANGUS COUNCIL – ADDITIONAL PAPER**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide further written evidence for phase 1 of your enquiry into the ongoing development of community planning partnerships and the community planning process.

Further to your committee's initial call for evidence, we have also been asked to provide information to inform the review of community planning and single outcome agreements, which is, I believe, also relevant to this enquiry. I have attached the Angus response as an appendix. This, together with our initial response to your enquiry, provides much of the detail about our partnership, how it operates and the processes that support the delivery of better outcomes for individuals and communities.

We are as a partnership and as a local council signed up to collaborative working, focusing on outcomes, implementing preventative approaches and to the integration of services where this is possible.

The complexity of the environment for partnership means that our approach is influenced on many levels ie are national perspective, regional ie Tayside, Angus wide thematic, and community. It is my view that the interplay between these levels is critical to the future of our partnership work here in Angus and the ability for partnerships and indeed local government, to influence public sector reform.

From a local government perspective the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 laid the cornerstone for our partnership efforts. This was built upon significantly with the introduction of the concordat between central and local government, rightly giving recognition to democratic accountability. The response to the Christie Commission within the announcements about the spending review further embedded the role of local government in leading and supporting partnership work at the level of the local authority, alongside the further development of SOA's.

However, more recently there has been a more overt financial imperative to reform. This can impact on the ability of partnerships to perform over the medium to longer term. For example, in Angus we have integrated Mental Health teams. The national focus on the integration of Health and Social Care is primarily about older people. Locally we want to focus on prevention and therefore have a desire to focus integration of health and social care across all adult services. However at a regional level it may make better financial sense to centralise some services eg mental health. This would be to the detriment of our locally integrated approach. While there can be good and bad about centralisation, redesign and integration, it is really important that the focus remains on achieving better outcomes for individuals, families and communities at a local level. This requires clarity and co-ordination about the direction of travel at all levels.

What is clear is that no one organisation can improve outcomes alone. The Community Plan and SOA is key to clarifying the priorities and outcomes that all local partners can sign up to. This requires a collaborative approach and a leadership aimed at effectively tackling

some of the more entrenched issues in society. Leaders working at the local level are often best placed to work together to discover new ways of working that also achieve savings. The case studies we submitted as evidence take a preventative approach to reduce future demand and/or impact on the public sector system. Additionally, all partners are looking to deliver efficiencies of a significant nature. The need to balance efficiencies within a framework for continued commitment to an outcomes based approach is therefore critical and the reform of public services needs to embed this approach at its core.

Most public sector organisations are reducing their workforce which ultimately prompts reshaping and redesign of services. While national leadership is required to support clarity of the direction of travel it is important that the relationship between central and local government continues to recognise that partnerships work best at a local level and that local government continues to have the lead in that.

Appendix**REVIEW OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS****What are the pre-requisites for effective community planning?**

- Effective governance and leadership arrangements being in place both at the national and local level.
- Local democratic accountability is important.
- A clear vision and agreed priorities, outcomes and measures.
- Action plans with resources aligned to them.
- All partners being signed up to the partnership approach realising that they cannot deliver on outcomes independently.
- Alignment with individual partners' plans, priorities, reporting and governance arrangements.
- Evidence through a strategic assessment to support the community plan and single outcome agreement approach and that data collection and analysis is rigorously undertaken at both national and local level.
- Arrangements in place to evidence the impact of work for individuals and communities.
- Effective processes to support partnership work are in place for example reviewing partnership effectiveness, planning days and effective timetabling and agendas for meetings etc.
- Ability to effectively straddle thematic and local or place based community planning.
- Communities are involved in the planning process.

What are the key changes in operating context for community planning?

- National and local political changes.
- Police and Fire Reform.
- The Christie Commission report.
- Spending review and response to Christie.
- Integration of health and social care.
- Change funds.

- Finance committee focus on prevention.
- Welfare reform.
- How should community planning change to support wider public service reform, both short and longer term?**
- Build upon established relationships to support change.
- Understand that the partnership approach is based on collaboration.
- Establish and agree a shared vision, priorities and intended outcomes.
- Learning and Development for politicians at both national and local level in relation to understanding the cross-cutting implications of their ministerial roles and convenerships.
- Being open and transparent about the reform process.
- Effective use of change funding to enable new integrated approaches to be developed and implemented.
- Establish pooled resources to assist better integration ie it is all public money.

How should SOAs change?

- To date there has been an evolutionary approach to the focus on and delivery of outcomes. Over time the single outcome agreement has become much more strategic, as well as more focused on outcomes rather than inputs, however, the latter remains a challenge and continued effort is required.
- The need to develop longer term plans within the context of the single outcome agreement is becoming increasingly important. The most recent SOA developed in Angus is much more integrated and clear about priorities and how they relate to outcomes and indeed actions. There remain challenges with regard to the alignment with target setting for individual partner organisations eg HEAT targets.
- The response to Christie in the spending review has given an additional importance to preventative spend as well as aligning the improvement agendas within organisations with partnership working. Over time this should further integrate thinking within organisations, and in particular local government, about the outcomes approach.
- All partners are subject to different demands and accountability structures. The partnership is clear that community planning at an Angus level is assisted by the democratic accountability of political leaders in the process. It is suggested that this should be built upon in relation to the development of single outcome agreements.

What are the pre-requisites for effective performance management which drives improvement in a community planning context?

- Performance management means different things at different levels within and across organisations and leadership is therefore important in relation to community planning and the SOA.
- Again, a clear vision linked to priorities and outcomes helps to establish a shared understanding amongst partners around the delivery of services and the key actions that need to be taken. Key issues for the partnership are around the availability of data

and the establishment of evidence to inform planning, alongside partners being able to share information that is both robust and timely.

- The different performance management arrangements across partnership organisations with no common denominator in terms of reporting other than through the single outcome agreement which sits at a very strategic level can cause confusion. Therefore, alignment of performance management arrangements is a critical consideration when thinking about community planning. Organisations are often faced with competing demands within their own agency, never mind between agencies, and this therefore requires careful thinking and being better joined up at the centre. The national performance framework helps this process at a Scottish level however it is limited at the local authority level and data availability is even more restricted at the local geographies.
- Whilst it is important to analyse information this is often based on the data that is available and is therefore not always a full picture in terms of informing planning although this is improving all the time. It is particularly relevant in relation to population based information and drilling down to local geographies. The need to undertake a strategic assessment will be helpful not only in understanding the current picture but also in identifying information gaps.

How should external scrutiny change?

- Government structures and ministerial input is key to determining accountability in relation to external scrutiny. It will be important therefore to further develop community planning and single outcome agreements within the inspectorate structures, as at present the inspectorates are primarily service driven.
- A key challenge is in relation to the golden threads between outcomes, measures and delivery that weave across and down partners' organisations. It will be helpful if this could be thought about at a national level to inform and integrate our scrutiny arrangements to ensure they are effective across the whole range of partnership organisations.