

**REVIEW OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND SINGLE OUTCOME
AGREEMENTS
RESPONSE FROM STIRLING COMMUNITY PLANNING
PARTNERSHIP**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Stirling Community Planning Partnership welcomes the opportunity to take part in the National review of Single Outcome Agreements and Community Planning Partnerships.
- 1.2 The Partnership is clear that Community Planning Partnership must provide the strategic framework by which public service reform ambitions are realised, both locally and Nationally.
- 1.3 The Partnership particularly welcomes the desire by Scottish Government to strengthen the governance, accountability and scrutiny arrangements of community planning.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Stirling CPP is a mature Partnership. It has in place a comprehensive structure that supports the implementation of the Single Outcome Agreement for Stirling. The Partnership has a senior executive group where all signatories to the SOA, including both statutory and non-statutory partners are held responsible for its implementation.
- 2.2 At a more operational level, a number of thematic partnerships take forward action plans to progress the six outcomes of the Single Outcome Agreement. The Partnership seeks to ensure that governance extends to those relevant partnering arrangements in Stirling that affect delivery of the SOA. For example, Stirling Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Stirling Action for Change Partnership and the More Choices, More Chances Partnership are all part of the CPP framework.
- 2.3 The Partnership has also developed its engagement mechanisms. For example many communities across the Stirling area have been supported to produce local community plans, and further to aggregate the more strategic issues emerging in these plans through their wider Area Community Planning Forums. At a thematic level, the Partnership has working relationships with the Stirling Older People's Reference Group, the Stirling Youth Partnership and the Stirling Multi-Cultural Partnership.

2.4 Finally in summary, the Partnership was instrumental in the establishment of Stirling's new Third Sector Interface and is now building stronger relationships with the third sector via Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise.

3. OUTCOMES FOR STIRLING

3.1 The Partnership has recognised that it needs to continue to develop and improve if it is to meet the challenges of public sector reform in the context of reducing public sector finance.

3.2 In its deliberations on the Christie Commission, the Partnership agreed a range of potential areas for improvements, including:

- Maintaining a focus on outcomes for communities, citizens and service users is critical. However service configuration can still often respond first and foremost to the needs of the organisation.
- Our ability to measure impact on outcomes, particularly from a qualitative perspective, needs to improve. Public sector performance management systems are predominately output focused.
- The crucial role of effective community engagement and empowerment in defining services and measuring outcomes needs to be strengthened, adequately resourced and more efficiently joined up.
- Early intervention is essential, but partners must be supported and challenged to act collectively at an earlier stage, and to understand exactly what type of intervention is required.
- Partnership systems must be robust to both capture and report key information on a timescale that supports the ability to actively intervene.
- Partnerships must be able to evidence priorities, and held to account for the collective service delivery that impacts on these. Evidence of delivery that meets outcomes must be used to inform budget decisions.
- The capacity of the current system to innovate is minimal. The public sector remains risk averse by nature. The pressure of reactive service delivery, within a still heavy scrutiny and inspection regime, works against innovation and early intervention.
- The lack of significant progress towards shared progress across partners hinders pursuit of outcomes and flexibility to collaborative service redesign, particularly around early intervention and prevention within vulnerable communities and families.
- The public service system has to date not been able to effectively target mainstream services towards making a real difference in our most disadvantaged communities.

- 3.3 The Partnership also undertook recent review and improvement actions precipitated by a Stirling Council internal audit of community planning, and by the recent external Audit of Best Value and Community Planning undertaken by Audit Scotland.
- 3.4 In response to these challenges, the Partnership has agreed 'Outcomes for Stirling'. This is a process through which Stirling's Single Outcome Agreement 2012-2017 will be delivered. Perhaps more importantly however, Outcomes for Stirling will seek to challenge partners to deliver the step change in working relationships, both internally and in partnership that is required to continue to deliver on outcomes in the context of economic recession and public service reform.
- 3.5 Outcomes for Stirling takes as its starting point a shared ownership and commitment to the Single Outcome Agreement as a process (not just a document), that will support more targeted, evidenced priorities, with outcomes both for Stirling, and within Stirling for more vulnerable communities and particular life stages. It will also challenge partners to design and support stronger governance and shared accountability that enables the CPP to evidence single agency and collaborative service delivery towards outcomes. This delivery will be measured by a much smaller, more pertinent set of output indicators, and more effective qualitative assessments via local community planning.
- 3.6 Partners have agreed that Outcomes for Stirling will support local implementation of the Christie Commission recommendations and Scottish Government expectations of community planning and Single Outcome Agreements.
- 3.7 However Scottish Government also needs to make changes in the way it both supports and challenges CPPs to deliver if Outcomes for Stirling is to be fully effective. The Partnership therefore has the following specific responses to the questions raised in the National Review.

4. SPECIFIC RESPONSES

- 4.1 *What are the prerequisites for effective Community Planning*
- Effective Community Planning requires the full engagement of all relevant partners. Engagement must not be 'on the fringes' of core activity, or run parallel to it.
 - Effective Community Planning must engage with communities, both of people and of place to determine issues and priorities; service delivery required to meet these priorities; and assess performance.
 - Local Elected Members must play a role in Community Planning Partnerships Members should be supported to understand the role of democratic legitimacy in a partner context, and to offer a scrutiny

role across all delivery aspects of the Single Outcome Agreement, not just those pertaining to the local authority.

- Community Planning must be adequately resourced. Partners must be able to demonstrate commitment to the development of partnership working, community and third sector engagement, and continuous improvement in a partnership environment.
- Community Planning must be seen to hold collective governance across its member partners. It must have the authority to insist on collective planning, prioritisation and delivery.
- Effective Community Planning must be able to hold to account the leaders of all partner organisations to the delivery of shared outcomes. Clear, unequivocal governance that has the legitimacy to support and scrutinise all partners impact on outcomes is essential.

4.2 What are the key changes in the operating context for Community Planning

- Clearly the need for public service reform is the most obvious change, including the need to focus more on early intervention and prevention.
- The experience of CPPs working within the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, through to the Single Outcome Agreement process has delivered a great deal of learning of what works and frustrations around inability to act further. The ambition of local Partnerships and Scottish Government to now respond to these is a timely change.
- The need for partners to make the most effective use of severely constrained finance settlements demands more effective community planning.
- The economic challenges faced by our communities bring a much sharper focus to collaborative service delivery both to our most vulnerable communities, and to those who are perhaps now requiring support never before accessed.
- The demographic challenges of both an increasing elderly population, and a disenfranchised younger generation presents a complex set of challenges on resource prioritisation.
- The structural reform of Police and Fire Services; Health and Social Care Services; Colleges; and the Third Sector present both challenges and opportunities. It is essential that partner representatives within the CPP have power and autonomy to commit local resources and to prioritise local outcomes through the SOA. Local Police and Fire Plans for example, should be part of SOA arrangements.
- The welcome recognition by Scottish Government and COSLA that Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreements are the key building blocks for better outcomes for communities is potentially a

very significant change, if backed up by stronger legislation and more 'teeth' for CPPs operating locally.

- A stronger community and third sector changes the relationship with CPPs. Communities expect to be much more engaged in determining what their own local priorities are, and how these should be reflected in Partnership service delivery. Third sector partners expect to be engaged both as equal partners in planning, and as service deliverers within a tighter commissioning context.

4.3 *How should Community Planning change to support wider public service reform, both in the short and longer term*

- The statutory duty of community planning in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 must be seen to be enacted. Consideration should be given to extending the duty where appropriate to other partners.
- The duty should be much more explicit in how partners are expected to enact their participation in community planning, and their engagement of communities.
- Partnerships should be supported to increase their ability to build evidence of what works, built logically from desired outcome to operational input. There is still a tendency to assume that inputs will achieve outcomes, rather than test and gather evidence to prove what works.
- Partners must be held to account for the delivery of all mainstream services towards community planning and the SOA. There should be clear analysis of contribution, and demonstration of resource commitment. There should be no 'hiding place' for single agency, or single Service delivery.
- Shared leadership across Partnerships needs to be improved and demonstrated both within and amongst partner agencies.
- Partnerships have a good track record in determining vision and values collectively, but often fail to translate this into individual agency delivery, especially in areas of large core service implementation. The link between shared visioning and operational activity needs to be fully understood and demonstrated. Those leaders representing their agency within the Partnership must be held to account for the partnership performance of their organisation within the overarching framework of the Single Outcome Agreement.
- The role of the community and third sector is crucial in the design and delivery of services. However there is concern over the lack of necessary resources to continue to build the capacity of this sector.
- Partnerships must be challenged on their ability to collectively commission services from the third sector. Commissioning and

monitoring must be able to demonstrate outcome based results as well as output targets.

4.4 *How should SOAs change*

- Single Outcome Agreements must be recognised both locally and Nationally as the strategic framework for public service reform
- Single Outcome Agreements must be evidenced, targeted and prioritised, and effectively monitored
- Governance of Single Outcome Agreements must drive delivery and performance within partner agencies and across the CPP itself.
- The primacy of the Single Outcome Agreement process must apply equally to all partners. There remains a mis-match between those partners who see their first tier of accountability as the local CPP, and those who react more to National or indeed UK drivers.
- The role of Scottish Government as a more active partner in the local Single Outcome Agreements should be examined, alongside the duty of Ministers to participate in community planning
- Single Outcome Agreements must be able to demonstrate collaboration, integration and a focus on prevention
- Single Outcome Agreements must be able to evidence results in specific communities, as well as at a local authority wide level
- Single Outcome Agreements should be binding agreements. Partners should be held to account for their performance on evidenced based planning; engagement within the CPP; community capacity building; resource contribution; and service delivery towards outcomes. The community planning legislation should be expanded to place the SOAs on a statutory footing. Partners must expect to be held to account by local communities, Local Elected Members, the CPP and Scottish Government.
- SOAs must be able to demonstrate the integration of the work of other partnering arrangements that may lie outwith the formal CPP structure, but within which the CPP must have oversight. For example partnering around Health and Social Care integration must be seen to contribute to Single Outcome Agreements.
- Local and National agencies must be held fully and transparently accountable for their delivery with Single Outcome Agreements.

4.5 *What are the prerequisites for effective performance management, which drives improvement in the Community Planning context*

- CPPs must begin with a shared understanding of the priorities for their area, as a whole and within specific communities.
- CPPs must understand the impact of their services on these priority outcomes and therefore of the changes they would expect to see from an increase in collaborative, preventative 'upstream' activity
- CPPs need to be understand not simply what they can measure, but why they wish to measure it.

- Performance needs to define indicators, both qualitative and quantitative that will effectively measure integrated collaborative activity, as well as determining which single agency targets and indicators will contribute to overall SOA performance
- Partnership performance frameworks need to drive delivery across all partner agencies. The PSIF for partnerships model should be further supported.
- Binding Single Outcome Agreements must be able to be legitimately measured, both in term of service delivery indicator, and partnership process indicators. Partnership working itself requires more robust performance management, and should not be overlooked in a performance framework.
- The role of communities in supporting improvement through more interactive public performance reporting should be examined.
- Scottish Government should develop proven evaluation tools and support local skill development, to enable partners to manage performance in an outcomes framework.

4.6 *How should external scrutiny change*

- Partnerships should be required to self assess performance as starting point for external scrutiny. The Best Value Audit should take place at a CPP level.
- Other external scrutiny should be reduced, or at least more effectively integrated into the SOA/ CPP scrutiny model to enable all partners to assess how their individual service performance is impacting on SOA outcomes

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Stirling Community Planning Partnership recognises that the operating context for community planning and Single Outcome Agreements is now much more acute. The Partnership has taken steps locally to respond to this challenge via 'Outcomes for Stirling.'
- 5.2 In its response to this Review, the Partnership has highlighted in particular where changes at a National level will support 'Outcomes for Stirling' to deliver more effectively and comprehensively.
- 5.3 The Partnership would urge Scottish Government to complete the Review within the tight timescale outlines, and to implement the changes required as soon as is practically and legislatively possible.

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20th February 2012