

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Highland Single Outcome Agreement 2009-11
Report by the Chief Executive

Summary

The second Single Outcome Agreement for Highland is circulated separately for Members to comment on. It reflects new guidance from the Government and the progress in developing the Community Planning Partnership.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The second Single Outcome Agreement (SOA2) is due for submission to the Scottish Government for 15th May 2009, with sign off with Ministers in June 2009.
- 1.2 There are differences between the first and second SOA arising from:
 1. New requirements in Government guidance;
 2. The way in which the Highland Community Planning Partnership is developing.

2. Government requirements

- 2.1 New guidance from the Government, supported by Cosla and the Local Authority Improvement Service highlights the following purpose and requirements of the SOA.
- 2.2 Single Outcome Agreements and Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) are to have a strategic focus, be about actual outcomes, draw on evidence for decision-making, be capable of delivery and promote continuous improvement. They require new ways of thinking and working in the public sector at all levels, seen as a change process where:

... both nationally and locally, we should be clear about the outcomes which our communities need and then review and align our arrangements to ensure that they are fit for purpose to support the delivery of those outcomes¹.
- 2.3 There is a clear expectation that the SOA must 'move beyond business as usual' and '...questioning...whether existing arrangements are fit for purpose including the wider CPP itself or specific delivery partnerships that are part of it².
- 2.4 There is recognition in guidance and within the Highland CPP that a fully functioning SOA and CPP require a development process. The steps can be summarised as follows:
 1. Sharing evidence and agreeing the analysis of need for the area strategically.
 2. Agreeing what needs to be achieved, expressed as high level local outcomes

¹ Single Outcome Agreements: Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships, produced by Audit Scotland, Cosla, Scottish Government, The Improvement Services and SOLACE October 2008, page 4

² Scottish Government (5.2.09) Single outcome Agreements (SOAs) 2009 Governance and Accountability for SOAs, prepared by the Concordat Oversight Group, paragraph 12.

for the population and aligned to national outcomes.

3. Agreeing the extent of improvement required over periods of time and setting appropriate targets. This involves challenge within the CPP on contributions from all partners.
4. Agreeing the action to support delivery against the targets, being imaginative about contributions from partners, recognising both leading roles and 'value added' roles and accepting shared accountability for the delivery of outcomes.
5. Reviewing structures, processes and resource deployment to deliver outcomes, ensuring they are fit for purpose for steps 3 and 4 above. This will include a review of the methods for engaging people and communities.
6. Aligning partnership commitments and performance indicators with organisational business planning and performance management and reporting (the 'golden thread'³ for accountability).
7. Partnership self-evaluation, management and scrutiny of performance, with partners held to account for their performance within their organisations, within the partnership, with Government and publicly.

2.5 The Governance and Accountability Guidance states that 'moving beyond this position, and developing the CPP as a more robust basis for collective governance and aligned performance management is an important task for the next phase of SOA development'. (2009 para.17). These steps form part of the wider public sector reform agenda, along with efficiency, regulatory reform (including Best Value 2 audits) and the Government's target to reduce the number of Scottish public bodies by 25% by 2011. The public sector reform agenda seems more pressing as the demand for public services and support is likely to increase while available public funding will become more pressured.

2.6 SOA development also supports the general move in social policy over the past decade to welfare pluralism, with public services provided increasingly by the Third Sector and with individuals encouraged to take more responsibility for improving their own circumstances. The Key Messages document states:

We cannot 'do' outcomes to people: we need to work with them to support positive outcomes in their lives. This goes beyond conventional community engagement and is about fuller partnership with people in pursuing outcomes. This will take time, effort and commitment but key outcomes like improved health, economic opportunity etc. can only be achieved this way⁴.

This is reinforced by the Governance and Accountability Guidance: "Public services need to engage people and communities, and work with them to achieve mutually shared outcomes" (para.15).

3. Partnership development

3.1 The first Highland SOA agreed in 2008 was received well by the Scottish Government, Highland Council and its partners. A year ahead of target it included

³ "The 'golden thread' needs to run from high level outcomes in the SOA through to the underlying planning, delivery and performance systems of all partner. Key Messages document (February 2009, page 1)

⁴ Key Messages (February 2009) from the SOA High Level Steering Group, page 2.

several community planning partners. It was comprehensive, identifying relevant local outcomes which would also contribute to all 15 national outcomes. Evidenced context statements were provided and a range of over 200 performance indicators were identified to help measure progress, drawing on the menu of local and national indicators.

- 3.2 For SOA1 the local outcomes were straight forward to identify across partners, but they were not prioritised and the extent of improvement expected was drawn almost entirely from the separate performance frameworks used within each public organisation. The first SOA provided useful contextual information on the issues for the Highlands and a compendium of a number of performance targets each partner was already working towards⁵.
- 3.3 Partners agree that the first SOA was useful as a starting point to develop the second SOA in 2009, where they have to prioritise high level local outcomes and review arrangements for delivering them against an agreed rate of progress. This is far more challenging, requiring potentially changes in resource allocation, joint working arrangements and behaviours. It is likely that future grant settlements and funding levels for the public sector will bring the need to move from co-ordination to integration into sharper focus.

4. SOA 2

- 4.1 The draft of the second SOA (SOA2) is circulated separately for this Council meeting. The key changes to note from SOA1 are:
1. the production of an area profile for Highland, highlighting needs and issues (section 3 of the SOA);
 2. the work done to identify partnership priorities and to translate these into a reduced set of local outcomes to achieve (moving from 53 local outcomes in SOA1 to 15 in SOA2). These are summarised in Appendix 1 of this report and in Appendix 4 of the SOA;
 3. identifying seven areas to prioritise for partnership review from 2009 (these are shown in italics in Appendix 1);
 4. refreshed information on how the CPP is developing;
 5. reducing the number of performance indicators to include and monitor;
 6. including links to relevant plans and strategies which support the local outcomes.
- 4.2 At the time of writing work is still underway to refine the performance indicators to include with partners. Members views on these and any other part of the Single Outcome Agreement can be received until 11th May 2009. It is proposed that a cross-party group of 15 members (in accordance with the agreed formula) meets on 14th May to agree the final submission taking into account any changes requested from partners as well. It is worth noting that the performance expected against seven of the 15 outcomes will be reviewed thoroughly in partnership from 2009 onwards. A briefing for all members on community planning will be organised before the summer recess.
- 4.3 A formal performance report is required for September each year. An interim report is required for SOA1 only and this is being produced for the end April 2009; however this will include largely 2007-8 data. Further partnership discussion will be needed to analyse the performance data and agree areas for improvement.

⁵ A notable exception to this is found in the information and performance targets relating to children where service planning, delivery and performance reporting are integrated and effective.

5. Recommendation

5.1 Members area asked:

1. to note the requirements of Single Outcome Agreements and Community Planning Partnerships as described in the new set of guidance and the differences between the first and second SOAs in terms of the partnership development required;
2. to comment on content of the area profile for Highland;
3. to endorse the 15 local outcomes agreed with the Council's community planning partners and the seven priority areas for partnership review from 2009;
4. to provide any further comment on the SOA by 11th May to enable submission by 15th May 2009, with a cross-party group of 15 members (in accordance with the agreed formula) meeting on 14th May to agree any revisions to the SOA;
5. to note that a briefing for all members on community planning will be arranged before the summer recess.

Signature:

Designation: Chief Executive

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Date: 27.4.09

Sustainable Highland Communities

1. People across the Highlands have access to the services they need
National outcomes: 1, 3, 7, 8, 10, 13
2. *People are, and feel, safe from crime, disorder and danger*
National outcomes: 8, 9, 13
3. Our communities take a greater role in shaping their future
National Outcomes: 4, 11, 13
4. Public services are delivered effectively, efficiently and jointly
National Outcome: 15

Safeguarding our environment

5. Our natural heritage is protected and enhanced to make the most of economic, health and learning benefits
National Outcomes: 1, 6, 10, 12
6. *Carbon emissions are reduced and communities are protected from changing weather patterns*
National Outcomes: 10, 12, 14

A competitive, sustainable and adaptable Highland economy

7. *The impact of the recession is limited and sustainable economic growth is supported*
National Outcome: 2
8. *Growth in the knowledge economy is supported by achieving full university title in 3 years*
National Outcomes: 2, 3
9. To support the economy access is improved to housing, transport and high speed broadband
National Outcomes: 1, 10
10. More people are supported into employment
National Outcomes: 2, 3, 6, 7

A healthier Highlands

11. Healthy life expectancy is improved especially for the most disadvantaged
National Outcomes: 6, 7
12. *The health and independence of older people is maximised*
National Outcomes: 6, 7
13. *Attitudes and behaviours towards alcohol and other drugs are changed and those in need are supported by better prevention and treatment services*
National Outcomes: 4, 5, 9

Better opportunities for all / A fairer Highland

14. The impact of poverty and disadvantage is reduced
National Outcomes: 2, 4, 7
15. *The cycle of deprivation is broken through intervention in early years*
National Outcomes: 5, 7, 8

Priorities for partnership review are listed in italics