

## The Highland Council

### Community Safety, Public Engagement and Equalities Committee 12<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Agenda Item	6
Report No	CPE 32/13

#### Improvement Plan for Member Scrutiny and Engagement

#### Report by Assistant Chief Executive

##### Summary

This report shows that good progress is being made with the Committee's Improvement Plan. It recommends the Committee pilots a new approach to self-assessment based on proposed inspection criteria.

## 1. Background

1.1 Members have agreed an improvement plan for the Committee which focuses on the following areas:

1. Community planning structures;
2. Improving the partnership understanding of community safety needs;
3. Improving performance reporting and scrutiny; and
4. Other areas for development.

Improvement activity was identified largely from the member seminar in January 2013. An up-date of the improvement plan is attached at Appendix 1. Actions are progressing well with several completed. One new action and a new proposal are included.

1.2 We have commitments in our Programme to engage effectively with the new national services for police and fire including agreeing community safety priorities and monitoring performance. The improvement plan for the committee helps deliver these commitments.

## 2. Improvement Plan

2.1 The review of community planning arrangements as highlighted at the Council meeting in June 2013 (as part of the Single Outcome Agreement) is underway. The CPP Board meets on 13<sup>th</sup> September and will consider the progress being made. The Local Police Commander and Local Senior Officer for the Fire and Rescue Service are leading on the review of community safety arrangements and can provide a verbal up-date of progress at the Committee meeting. This work will help with the actions in Appendix 1. Other work in progress includes the involvement of both local senior officers in Ward Forums as part of the consultation on local plans and ward plans and the agreement for police and fire performance reports to be made to Area Committees.

### 2.2 New actions/proposals

Following a meeting with members from the island authorities, a new action is to share practice with the island authorities. The Chair will be able to up-date members on the most recent meeting held in Orkney on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

- 2.3 At the Committee meeting in June 2013 members were advised of the proposed inspection by the inspection bodies for police and fire services (HMICS and HMFSI) from early 2014. A summary of the proposed inspection is attached at Appendix 2. The key areas for the inspection are:
- Equalities duties
  - Development of plans
  - Community engagement
  - Partnership working and community leadership
  - Performance management an improvement
  - Use of resources
  - Local scrutiny and challenge
- 2.4 While the inspection will focus on the police and fire and rescue service, members will be involved because the scope of the inspection is around engagement between the national services and elected members and the Council. It is proposed that the scope of the inspection is used to identify any further action for improving the work of the committee.
- 2.5 It would be possible to design our own way of developing self-assessment at both officer and member levels around the key areas for the inspection. However the Improvement Service is currently exploring how this might be done and is keen to pilot a method with Highland Council. This external support would be helpful and it is proposed we agree to pilot a method with the first workshop arranged before the end of December 2013.
- 2.6 The advantages of doing self-assessment in this way are:
- Members were keen for another workshop following the session held in January and this would be a useful topic to explore in a workshop. Also in keeping with the earlier workshop we can invite members from the Adult and Children's Committee to attend given their interest in public protection issues;
  - Member self-assessment can contribute to members' personal development plans;
  - We will be able to identify where further improvement is needed based on evidence and challenge;
  - We will have evidence of our continuous improvement approach for the Inspection bodies; and
  - We can contribute to any new practice to be promoted nationally.
- 2.7 Follow up surveys were also conducted for the first three meetings of the Committee as a pathfinder. A survey was not carried out following the June Committee due to a lack of capacity (resources were diverted to concluding the SOA for the end of June 2013). Surveys were useful in identifying improvements to the style of performance reporting and agenda topics to cover. However after the third survey no new information on scrutiny or performance reporting was identified and a programme of items for committee had been established. This along with the response to the surveys not exceeding 10 members may indicate that the style of survey used may have

served its purpose and that further surveys of this type may have less value. It is proposed that the workshop approach using self-assessment is adopted as this allows more in depth consideration of where improvement is needed, along with the advantages outlined in paragraph 2.6 above. However we may find it useful to carry out an initial survey by email in advance of the workshop.

### **3. Implications**

3.1 Resource implications – There are no new resource implications arising from this report. Self-assessment can be supported by current resources and using external assistance from the Improvement Service.

Legal implications – By progressing and developing the Committee's improvement plan we can demonstrate we are meeting our legal duties to engage with the national services.

Risk implications – The risk of a negative external inspection report can be mitigated by conducting self-assessment using the inspection criteria.

Equalities implications – The proposed inspection framework highlights the importance of equalities and will be included in the self-assessment proposed.

Climate Change/Carbon Clever implications – We can minimise any carbon emissions arising from members travelling to take part in the first self-assessment workshop by selecting a date when members are likely to be in Inverness for other business. We can also explore whether using VC arrangements would work for the self-assessment and whether any on-line questionnaire could be used as pre-work.

### **4. Recommendation**

4.1 Members are asked to consider and note the progress being made with the Improvement Plan for the Committee as set out in Appendix 1.

4.2 Members are asked to agree to take part in a pilot self-assessment workshop designed around the proposed inspection criteria and supported by the Improvement Service. This can be arranged before the end of December 2013.

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Date: 2.9.13

## CPE Committee Improvement Plan

Actions	Lead Officer /Status	Update
<b>Theme 1. Community planning structures</b>		
1.1 Review of community planning arrangements for community safety to understand what groups exist where and how these can fit together properly.	Head of Policy and Performance  <b>Progressing well</b>	Progress with the review is being reported to the CPP Board on 13.9.13. In the improvement plan accompanying the SOA agreed by the Government in July, we have until March 2014 to have new community planning arrangements in place.
1.2 To show clearly the connections between Highland wide outcomes and local priorities and action.	Head of Policy and Performance Local Senior Officer (SFRS) Local Commander (Police Scotland)  <b>Progressing well</b>	Highland wide outcomes agreed through SOA and at Council end June 2013 and reported to CPE committee September 2013. Top 3 community concerns remain as speeding cars, alcohol misuse and anti-social behaviour (Citizens' Panel feedback 2013). Local consultation underway from September 2013 for the development of Local plans for police and fire services. This will be used for Ward Plans too.
1.3 An up-date report to be brought back to the Committee on the transfer of assets and finance from the Boards to the Council for either the June or September 2013 Committee meeting.	Head of Accounting  <b>Complete in December</b>	This is scheduled for December 2013 Committee to allow for the audit of accounts due 30.09.13
<b>Theme 2. Improving partnership understanding of community safety needs</b>		
2.1 Ensure the community safety priorities for Highland are agreed in partnership, based on evidence and reflected in the SOA.	Local Police and Fire leads/Head of Policy & Performance  <b>Complete</b>	Completed for SOA 2013, approved at Council and CPP Board June 2013.
2.2 Hate incidents and crimes and violence against women to be reported annually to the Committee with future reports to enable more	Local Police Commander, Head	Standing item in December CPE Committee meetings

## CPE Committee Improvement Plan

Actions	Lead Officer /Status	Update
scrutiny of police and council performance.	of Policy & Performance, Head of Social Care <b>Complete</b>	
2.3 Identify data gaps for improving our knowledge of community safety needs, including from harder-to-reach communities, businesses and the third sector.	Local Police Commander/Head of Policy & Performance <b>Progressing well</b>	To be included in the work of the new CPP theme group on community safety. Gaps were identified through the joint strategic assessment in April 2013.
2.4 On-going development of Ward plans for Police by engaging members at the ward level. Plans and discussions to include information about hate crimes and violence against women and proposed responses to these issues.	Local Police Commander/ Corporate Manager <b>Progressing well</b>	Police Scotland and Corporate Manager arranging this through ward forums from September 2013. This is being done with SFRS as well.
<b>Theme 3. Improving performance reporting and scrutiny</b>		
3.1 On-going liaison with the National Fire Board for Scotland and Scottish Police Authority with identified representatives to link with if difficult issues emerge. This would include liaison and reports on resource allocation to the Highlands for both services.	Head of Policy & Performance <b>Progressing well</b>	National Board Members to attend CPE Committee and community planning partnership meetings. In August officers from the Highland CPP met with Scottish Police Authority staff.
3.2 Developing a programme of annual reports on specific strategic community safety themes for the CPE Committee for members to be aware of the issues and be involved in agreeing the planned responses.	Heads of Service in the Council, Local Police Commander & Local Senior Officer for Fire and Rescue <b>Complete</b>	Completed. Annual reporting is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September committee – road safety</li> <li>• December committee – hate incidents and violence against women</li> <li>• March or June committee – anti social behaviour, emergency planning</li> </ul>
3.3 Work towards providing performance reports for police and fire services at the Council's Area Committees for local scrutiny.	Local Police Commander/Local Senior Fire Officer <b>Progressing well</b>	Agreement reached that performance reports for areas to be provided for Area committees.
3.4 Work towards amending the standard Police quarterly	Local Police	Work in progress and to include information required

## CPE Committee Improvement Plan

Actions	Lead Officer /Status	Update
<p>performance report as identified at the workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining why some progress is 'ragged' red, amber or green by providing information on the tolerance levels for assessing performance;</li> <li>• Thinking how colour coding can be changed to e.g. use symbols to avoid expensive colour printing and to improve some of the labelling on tables to show the financial years being referred to;</li> <li>• Showing a trend over time, as in the Fire Service reports, rather than just the three year average;</li> <li>• To include targets and benchmarking once the national police plan is developed;</li> <li>• Explain why variances occur in performance in a new narrative section of the report;</li> <li>• Consider how to show equalities impacts.</li> </ul>	<p>Commander</p> <p><b>Progressing well</b></p>	<p>from Police Scotland template.</p>
<p>3.5 Work towards amending the standard Fire service quarterly performance report as identified at the workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including more national context, analysis and benchmarking data;</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction data;</li> <li>• Stretching targets that are explained and clearly linked to need;</li> <li>• Links to be made to the outcomes to be achieved (as in SOA);</li> <li>• Provide analysis of why targets are not met and what has caused the variance and this would improve accountability of the local officer to the committee.</li> </ul>	<p>Local Senior Fire &amp; Rescue Officer</p> <p><b>Progressing well</b></p>	<p>Work in progress and to include any information required from Scottish Fire Service templates for local reporting.</p>
<p>3.6 To arrange further member workshops building on the learning from the workshop in January 2013, when required.</p>	<p>Local Police Commander/Local Senior Officer for Fire /Head of</p>	<p>Propose a workshop or workshops as part of the preparation for the Inspection planned for early 2014. New opportunity to pilot member self-assessment based on the inspection criteria and supported by the</p>

## CPE Committee Improvement Plan

Actions	Lead Officer /Status	Update
	Policy & Performance <b>New proposal</b>	Improvement Service. First workshop date TBC, but to have taken place by end December 2013.
3.7 Putting arrangements in place so that members receive police briefings on local matters timeously.	Local Police Commander <b>Complete.</b>	Completed. Local Police briefed.
3.8 Considering how best the Fire and Rescue Service can engage with Ward Forums, Business Meetings and Community Councils. Possible learning from the Police approach.	Local Senior Fire & Rescue Officer <b>Progressing well</b>	Completed. SFRS consulting through Ward Forums on local plans from September 2013.
3.9 The Scottish Ambulance Service asked to provide quarterly performance reports to the Committee from the March 2013 meeting onwards.	Head of Policy & Performance <b>Complete</b>	Completed. SAS has agreed to provide reports.
3.10 Share practice with the island authorities on member engagement and scrutiny.	Local Police and Fire lead officers & Head of Policy and Performance <b>New</b>	Following the meetings with members in the Island authorities in June 2013, a good practice network will be set up involving around 2 meetings a year to share practice.
<b>Theme 4. Other areas for development</b>		
4.1 Consider how community development approaches could be used to improve community safety locally.	Head of Policy & Performance <b>Progressing well</b>	To be taken forward through the new community planning arrangements, in particular through the partnership group exploring how to join up community development with 8 test sites (4 areas of multiple deprivation and 4 areas of rural fragility).
4.2 Consider further shared services opportunities.	Assistant Chief Executive <b>Progressing well</b>	On-going - examples of good practice exist. New community planning structure is considering a partnership group to press on with shared services. This will include the work of the CPP Property group.

### Key Points from the Proposed Inspection of Police and Fire & Rescue Services Post Reform

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 seeks to place local communities at the heart of the provision of police and fire and rescue services. There are three key elements to this:

- the designation of a Local Police Commander (LPC) and, for the fire and rescue service, a Local Senior Officer (LSO);
- the production of a local policing plan and a fire and rescue plan for each local authority area and approved by the local authority; and
- the creation of formal relationships between local authorities and the services.

HMICS and HMFSI plan to engage with Audit Scotland to reach agreement on arrangements to review progress on the introduction of local scrutiny and engagement structures and to consider how this will fit into a wider inspection and audit process that minimises the burden of inspection on service providers. A thematic inspection of the development of local police plans and local fire and rescue plans and associated arrangements for local scrutiny and engagement is planned.

A set of good practice indicators for local scrutiny and engagement has been developed to support the thematic inspection.

### Good practice indicators for local scrutiny and engagement Equalities

LPCs and LSOs should work with local scrutiny and engagement committees to ensure that equalities are given due consideration in all activity. Consequently equalities indicators are included as integral parts of the good practice indicators outlined below.

#### Development of plans

The police and fire services and, in particular, LPCs and LSOs should:

- Support members of local scrutiny and engagement committees to have a good understanding of police and fire performance management frameworks by assisting in the provision of awareness training for members, which includes an appropriate level of training on equalities duties.
- Work collectively with members of local scrutiny and engagement committees, stakeholders and communities to set local priorities and objectives that are articulated in approved local service plans that are aligned between SOA, partnership plans, local and national policing plans and focus on place to drive partnership approaches.
- Provide support to members in their role as leaders of Best Value and ownership of the vision, strategic plan and priorities, ensuring their role remains strategic and does not dwell on detailed operational matters.
- Ensure that plans focus on short, medium and long-term objectives.
- Ensure that strategic priorities and plans are regularly reviewed by the local scrutiny and engagement committee to ensure that they remain relevant to changing circumstances.

- Maintain an effective working relationship with partners and members
- Demonstrate a clear commitment to improving equality outcomes that is reflected in local plans, priorities and objectives.
- Consider the impact on equalities when developing plans, priorities and objectives.

### **Community engagement**

LPCs and LSOs should:

- Work with members of local scrutiny and engagement committees to develop a shared understanding of the needs of their local communities through involving members in routine engagement.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the profile and needs of its diverse communities and have processes in place to ensure that the profile is reviewed and updated.
- Be clear about the anticipated outcomes from any community engagement activity.
- Consider how best to coordinate this with other local engagement activity being carried out by partners ensuring there is a clear approach to consultation, representation and participation.
- Assist in ensuring a shared understanding of the needs of different communities and that they are included in developing a local vision, setting priorities and shaping services.
- Assist local scrutiny and engagement committees to ensure community engagement activity is securing improved outcomes for local people.

### **Partnership working and community leadership**

The police and fire services should work effectively with wider community planning partners and members to ensure clarity about their respective roles, generate added value and maximise the opportunities to deliver better outcomes through prevention, partnership working, performance and leadership.

To achieve this, LPCs and LSOs should:

- Ensure that effective partnership relationships are maintained and that local resources are participating and working effectively with partners to improve outcomes.
- Ensure that consideration is given to sharing and combining resources between partners.
- Assist members of local scrutiny and engagement committees to play an active, visible role in partnership activities.
- Have a clear understanding of what success looks like through clearly defined outcomes, objectives, targets and milestones that they own collectively.
- Assist local scrutiny and engagement committees in considering all partnership strategies and plans and the monitoring of what is and what is not being delivered.
- Work with partners to ensure that services are delivered in ways that meet the needs of, and ensures positive outcomes for the area's diverse communities

## **Performance management and improvement**

The police and fire services should work with partners and members to ensure effective scrutiny arrangements are in place that are supported by good-quality performance information, to allow local authorities, commanders and senior officers to improve service delivery and outcomes for local communities.

To assist in this, LPCs and LSOs should:

- Ensure members of local scrutiny and engagement committees receive regular performance reports, assist in the scrutiny of the information and support appropriate improvement actions.
- Ensure that performance information includes appropriate outcome-focused equalities measures to inform effective monitoring and scrutiny of the impact of equalities work and can demonstrate improved outcomes for its diverse communities.
- Monitor the progress and performance of local plans in relation to their contribution to implementation of community plans, SOA and other relevant partnership strategies and plans.
- Monitor customer satisfaction, customer response and complaints and provide appropriate statistical information on complaints made about the Police Service in, or the policing of, its area.
- Ensure that performance reports are sufficiently detailed to allow benchmarking against similar areas and identify good practice in addressing problems.
- Ensure that performance information is evaluated regularly to facilitate continuous improvement.

## **Use of resources**

LPCs and LSOs can provide appropriate information to local scrutiny and engagement committees:

- To assist in their assessment of how the wider partnership makes use of key resources to deliver objectives and priorities.
- To assess how local plans are linked and contribute to the achievement of wider community planning objectives.
- To assess local resource need with a view to identifying appropriate funding and resource opportunities to address local priorities.
- To identify good practice from across Scotland and beyond to provide opportunities to make best use of resources in addressing local issues.

## **Local scrutiny and challenge**

LPCs and LSOs have a duty under section 16(1)(e) of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to co-operate in community planning to improve the safety and well-being of their communities and can ensure they meet their statutory duty.

LPCs and LSOs should:

- Work with local scrutiny and engagement committees by developing a shared interest in performance and taking action based on what the performance information is telling them.
- Ensure that local arrangements are public facing, informative and balanced, highlighting successes and clearly identify where goals have not been achieved.

- Ensure that scrutiny and engagement arrangements are clear and understood by both members and officers.
- Ensure that members clearly understand their role and the decisions they are able to make.
- Ensure that the reporting process to local committees has the appropriate level of support to ensure that reports are timely and accurate.
- Ensure that relationships are constructive.
- Lead improvements in equalities effectively.