

The Highland Council

Community Safety, Public Engagement and Equalities Committee – 5 December 2013

Agenda Item	5
Report No	CPE 44/13

Improvement Plan for Member Scrutiny and Engagement

Report by Depute Chief Executive

Summary

This report shows that good progress is being made with the Committee's Improvement Plan. A self-assessment workshop has been arranged for Members on 11 December 2013 in order to prepare for the inspection of local police and fire and rescue services and their engagement with members.

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.

- 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 As indicated to committee in September a review of community planning arrangements is underway and this will include a review of community safety arrangements led by the Local Police Commander and Local Senior Officer for the Fire and Rescue Service. It is anticipated that new arrangements will be finalised and in place by the end of March 2014. An up-date on the joint working arrangements can be provided at the member workshop scheduled for 11th December 2013. Other work on-going 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

There are no new proposals to this committee.

2.3 At the Committee meeting in September 2013 members were advised of the proposed inspection by the inspection bodies for police and fire services (HMICS and HMFSI) from early 2014. The committee agreed a new action to prepare for inspection through a self-assessment process which would engage with the proposed inspection framework (detailed in Appendix 2). Arrangements are now in place and a Members workshop will be held in Dingwall on 11th December 2013. In order to prepare for this a Members survey will be issued in advance of the workshop. This approach is supported by the Improvement Service and is seen as developing new practice at a national level.

2.4 The survey scope will cover three of the six elements of the proposed inspection framework detailed at Appendix 2, focusing on members' views on:

- Community engagement – the extent to which members feel they and their communities are engaged in understanding diverse local needs and issues
- Performance Management and Improvement – the nature of police and fire service performance reporting and the extent to which it enables good scrutiny by members
- Local scrutiny and challenge – whether there is good engagement on understanding what is working well and where improvement is needed.

The remaining aspects of the framework will be included in the workshop, although this needs to recognise that some work is still in progress on new joint working structures through the community planning review, including joint resourcing, and in the development of local plans for police and fire.

2.5 It is important that Members are involved in preparing for the inspection of local police and fire as the scope of the inspection covers engagement between the national services and elected members and the Council. The inspection report will potentially identify further action for improving the work of the committee. Members of the Adult and Children's Services committee are invited to the work shop as well and are likely to be in scope for the inspection work.

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 have tried to minimise any carbon emissions arising from members travelling to take part in the first self-assessment workshop by selecting a date when some members were planning to be in Dingwall for the Area Committee.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- i. consider and note the progress being made with the Improvement Plan for the Committee as set out in Appendix 1; and
- ii. note that arrangements have been made for a pilot self-assessment workshop designed around the proposed inspection criteria and this will be held on 11th December 2013. Members will be sent a survey in advance of the workshop as part of the self-assessment.

Designation: Depute Chief Executive

Date: 18 November 2013

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CPE Committee Improvement Plan

Actions	Lead Officer /Status	Update
Theme 1. Community planning structures		
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 Progressing well	Progress was reported to the CPP Board on 13.9.13. The fit with local area arrangements is being considered for the December meeting of the board. 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) Progressing well	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. SFRS update: This will be used for Ward Plans too. Ward consultation sessions now complete with detailed analysis on outcomes to follow. Initial findings relate to and recognise the continued partnership delivery of prevention and protection activities aimed at reducing the number of incidents identified in the top 3 concerns. The Fire and Rescue Service will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver free HFSV to those most in need • Continue to deliver the Driving Ambition road safety programme • Continue to deliver fire safety youth engagement programmes
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	Head of Accounting	This was reported through the Annual Audit of Accounts.

CPE Committee Improvement Plan

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either the June or September 2013 Committee meeting.	Complete in December	
Theme 2. Improving partnership understanding of community safety needs		
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 Complete	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 scrutiny of police and council performance.	Local Police Commander, Head of Policy & Performance, Head of Social Care Complete	Standing item in December CPE Committee meetings
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 Progressing well	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 Progressing well	Police Scotland and Corporate Manager arranging this through ward forums from September 2013. This is being done with SFRS as well.
Theme 3. Improving performance reporting and scrutiny		
3.1 On-going liaison with the National Fire Board for Scotland and Police Scotland Authority with identified representatives to link with if difficult issues emerge. This would include liaison and reports on	Head of Policy & Performance Progressing well	National Board Members to attend CPE Committee and community planning partnership meetings. In August officers from the Highland CPP met with Scottish Policy

CPE Committee Improvement Plan

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resource allocation to the Highlands for both services.		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 Complete	Completed. Annual reporting is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September committee – road safety • December committee – hate incidents and violence against women • March or June committee – anti social behaviour, emergency planning
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 Progressing well	Agreement reached that performance reports for areas to be provided by police and fire services for all Area committees twice a year.
3.4 Work towards amending the standard Police quarterly performance report as identified at the workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining why some progress is 'ragged' red, amber or green by providing information on the tolerance levels for assessing performance, • 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. • Showing a trend over time, as in the Fire Service reports, rather than just the three year average; • To include targets and benchmarking once the national police plan is developed; • Explain why variances occur in performance in a new narrative section of the report; • Consider how to show equalities impacts. 	Local Police Commander Progress up-date to be provided at the meeting	Work in progress and to include information required from Police Scotland template.
3.5 Work towards amending the standard Fire service quarterly	Local Senior Fire &	Work in progress and to include any information

CPE Committee Improvement Plan

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<p>performance report as identified at the workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including more national context, analysis and benchmarking data; • Customer satisfaction data; • Stretching targets that are explained and clearly linked to need; • Links to be made to the outcomes to be achieved (as in SOA) • 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. 	<p>Rescue Officer</p> <p>Progressing well</p>	<p>required from Scottish Fire Service templates for local reporting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More work being carried out nationally to reflect national context and benchmark standards which in turn will influence local targets e.g. fire related ASB and AFA reduction • Progressing with HC (and PS) to incorporate fire FRS related questions reflecting community attitude to FRS activity • Stretching targets now set across range of key activities including accidental dwelling house fires and fire related casualties. • New format PM reporting will align to agreed SOA outcomes and targets • Detailed analysis will be undertaken to inform performance outcomes, ensuring local accountability
<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 Policy & Performance</p> <p>Progressing well</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 Improvement Service. First workshop date arranged for 11th December 2013 with a Members pre-workshop questionnaire circulated in November 2013 in preparation.</p>
<p>3.7 Putting arrangements in place so that members receive police briefings on local matters timeously.</p>	<p>Local Police Commander</p> <p>Complete.</p>	<p>Completed. Local Police briefed.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Local Senior Fire & Rescue Officer</p> <p>Complete</p>	<p>Completed. SFRS consulting through Ward Forums on local plans from September 2013.</p>

CPE Committee Improvement Plan

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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 Complete	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 Progressing well	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. Last meeting was hosted by Shetland Islands Council in September 2013.
Theme 4. Other areas for development		
4.1 Consider how community development approaches could be used to improve community safety locally.	Head of Policy & Performance Progressing well	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 Progressing well	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.

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 have 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.

