

The Highland Council

27th June 2013

Agenda Item	
Report No	

The Highland SOA Report by the Chief Executive

Summary

This report summarises the changes to the SOA from the version circulated to members in May 2013 and highlights that the review of community planning underway will support its development over the next year. Positive feedback was provided on the SOA from the Scottish Government and Cosla representatives on the quality assurance panel. The final draft SOA is circulated separately for members' consideration.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the Council meeting in May 2013, members considered the draft Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and the steps required to conclude it. This report is accompanied by the final SOA, circulated separately, describes what has changed from the earlier draft and outlines the next steps in its development.
- 1.2 The Council's programme 'Working together for the Highlands' contains a commitment that:
'With partners the Council will implement the changes to community planning and develop the Single Outcome Agreement in line with the Scottish Government review so that community planning is effective in the Highlands.'

2. Finalising the SOA for Highland

- 2.1 The report to Council in May highlighted where further work was required with partners to finalise the SOA. The main changes made are:
- The chapter on Safer and Stronger and Reducing reoffending is drafted and included along with a partnership delivery plan (section 6 of the SOA);
 - The partnership delivery plans for economic recovery and early years have been up-dated;
 - Various text up-dates have been made, including members' requests for further information on improving the road network, transitions for young adults and for more focus on areas of deprivation.
 - Further information on reviewing the arrangements for community planning in Highland, including the links to be made with local partnership working and engagement (section 11). This review is now underway and all partners are contributing to that review. Progress with the review is to be reported to the CPP Board in September 2013.
- 2.2 Some gaps in the SOA identified at the Council meeting in May have not yet been progressed as they require further partnership work. This includes:

- Finalising all of the partnership delivery plans, including the performance targets and indicators to use. This is important so that there is clarity on what the partnership seeks to achieve, by when and for each partner to be held to account for their contribution.
- Building a stronger partnership focus on tackling inequality.
- Quantifying the total public resources for the priority areas (excluding early years and older people where this has been provided).
- Including broader partner resources on prevention (currently this is mostly Council resources).
- Describing how partners plan to engage with communities together and to continuously improve engagement.

2.3 All of these actions require further partnership work and agreement and this requires the right partnership working arrangements. To this end the review of community planning should support the completion of these actions over the next year.

3. Next steps

3.1 Representatives of the Scottish Government and Cosla, through a quality assurance panel, fed back their views on the Highland SOA on 14th June 2013 with a view to identifying areas for development. This highlighted the following strengths:

- Partners having a significant role in producing the SOA, a sense that it is being designed with partnership commitment and shows where the partnership can add value;
- The SOA is seen to be a genuine plan which can be translated into delivery;
- The SOA does make national priorities meaningful for the Highlands;
- Good progress is being made to develop effective governance around community planning and its approach to the review may provide valuable lessons to other CPPs;
- There is self-awareness of where improvement is needed; and
- The initial Council contribution of £3m to a prevention fund.

3.2 In keeping with the Partnership's assessment, the areas for development include:

- Developing the delivery plans to include appropriate improvement targets, indicators and base-lines, with these monitored by the Board;
- Clarity on the specific tasks and objectives for the partnership around prevention and tackling inequalities;
- Identifying variations in how the partnership will intervene across the Highlands to deal with different local needs; and
- Whether partners can contribute further to the partnership prevention fund.

These will be taken forward within the timescales agreed, supported by the

review of partnership arrangements. This enables both the Council Leader and the Minister for Local Government and Planning to agree the SOA on behalf of the CPP and the Scottish Government.

- 3.3 As part of the review of community planning, it is proposed that the Leader of the Opposition will have a place on the Partnership Board along with current members, the Council Leader, Depute Leader, Convener and Chair of the FHR Committee. The next meeting of the Board is 13th September 2013.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are asked to agree the Council's contribution to the SOA as set out in the SOA circulated separately.
- 4.2 Members are asked to note the positive feedback on the Highland SOA and that the development work will be taken forward with partners and supported by the review of community planning.
- 4.3 Members are asked to note that further information on the proposed arrangements for community planning will be provided to members after the summer. Members are asked to agree that the Leader of the Opposition will also have a place on the Partnership Board.

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