

**Minister for Local Government and Planning**

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**By email**

Cllr Craig Martin Sr  
Chair  
Falkirk Community Planning Partnership  
Municipal Buildings  
FALKIRK  
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1 August 2013

Dear Councillor Martin

**Falkirk Community Planning Partnership: Draft Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and Development Plan**

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership.

As you know, following the joint Scottish Government/COSLA Statement of Ambition in 2012 we have been taking steps to put community planning at the core of public service reform and to ensure that it and SOAs provide the foundation for effective partnership working and the delivery of better services and outcomes for communities.

In line with the Scottish Government/COSLA Guidance issued in December 2012, the development and delivery of new SOAs is a central part of that agenda and of mobilising our collective assets, activities and resources to deliver a shared 'plan for place' in each CPP area. That is why the Government and COSLA agreed a collaborative, cross-sector approach to the quality assurance of SOAs aimed at:

- Giving Ministers and the Leader of each Council confidence that the SOA is as well developed as possible and sets the course for effective partnership working and on-going improvement in the joint delivery of outcomes;
- Giving each CPP useful feedback and constructive challenge to help it develop and agree its SOA and undertake improvement thereafter; and
- Identifying steps that will require action from the Scottish Government and its agencies, as well as local government, if CPPs are to be able to develop and improve.

The QA teams involved in that process, 24 senior leaders from 17 different organisations, and the positive way in which CPPs have engaged demonstrate the benefits of collaborative working and the potential of constructive but challenging dialogue on community planning and public service reform. I hope we can build on that approach over the coming years.

The QA team which considered the SOA for your CPP identified a number of key strengths and areas for development. I have now received their advice and am pleased to be able to 'sign off' your SOA and the associated Plan for addressing the areas of development agreed with the QA team. That Development Plan is critical to making progress and I expect CPP and individual partners to maintain momentum on the agreed Plan. I will be asking Scottish Government Local Area Directors to provide constructive challenge and support on that and can assure you that we will be working through the National Community Planning Group to provide the national leadership, support and advice on issues such as joint resourcing and prevention which have been heightened through the QA process.

I know that you and other CPPs across Scotland have put significant energy and commitment in to the development of new SOAs. The task now is for CPPs and individual partners to move from planning to action and to make sure the strong foundations that are now in place deliver better services and outcomes for the communities we serve, especially the most disadvantaged.

I look forward to working with you as with move on to this next important stage in delivering our shared ambitions for community planning.

I am copying this letter to your Council Chief Executive and Community Planning Manager.

**Derek Mackay**