

FALKIRK COUNCIL

SUBJECT: SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2013 - 2015
MEETING: FALKIRK COUNCIL
DATE: 25 SEPTEMBER 2013
AUTHOR: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Community Planning Partnership is required to draft and publish a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), under the terms of the joint 'Statement of Ambition' issued by the Scottish Government and CoSLA in 2012.
- 1.2 The SOA covers the period 2013-2015 and co-incides with the completion of the tenure of our current Strategic Community Plan. A copy of our SOA is attached at Appendix 1. Thereafter both the Strategic Community Plan and our SOA will sit side by side within the same time period. The outcomes and actions contained within the SOA are made with the medium term in mind. The integration of our SOA with the Strategic Community Plan will provide a mid term review opportunity and ensure future compatibility, common direction and purpose.
- 1.3 The report will also reference a forthcoming audit on Community Planning which the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will undergo between October and December 2013.

2. COMPLETION OF THE SOA

- 2.1 Our draft SOA was submitted to the Scottish Government on time at the end of June. Since then the SOA has:
 - Been subjected to an assurance process by an independent panel appointed by the Scottish Government. The feedback we received from the panel was both constructive and positive in its praise of the clear understanding of place we have of the Falkirk Council area. This was supported by robust evidence. The panel also recognised the thorough assessment we had undertaken in 2011 to better inform partnership improvement. The panel commended us on the clear structure and readability of the document;
 - Been amended slightly to take account of assurance feedback; and
 - Been signed off by the Minister for Local Government and Planning. A copy of the sign off letter is attached at Appendix 2. This expresses satisfaction with our commitments within the SOA, together with our improvement plan to further improve Community Planning across the Falkirk Council area.
- 2.2 The SOA will also be considered and signed off by the Community Planning Leadership Board on 19 September 2013.

2.3 Members will recall that the SOA has been structured around the national themes referenced in the guidance, although we have made some slight amendments, as follows:

- Economic Recovery, Growth and Employment;
- Early Years;
- Safer. Stronger Communities and Reducing Reoffending;
- Health Inequalities and Physical Activity;
- Outcomes for Older People; and
- Poverty and Welfare Reform. This reflects Falkirk Council's Poverty Strategy.

2.4 There are also a number of cross-cutting issues we have given priority to, including:

- Tackling inequalities;
- Looking at issues across service and organisational boundaries as they impact on our citizens;
- Prevention and early intervention;
- Making best use of our resources to secure local outcomes;
- Being transparent and accountable; and
- Being both innovative and creative.

2.5 We have also set out in the SOA our Improvement Plan which demonstrates how we will meet aspects of the recent guidance on Community Planning which are not already in place or require further development. These include:

- Resource planning and management;
- Community empowerment and participation;
- Performance management; and
- Improvements in partnership governance.

3. COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT

3.1 Recently Audit Scotland advised that the Falkirk Community Planning partnership would undergo a Community Planning Audit between October and December 2013. A workshop was held on 5 September, involving Council Services and Community Planning partners, to brief them on the forthcoming audit. This is being supported by officers from Audit Scotland.

3.2 The advanced material on the audit received from Audit Scotland suggests that the audit will focus on:

- Ensuring that the Community Planning Partnership has a clear set of priorities, which are based on robust evidence and place an emphasis on tackling the causes of the key issues facing the Falkirk Council area into the future;
- Ensuring that our priorities are shared across the partnership and are expressed in a set of clearly shared actions, which are supported by appropriate strategic leadership and resources which are aligned to the delivery of our local outcomes;

- Promoting effective and efficient collaboration between partners and across the partnership; and
- Ensuring the partnership has effective performance management arrangements in place to allow us to demonstrate that our actions are making a difference to the area and for improving outcomes for local people.

3.3 Last year the Community Planning Partnerships in Aberdeen, North Ayrshire and the Scottish Borders all experienced Community Planning audits. There have been a number of key learning points from these audits, including:

- Improving engagement with Community Planning boards to ensure that its perspective is fully reflected within the audit;
- Focus on SOA's and the direction of travel which the partnership is currently taking and into the future;
- Each audit needs to be tailored within a common framework;
- How the partnership reflects prevention, integrated public services and the effective use of resources;
- Ensure effective collaboration occurs across the different scrutiny bodies; and
- Achieve an effective balance between the local and national perspectives the audit requires.

3.4 We will ensure that Members are kept informed as the audit progresses.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Our new SOA marks a step change on our level of aspiration for our area and the greater emphasis we are giving to prevention and early intervention based approaches. We will also ensure that the both the Strategic Community Plan and the SOA are used as joint catalysts for change and reform.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council:

- 5.1 Approves the final Single Outcome Agreement attached at Appendix 1; and**
- 5.2 Notes the forthcoming Community Planning audit and its proposed scope, as outlined at section 3.**

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Date: 30 August 2013

Ref: ABD0913AW – Single Outcome Agreement 2013 - 2015

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. None

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone Andrew Wilson on 01324 506046.