

Partnership Checklist

December 2015



Purpose of the Checklist

The Statement of Ambition published by the Scottish Government and COSLA, sets out high expectations for community planning and puts the process at the core of public service reform. The Community Empowerment [Scotland] Act 2015 sets out new statutory duties for Community Planning Partnerships [CPPs] and partners.

The Partnership Checklist has been developed to support CPPs to critically review their 'fitness for purpose' in achieving shared outcomes.

The checklist is aimed specifically at CPPs Boards. There is also a specific checklist aimed at CPP thematic groups [e.g. groups focused on a specific theme such as Community Safety, Health Improvement, Lifelong Learning] and also by neighbourhood or local level partnership groups.

The purpose of the Checklist is to:

- Assess views on the effectiveness of current partnership arrangements and how well the partnership meets the challenges of the 'outcomes approach'; and
- Identify areas where there may be scope for improving the operation of the partnership and the impact it has.

The checklist acts as a 'can opener' for identifying potential areas for improvement in the partnership, which are identified through a follow-up workshop.

Focus of the Checklist

The areas that the checklist focuses on are derived from research evidence and good practice concerning what makes for effective, outcome-focused partnership working. This includes the Statement of Ambition, the Accounts Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry in their CPP audit framework and more recently the Community Empowerment [Scotland] Act 2015.

The checklist leads partnerships to explore the following areas:

1. Community Engagement & Participation
2. Use of Evidence
3. Focus on Outcomes
4. Leadership & Relationships
5. Governance
6. Accountability
7. Use of Resources
8. Performance Management and Reporting
9. Impact

Practical Use of the Checklist

Stage 1

Normally following a brief awareness session, the checklist is issued as an electronic survey to all members of the partnership that is being reviewed. The survey should be completed by each individual involved in the partnership.

The checklist contains 61 statements and should take approximately 1 ½ - 2 hours to complete. The checklist leads respondents through a sequence of statements relating to partnership working. Respondents are asked to rate the extent to which they agree/disagree with each statement.

Each statement in the checklist should be scored against the undernoted scale:

| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Don't Know |
|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |

The 'Don't Know' option should be used when the respondent feels they do not have sufficient information about the particular statement to enable them to make a judgment.

At the end of each section there are two comments boxes – one requires you to provide details of evidence that supports your views on how the partnership is performing in relation to the issues covered by the section and the other requires you to provide further details of how you think the partnership can improve in relation to the areas covered by the section. You will not be able to proceed through the Checklist without providing input to the comment boxes.

All checklist responses are anonymous and non attributable.

Stage 2

The checklist findings are analysed and a short report is compiled summarising the responses and key points for discussion.

The report will be used as the basis for facilitating a structured workshop with the partnership. The workshop should typically take a maximum of 3 hours. The purpose of the workshop is to give the partnership an opportunity to discuss the strengths and issues emerging from the checklist and to support them to agree and prioritise appropriate improvement actions to further strengthen the partnership.

Stage 3

The workshop will last a maximum of 1 ½ hours and will focus on the development of an Improvement Plan, which will cover the following areas:

- The issues that can be improved upon
- The actions that will be undertaken to address these issues

- Lead responsibilities for driving the actions
- Timescales for implementing the actions
- Resources required to drive the improvement
- Overall impact the improvement/s will make

Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF)

In addition to the Partnership Checklist, we have also developed a PSIF CPP Thematic Framework. This is a more operationally focused self-assessment framework. For further information please contact psif@improvementservice.org.uk

1. Community Engagement & Participation

1. The partnership has effective engagement mechanisms for understanding the needs of individuals and communities.
2. Input from individuals and communities influences the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, the activities undertaken and the way that activities are delivered.
3. The partnership has effective mechanisms for communicating with key stakeholders/ individuals/communities.
4. The partnership is taking all reasonable steps to secure the involvement in community planning of any community body which it considers able to contribute to it. In particular, the CPP is having regard to community bodies which represent those communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.
5. Statutory partner bodies are contributing funds, staff or other resources to secure the participation of community bodies in community planning.

Thinking about the issues covered in this section:

A. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to how the partnership is performing in relation to Community Engagement & Participation.

B. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its approach to Community Engagement & Participation.

2. Use of Evidence

6. The partnership has developed and agreed a common understanding of local needs and opportunities.

7. The partnership has made full use of different partners' data sources and expertise in data analysis.

8. Agreed priorities and outcomes in the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan reflect the key challenges of the area identified through the CPP's data analysis and community engagement activity.

9. The partnership has a good understanding of the distribution of positive and negative outcomes across its area, including information relating both to inequalities (e.g. education, income, health) and the range of equalities groupings (e.g. age, race, gender).

10. The partnership draws upon research and evaluation evidence to inform its understanding of which activities represent good value for money and make a tangible difference to delivering the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

Thinking about the issues covered in this section:

A. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to how the partnership is performing in relation to the use of evidence.

B. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its use of evidence.

3. Focus on Outcomes

11. The partnership has a clear statement in the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan of the outcomes it is focusing upon (i.e. the difference that it ultimately aims to make in the community) and individual partners understand their respective responsibilities for achieving these outcomes.

12. The partnership has undertaken some level of contribution analysis/logic modelling to clearly identify the activities/tasks needed to achieve its outcomes and any related factors likely to influence them resulting in a clear delivery plan.

13. The partnership has identified and agreed which localities/communities and/or client groups it will prioritise in relation to reducing inequalities in outcomes.

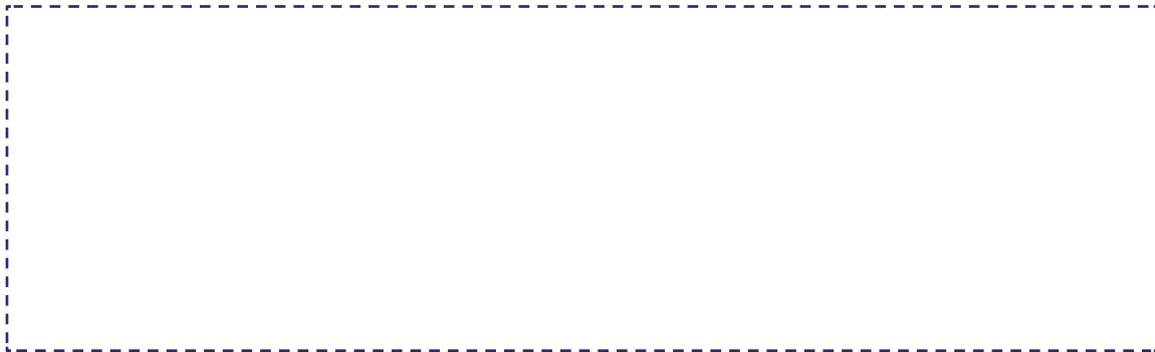
14. The partnership has identified priority outcomes for these communities

15. The partnership actively encourages innovation and discussion around the best ways to achieve SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan outcomes.

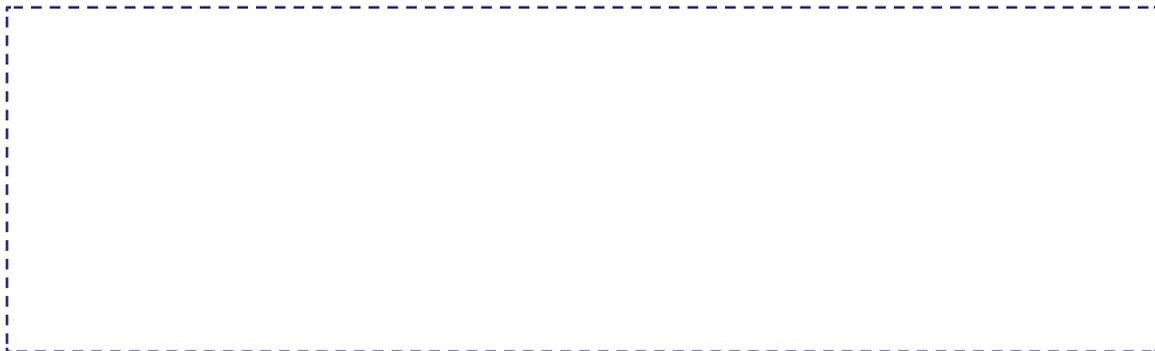
8.

Thinking about the issues covered in this section:

A. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to how the partnership is performing in relation to the focus on outcomes.



B. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its focus on outcomes.



4. Leadership & Relationships

16. The partnership has strong and effective shared leadership.
17. Partners work effectively together to achieve and agree and shared purpose.
18. Partnership meetings take place within a positive spirit of transparency, openness and trust.
19. The key organisations that can contribute to achieving the partnership's SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan are involved and contribute appropriately and there is no obvious partner missing.
20. Elected members of the local authority are engaged in the leadership of the partnership and scrutinising performance.

Thinking about the issues covered in this section:

A. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to how the partnership is performing in relation to Leadership & Relationships.

B. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its approach to Leadership & Relationships.

5. Governance

21. The partnership has appropriate structures and processes to support shared, effective decision making.
22. The partnership has a vision and strategic direction which partners are committed to.
23. Partners have discussed and formally agreed their respective roles and responsibilities in relation to the partnership and delivery of the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.
24. All partners have agreed to a conflict resolution mechanism.
25. The partnership is an effective mechanism for addressing issues that cut across different thematic areas and for avoiding 'siloed' or duplicated working by thematic groups.
26. Each partner organisation regularly attends partnership meetings, ensuring continuity as much as possible.
27. The individuals involved in the partnership are sufficiently empowered and influential to significantly advance the key issues.
28. The partnership has an effective mechanism in place for managing collective risks, which is regularly reviewed.
29. The local authority, NHS Board, HIE, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service understand their new governance duties to facilitate Community Planning and take all reasonable steps to ensure the partnership operates effectively.

A. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to the partnership's governance.

B. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its governance.

6. Accountability

30. The partnership's SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is clearly reflected in the strategic and operational plans of my own organisation.
31. The partnership's SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is clearly reflected in the strategic and operational plans of the other key partners.
32. The partnership 'adds value' to the partners' individual contributions to the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.
33. Partners effectively communicate decisions of the partnership within their own organisation.
34. Partners play an active role together in agreeing, monitoring and taking action to improve local outcomes.
35. The individuals involved in the partnership offer constructive criticism and regularly challenge each other and the partnership as a whole to 'do more' in achieving the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan outcomes and to improve.
36. The partnership's accountability arrangements are clear, understood and implemented by all partners.
37. The partnership holds individual partners to account for their performance and contribution to the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

Thinking about the issues covered in both these sections:

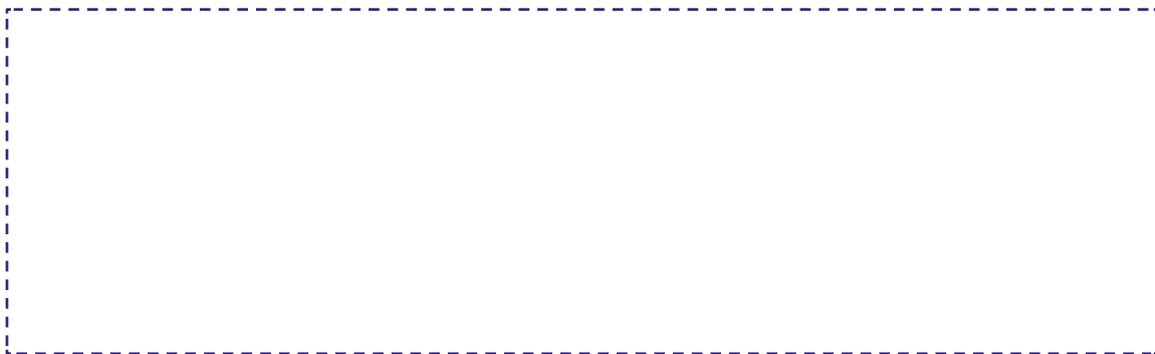
C. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to the partnership's accountability.

D. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its accountability.

7. Use of Resources

38. The partnership knows what resources (financial, staff, assets) are deployed locally.
39. The partnership has undertaken an analysis of what it spends on local services and activities and how this contributes towards its agreed outcomes.
40. Partners realign resources in order to better deliver early intervention and prevention approaches.
41. The partnership's SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is reflected clearly in the resource allocation processes/ decisions made by my organisation (including decision making about resource reductions).
42. The partnership's SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is reflected clearly in the resource allocation processes/ decisions made by other partners' organisations (including decision making about resource reductions).
43. Partners have identified and prioritised the skills required for effective partnership working within their senior and middle management.
44. Partners have identified opportunities to develop their workforces jointly.
45. Partners contribute such funds, staff and other resources as the CPP considers appropriate to improve local priority outcomes.

A. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to how the partnership uses its resources.



B. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its use of resources.



8. Performance Management and Reporting

46. There is a clear performance reporting linkage between individual partner organisations, thematic partnership groups and the CPP Board.

47. The partnership has effective arrangements to evaluate its own performance.

48. The targets set for the partnership are ambitious and stretching, whilst being realistic.

49. The long term improvements in outcomes that the partnership is seeking to achieve over the next decade (as set out in the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) are supported by immediate outcomes, indicators and targets against which progress can be measured in the short and medium term.

50. There is an efficient and robust system in place for recording progress made towards the achievement of outcome targets.

51. The performance information considered by the partnership is timely, relevant and provides a good measure of progress towards the desired outcomes and key time specific targets.

52. Where appropriate, performance information is segmented - for example by population groups, older/younger people, and different local areas.

53. The partnership actively uses performance information to facilitate constructive strategic discussion and, where required, to instigate corrective action in order to address under-performance against key targets.

54. Performance management arrangements of the partnership are aligned with partners' performance management arrangements.

55. The partnership benchmarks information with other partnerships.

56. There is a publicly available, easy to understand performance report, which demonstrates progress (including successes and failures) of the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, and is clear about the difference the CPP is making to improve the lives of local people.

A. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to how the partnership manages and reports performance.

B. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its performance management and reporting.

9. Impact

57. By working together, the partnership has delivered improvements which could not have been delivered by individual organisations.

58. The partnership has made demonstrable progress against the targets and objectives contained within the SOA/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

59. The partnership is making progress in closing the gap around inequalities in outcomes within its own area.

60. The key focus of the partnership's activities is upon addressing the root causes of the issues it has prioritised.

61. There is evidence that the partnership's actions around early intervention and prevention are having an impact.

A. Please provide details of evidence that supports your views in relation to how the partnership understands the impact it is making.

B. Please provide further details of how the partnership can improve its impact.

This part of the checklist is optional

Preparedness for Community Empowerment [Scotland] Act 2015

[A] How prepared do you think the CPP is for the implementation of the new Act ?

[B] What key actions do you think the CPP needs to undertake to ensure it meets the requirements of the new Act?

The Improvement Service
iHub

11 Quarrywood Court
Livingston
West Lothian
EH54 6AX

Tel. 01506 282012
www.improvementservice.org.uk

The logo for the Improvement Service features the lowercase letters 'is' in a dark blue, sans-serif font. A small red dot is positioned above the 'i', and another red dot is at the end of the 's'. Below this, the words 'improvement' and 'service' are written in a smaller, dark blue, sans-serif font. The word 'service' is in red, while 'improvement' is in dark blue.

improvement **service**