

From the Chief Executive, Rory Mair



31 October 2008

Your Ref:

To : Chief Executives

Our Ref:

Cc: Chief Executives of Health Boards
Chief Constables
Chief Fire Officers
Lead Officers of Regional Transport Partnerships

Dear Chief Executive

Single Outcome Agreement (SOAs) Guidance 2009 & Key Messages

Please find attached the following two documents:

1. Set of Key Messages regarding the Outcomes Process, and
2. SOA Guidance 2009

The High Level Group on Single Outcome Agreements has agreed this set of key messages because we believe it's important that all of us in the public sector who have committed to the outcomes process are able to project progress, success and future development in a consistent and enthusiastic manner. We would hope that you and your community planning partners would feel able to use these key messages in joint discussions, and in discussions you're having with others, in a way that projects the growing momentum and success of the outcome process.

As you will be well aware, the guidance on SOA's 2009 has been developed through much very useful consultation. The High Level Group would like to thank you for the efforts you put into responding to draft documentation and we feel sure that this guidance document takes on board all those message that arose consistently through the development process.

You will see from the mailing list that the High Level Group has sent these documents to all of the statutory community planning partners. However there may be others you feel would benefit from the documentation. These are public documents and you should not feel constrained in any way from using them in ways that will be useful in pushing the outcome process forward.

We hope that you will find both documents useful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rory Mair".

Rory Mair
Chair of the High Level Group

KEY MESSAGES

Key Messages

1. The 'outcome focus' is the ambition to see Scotland's public services working together, and with private and voluntary sector partners, to improve the quality of life and opportunities in life for people across Scotland. The outcomes in an SOA should be expressed in terms of quality of life and opportunity, or in terms of the economic, social or environmental contexts that influence people's quality of life and opportunities in life.

"Our guiding principle in this fundamental change is that, both nationally and locally, we should be clear about the outcomes which our communities need and then review and align our arrangements to ensure that they are fit for purpose to support the delivery of those outcomes".
2. The 'national outcomes' agreed between national and local government in the Concordat address the improvements sought across Scotland as a whole in quality of life, opportunities in life and living context. Each local partnership needs to examine trends and issues in their own area, and establish local priorities within that context. In some areas, aspects of quality of life and opportunity may already significantly exceed national ambitions (e.g. life expectancy, East Renfrewshire or East Dunbartonshire): In other areas, the same aspects may fall well below any reasonable expectations (e.g. life expectancy in parts of Glasgow). Priorities need to be set accordingly.
3. SOA's should focus strategically on priority areas for improvement and on the end outcomes to be achieved in terms of quality of life, opportunity and the context in which people live. They are high level documents and should focus on a limited and manageable number of priorities.
4. Addressing inequalities, and improving equality, in quality of life and opportunities in life is a national outcome in its own right, but also a cross-cutting theme that should be considered across the SOA. General improvement that leaves some of our people living well below the standards of the majority will not meet either national or local ambitions for a fairer Scotland.
5. SOA's needs to be clear what success will look like and how we will know we are getting there. At minimum, we need to be clear how the end outcome is to be measured, and about how progress towards that will be monitored. The evidence of Phase I of developing SOA's is that a small number of highly focussed measures of end outcomes and progress targets is more useful than a larger number of less well focussed measures and targets.
6. The SOA does not replace all the underlying service planning and performance management arrangements already in place. It provides an outcome framework and focus for service planning, resource planning and performance management but these still have to be there in a robust and rigorous way. A 'golden thread' needs to run from the high level outcomes in the SOA through to the underlying planning, delivery and performance systems of all partners.
7. The partners to the joint SOA will continue to have full accountability for services and provision that is their distinct responsibility. Not everything could or should be included in the SOA! The key development step across the next period is to create effective mechanisms for joint accountability for SOA commitments, alongside the specific accountabilities agencies will continue to have for their own resources and services. Where tensions are identified between new accountability arrangements for the SOA, and the pre-existing accountability frameworks each partner agency operates within, the Scottish Government has agreed to address and resolve these matters.

8. The Scottish approach to developing SOA's has been explicitly based on action learning. Rather than try to plan everything in advance, which often means nothing happens in practice, the approach has been to establish momentum and learn through practice. It is fair to say that our current arrangements for partnership governance and organisation are less than perfect. However, clear agreement between partners about priority outcomes provides a basis for reviewing and improving them in ways that build people and communities into the centre of our approach to redesigning the public sector.
9. Clearly, realism and ambition need linked in developing SOA's. Circumstances, like the current global financial crisis, may severely restrict our ability to deliver certain outcomes. Equally, some social issues, like intergenerational disadvantage/deprivation, are deeply embedded, complex and improvement may take time. The key is to start with ambition and let experience temper that rather than let 'realism' drive out ambition. If the whole approach is about learning, development and improvement, aiming high is a reasonable starting point.
10. Finally, SOA's are ultimately a partnership with the people and communities whose quality of life and opportunity we want to be improved. We cannot 'do' outcomes to people: We need to work with them to support positive outcomes in their lives. This goes beyond conventional community engagement and is about a fuller partnership with people in pursuing outcomes. This will take time, effort and commitment but key outcomes like improved health, economic opportunity etc can only be achieved this way.

SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS

GUIDANCE FOR

COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIPS

OCTOBER 2008



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1. Introduction

The Scottish Government and local government share an ambition for the outcome focused planning and delivery of public services in Scotland. That ambition is expressed in the historic Concordat of November 2007 and in the successful development and agreement of Single Outcome Agreements between all 32 Councils and the Scottish Government by June 2008. This ambition is shared by Community Planning partners, with half of those first phase SOAs being developed with Community Planning Partnerships.

All Community Planning Partnerships should now be either reviewing or developing their Single Outcome Agreements, for agreement with the Scottish Government for 2009-10 onward. SOAs agreed between CPPs and the Scottish Government in 2008 should now be reviewed to take account of this Guidance, of learning from that first phase, and of information now available for 2007-08. This second phase of SOAs should be endorsed by the CPP Board and signed by the Scottish Government, by the Council, by the statutory Community Planning partners and also, at a minimum, by those other public bodies in the Community Planning Partnership.

This Guidance is provided jointly by COSLA, Scottish Government, SOLACE, Audit Scotland and the Improvement Service – and has been developed with ACPOS, CFOAS and NHS Chief Executives - to assist CPPs in that work. The Guidance is intended for all the statutory partners in Community Planning and all other public bodies in Scotland, but it will also be of interest to all Community Planning partners, including those in the third sector.

The early development and agreement of the first phase SOAs provided valuable experience and learning for all participants and this Guidance now builds on that learning – and on both the SOA Development and Self-Assessment Toolkit [SOA Development and Self Assessment Toolkit](#) and the Working Guidance for Public Bodies on an Outcome Based Approach [Outcome Based Approach - Working Guidance for Public Bodies](#) – and updates the guidance provided for local government in February 2008.

The key points of our learning from the first phase SOAs, which we emphasise throughout this Guidance, are that:

- A Single Outcome Agreement must have a **strategic focus** – with a manageable and meaningful number of outcomes and robust and measurable indicators – rather than being a compilation of unprioritised plans and activities;
- A Single Outcome Agreement must be about **actual outcomes** – it should clearly focus on people's quality of life and opportunities, and on the supporting social, economic and environmental conditions;
- A Single Outcome Agreement must be **evidence-based** – it should be based on an integrated area profile of social, economic and environmental conditions and trends, and consideration of future challenges and opportunities;
- A Single Outcome Agreement must be **capable of delivery** – it should show a clear line of sight to the supporting plans and activities which should lie 'below the waterline'; and
- A Single Outcome Agreement must promote **continuous improvement** – it is a significant advance on previous arrangements for planning and delivering public services, but it should also identify the further work needed, including arrangements to secure full ownership from all local partners and communities.

The move to SOAs with all CPPs brings to a focus a number of issues – around governance, accountability and performance management - which COSLA, Scottish Government, SOLACE, Audit Scotland and the IS are addressing through the further work identified in this Guidance.

The Guidance provides an outline of the SOA and explains the links to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework. It also provides a format and a template for the presentation of the SOA, as well as an annex explaining the key terms used in the Guidance (see **Annex 1**).

The move to an outcome based approach for public services will not be completed with the agreement of SOAs between the Scottish Government and all Community Planning Partnerships in 2009 – important though that is. This is only the start of a fundamental change in our ways of thinking and working, with inevitable needs for further advice and support. The Scottish Government, COSLA, SOLACE, Audit Scotland and the Improvement Service are committed to providing that support as it is needed. ***Our guiding principle in this change process is that, both nationally and locally, we should be clear about the outcomes which our communities need and then review and align our arrangements to ensure that they are fit for purpose to support the delivery of those outcomes.***

Finally, you will be aware that your SOA should be with the Scottish Government by the end of **February 2009**, so that discussion between the CPP and Scottish Government can conclude in agreement by the end of **May 2009**. Your Scottish Government liaison Director and your Council's Chief Executive will be ready to assist at every stage of this process.

2. Background and Learning

The Concordat between the Scottish Government and COSLA sets out the terms of a new relationship between the Scottish Government and local government, based on mutual respect and partnership. This new relationship is represented by a package of measures, which were endorsed by the Scottish Government and COSLA, and which both parties believe will lead, over time, to significant benefits for citizens and communities across Scotland.

A central proposal was the creation of a Single Outcome Agreement between each Council and the Scottish Government, based on the 15 National Outcomes agreed in the Concordat. The National Outcomes are part of the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (see **Annex 2**), but they also reflect established corporate and Community Plan commitments across Councils and Community Planning Partnerships. Progress on the National Outcomes for Scotland as a whole cannot in most cases happen unless progress is made at local level.

In practice, improving outcomes at the local level requires the full engagement of CPPs (including third sector partners) which this second phase of SOAs is intended to secure.

The first phase of SOAs was implemented at an accelerated pace and it is to the credit of all concerned that they were developed and agreed so quickly. Individually and collectively they demonstrate a significant move toward the shared ambition of an outcome based approach to planning and delivering public services. We now have the benefit of the learning from that first phase, and a better understanding of what should happen in this second phase.

The key learning point from the first phase is the need to develop and maintain a **strategic focus** for a Single Outcome Agreement. First phase SOAs generally demonstrated a significant convergence around 20 outcomes which could be directly linked to relevant National Outcomes. They also supported those outcomes with around 30 commonly used indicators.

However, the numbers of outcomes, indicators and 'asks' in some first phase SOAs made it difficult to identify strategic local priorities. Their linkage between outcomes and indicators was sometimes not clear, and nor was their linkage between outcomes which will take time to achieve and targets with 3 year horizons. Their outcomes were sometimes about aspirations or activities, rather than actual outcomes which could be evidenced in the experience of local people or conditions in the area. Local outcomes often appeared to have been prompted by the existence of a National Outcome, rather than the existence of a local priority. 'Asks' were often about

matters of detail or funding which are not appropriate within a strategic document or the context of the Concordat.

Many SOAs also contained a volume of detail which is more appropriate for the supporting service plans or performance management frameworks which lie 'below the waterline' of the SOA – i.e. supporting the SOA by showing how outcomes will be delivered, but not appearing 'above the waterline' in the SOA document itself.

Those SOAs which presented an integrated area profile of local conditions (rather than just the separate local contexts for each of the 15 National Outcomes which had been suggested) generally had fewer outcomes and indicators, and more of the strategic focus which will be crucial to the work of CPPs.

COSLA, Scottish Government, SOLACE, Audit Scotland and the Improvement Service have therefore agreed to re-emphasise the need for SOAs to demonstrate a strategic focus and have agreed the purpose of a Single Outcome Agreement as set out below.

A Single Outcome Agreement is the means by which Community Planning Partnerships agree their strategic priorities for their local area and express those priorities as outcomes to be delivered by the partners, either individually or jointly, while showing how those outcomes should contribute to the Scottish Government's relevant National Outcomes.

3. Updating the Guidance

This Guidance reflects the learning acquired from the first phase of SOAs. The key changes which have been made in order to update this Guidance – and to promote the essential strategic focus for SOAs - are:

- Revision of text to better show how SOAs fit with the National Performance Framework while demonstrating their strategic focus (Section 4)
- Identification of issues which are being jointly addressed by COSLA, Scottish Government, SOLACE, Audit Scotland and the Improvement Service (Section 5)
- Revision of the SOA format to highlight the importance of the integrated area profile to the development and presentation of the SOA (Section 6)
- Revision of the SOA template to encourage fewer outcomes and indicators and clear links to the area profile (Section 7).

All CPPs will wish to ensure that they take this Guidance fully into account when reviewing or developing their SOA for presentation to the Scottish Government.

4. The Single Outcome Agreement

The Single Outcome Agreement sets out the outcomes which each Community Planning Partnership is seeking to achieve for its area and community. The SOA is likely to be based upon the Community Plan and key plans of the Community Planning partners. It is part of an overall framework for outcome focused planning and delivery of public services which is shared between local government, public bodies and the Scottish Government. The components of the framework are the National Performance Framework (**see Annex 2**); the local outcomes, indicators and targets being developed by CPPs in response to local priorities (**see Annex 1**); and the guidance on an Outcome Based Approach for public bodies from Scottish Government [Outcome Based Approach - Working Guidance for Public Bodies](#). Together they can be summarised as follows:

4.1 The Government's Purpose

Each part of the National Performance Framework is directed towards, and contributes to, the Government's single overarching Purpose - "to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth."

4.2 Purpose Targets

The Purpose Targets support the delivery of the Government's Purpose, and define the characteristics of, and include specific benchmarks for, sustainable economic growth across Scotland.

4.3 Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Objectives (Wealthier & Fairer; Smarter; Healthier; Safer & Stronger; and Greener) support the delivery of the Government's Purpose and are best viewed as means of aggregating outcomes into wider themes.

4.4 National Outcomes

Each of the 15 National Outcomes contributes to one or more of the Strategic Objectives. The National Outcomes are the starting point for the presentation of the SOA, using the template provided in Section 7.

All of the National Outcomes should be considered in preparing the SOA, but whether and how they will then be addressed will depend on their demonstrated relevance to the evidence and strategic priorities identified in the integrated Area Profile, which is the basis of the SOA (see 4.6).

4.5 National Indicators and Targets

The National Indicators and Targets support and track, at national level, the delivery of the National Outcomes. Where they are locally relevant they can be used by CPPs to support and track the delivery of local outcomes in the SOA.

Scotland Performs (<http://www.scotlandperforms.com>) provides further information on the National Performance Framework and on how Scotland is performing and making progress towards the National Outcomes and against the National Indicators and Targets.

4.6 Area Profile

An integrated profile of the social, economic and environmental conditions of the area is the basis of the SOA. On the basis of the evidence the Area Profile should identify past trends and future challenges and opportunities and then the strategic local priorities, both for improved and maintained conditions. The strategic local priorities should be expressed as a meaningful and manageable number of local outcomes.

Each local outcome should be capable of being linked to one or more of the National Outcomes, although there may be issues which are purely local priorities, as well as issues (such as the challenge of a shrinking and ageing population) where a link to one or more of the Purpose Targets may be more relevant and should be noted.

4.7 Local outcomes (see Key Terms in Annex 1)

The number of local outcomes should be meaningful and manageable, reflecting the strategic priorities drawn from the evidence in the Area Profile. They should be actual outcomes, focusing on people's quality of life and opportunities, and on the supporting social, economic or environmental conditions. They should not be just plans or actions which are hoped to have the intended effects. They should balance local ambition with realism about the time needed for change to happen. They are therefore likely to be achieved over a longer period than 3 years.

Both outcomes and indicators may be drawn from the national outcome frameworks for a range of issues and services, such as those for health inequalities ('Equally Well'), community care,

early years and anti-poverty. These four have been collaboratively developed by COSLA, the Scottish Government and relevant interests as valuable contributions towards solving some of Scotland's most complex problems by putting emphasis on early intervention and prevention. They could apply to the service plans and performance management arrangements which lie "below the waterline" of a SOA. The extent of their use 'above the waterline' and therefore in the SOA itself should be determined by their relevance and importance to strategic local priorities. Further support on health improvement aspects is in development at: [Health Improvement - Tools for SOA Processes](#).

4.8 Local indicators and targets (see Key Terms in Annex 1)

Each of the local outcomes should be supported by one or more robust and measurable indicators. A menu of local outcome indicators supported the delivery of the first phase SOAs. This has been reviewed against those indicators (including relevant National Indicators) used in those SOAs and a revised Menu of Local Outcome Indicators accompanies this Guidance for use by CPPs. This will continue to be developed by the IS, SOLACE, Scottish Government, ACPOS, CFOAS and NHS Chief Executives, with an improved version being provided at the end of 2008. The use of indicators from the Menu remains a matter for local choice.

The number of indicators and targets appearing in the SOA and thus 'above the waterline' should be manageable and meaningful. CPPs may therefore wish to focus on aggregated high level indicators and targets. Indicators should where possible be benchmarkable, so that continuous improvement can be informed by comparison with similar areas. And targets should also, where helpful, be SMART or at least indicating a direction of travel from an established baseline.

Targets should, wherever possible, directly relate to and help quantify the local outcome. They should be set for a 3 year horizon and act as 'progress' targets toward the achievement of the outcome, recognising that circumstances will change from year to year and be accounted for in the annual review process for the SOA. CPPs should also try to set longer term 'end' targets which can be used to demonstrate the achievement of the outcome, or of an intermediate outcome. These terms are worked through in **Annex 1**.

4.9 'Asks'

An 'ask' is a request made by a Council or CPP to the Scottish Government for it to take an action which will support the delivery of local outcomes. The arrangements for handling all the 'asks' made in the first phase SOAs are as set out in **Annex 3**. COSLA and the Scottish Government have agreed that, in light of the Concordat, 'asks' for funding for Councils should not be made. Any new 'asks' will now be expected to demonstrate and evidence that they are critical to the overall delivery of the local outcomes.

4.10 Performance Management

The SOA must be a strategic document, with performance management information therefore lying 'below the waterline'. However, SOAs must be underpinned by robust performance arrangements, to which there should be a very clear line of sight from the SOA document. As the successful implementation of CPP SOAs is likely to require strengthened collaboration and new ways of working, the alignment or revision of partners' individual and shared performance management arrangements for the delivery of shared outcomes should be clearly evident in that line of sight.

5. Further Support

The move to agreement of Single Outcome Agreements between Community Planning Partnerships and the Scottish Government brings to a focus a number of issues – notably around governance, accountability and performance management - which COSLA, the Scottish Government, SOLACE, Audit Scotland and the IS are addressing through the SOA High Level Steering Group. These issues particularly affect those public bodies which have a statutory duty to participate in Community Planning and/or which deliver or influence local services. These workstreams are therefore also being developed with ACPOS, CFOAS and NHS Chief Executives in the first instance, with a view to identifying and promoting good practice, rather than prescribing procedures. The context for each of the workstreams is the statutory and secondary guidance on Community Planning and Best Value emanating from the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

As we indicated earlier, our guiding principle in this change process is that we should first be clear about the outcomes which our communities need and then review and align our arrangements to ensure that they are fit for purpose to support the delivery of those outcomes.

Governance and accountability

Community Planning is a process “by which the public services provided in the area of the local authority are provided and the planning of that provision takes place”¹. Local authorities have a duty to initiate, maintain and facilitate this process and Scottish Ministers have a duty to promote and encourage the use of community planning.

A number of public service providers are statutory partners in Community Planning. The role that CPPs will now play in developing and delivering SOAs does not alter the separate accountabilities of those partners to either local authorities or to individual Scottish Ministers. However, the second phase SOAs will be agreements between all the Scottish Ministers and Community Planning Partnerships, signed by the Council, by the statutory partners and, at a minimum, by those public bodies in the Community Planning Partnership. There is therefore a need to identify good practice and workable options for governance and accountability which will support the collective delivery of local and national outcomes.

The extent to which any other public body is expected to contribute to the development and delivery of a SOA is likely to be determined by the extent of its potential contribution toward shared outcomes, as agreed with the CPP, i.e. the Scottish Government’s Purpose Targets, National Outcomes and local priorities, as they are addressed in the SOA (see the ‘guidance on an Outcome Based Approach provided for public bodies by the Scottish Government [Outcome Based Approach - Working Guidance for Public Bodies](#)’).

The extension of SOAs to CPPs is likely to provide opportunities to review the value and relevance of existing local partnership arrangements. A workstream for governance and accountability is being taken forward by the High Level Steering Group, with further support on good practice planned for December 2008.

Performance management

All local authorities have their own performance management frameworks and other Community Planning partners have their own sectoral frameworks. Some CPPs have agreed joint performance management arrangements and all CPPs will need to be able to demonstrate robust performance management systems ‘below the waterline’ of their SOAs. There is therefore a need to identify good practice for the alignment of different performance management frameworks in support of SOAs. But there is a lack of an evidence base which can demonstrate how interventions of different types by different partners will affect their shared outcomes.

¹ Local Government in Scotland Act 2003
October 2008

The national move to an outcome based approach is reflected in the collaborative development of the growing number of national outcome frameworks for issues and services such as health inequalities ('Equally Well'), community care, early years and anti-poverty. There is a parallel move toward multiple outcome based self-assessment models for public service providers. The principles for 'Best Value 2' and its extension across the public sector include a stronger focus on outcomes and partnership working. These are all valuable contributions to the outcome focused planning and delivery of public services, which create an opportunity to consider how they should fit together in support of SOAs.

A workstream for performance management is being taken forward by the High Level Steering Group so as to provide further support on the alignment of these approaches.

Indicators

The identification of robust, measurable and benchmarkable indicators for use in SOAs is an ongoing workstream for the High Level Steering Group. That workstream includes the identification of gaps in the available evidence base and any opportunities to improve or commission data which could address those gaps. There is also a need to bolster the analytical capacity available within local authorities and Community Planning Partnerships.

This workstream is an initial priority for SOLACE, ACPOS, CFOAS and NHS Chief Executives and is intended to deliver an improved Menu of Local Outcome indicators in December 2008.

Reporting

The Concordat expects Councils to submit an annual report to the Scottish Government setting out their progress and achievements towards the National Outcomes. It was envisaged that this report would be submitted around the turn of the financial year. However, given the timing of when many indicators become available for reporting and the extension of SOAs to cover CPPs, the HLSG has concluded that Councils should produce those reports on behalf of CPPs in September of each year.

As the Concordat expects reductions in the reporting burden, these reports will form an integral part of the reports which Councils already prepare under their statutory duty of Public Performance Reporting. The reports will have a dual purpose; first an outward focus reporting to communities and the public on the delivery of outcomes in the local area; and second to report to the Scottish Government a CPP's contribution towards delivery of outcomes which support the National Performance Framework.

A workstream for reporting is being taken forward by the High Level Steering Group, with further advice on the annual (September) report planned for December 2008.

However, given that 15 months will elapse between the signing of the first SOAs in June 2008 and when the first reports become available in September 2009, the HLSG has agreed that for one year only local government will provide an interim report for the Scottish Government on the first phase SOAs in April 2009. This will be drawn from the summaries of local progress and achievements, to be provided within the Local Context sections of the SOA template (Section 7).

In addition, general monitoring of progress and changes in local conditions, priorities or resources will be part of the ongoing dialogue between the Scottish Government and the Council/CPP, through Scottish Government Directors' involvement in CPPs.

Statutory Obligations

All parties are aware that in preparing their SOAs they are responsible for ensuring that all statutory obligations and requirements have been met – for example in relation to equalities and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs). In the case of equalities, improving performance on equality will contribute to successful delivery across a range of outcomes and further embedding equality will continue to be important in this second phase of SOAs.

Further material on good practice on public sector equality duties and issues around equalities will be provided shortly to assist CPPs. In addition, procedural advice on SEAs will also be provided shortly to CPPs.

Engagement of communities

Community engagement will be a key part of the ongoing development of Single Outcome Agreements by Community Planning Partnerships. Both first and second phase SOA should reflect the priorities in Community Plans which have been developed through consultation with communities. The Scottish Government and COSLA share a commitment to community empowerment and COSLA is currently finalising its Community Empowerment Action Plan, which will include the need to promote use of the National Standards for Community Engagement as part of a long term change in culture. This action plan will also focus on capacity building for council officers and elected members to engage with communities. This initiative should support the work of CPPs as they engage in the process of developing and reviewing SOAs.

Engagement of the third sector

The Scottish Government and COSLA see the third sector as a full and valuable partner in the development and delivery of policy and local services across Scotland, and local government is committed to fully engaging the third sector in Community Planning Partnerships and the ongoing development of the Single Outcome Agreements. COSLA is looking at how best to support CPPs and the third sector build effective and sustainable relationships through the Third Sector Task Group, involving Scottish Government, SOLACE, COSLA and third sector representatives.

Fairer Scotland Fund

Each CPP received a three year award from the FSF to take joint action to regenerate the most disadvantaged communities; assist the most vulnerable groups out of poverty; and help people to overcome barriers to work. In 2008-09, most CPPs presented their strategic plans for deployment of the FSF within SOAs. For 2009-10, CPP plans should be fully integrated in all SOAs. This is important, as the ring fence for FSF is due to end at March 2010. By this time, each CPP will have had two years to employ the FSF as a catalyst for local strategic dialogue and investment, enabling clear presentation of local outcome based approaches to tackling poverty and deprivation in the longer term.

To assist in the refinement of plans for 2009-10 and beyond, CPPs should continue to refer to the Scottish Government's FSF guidance shared on 21 December 2007 and 22 February 2008 as a guide. Through the facilitation of a new learning network for CPPs, focused on community regeneration and tackling poverty, the Scottish Government and its partners want to work with CPPs to identify the most reliable indicators to track progress for our most vulnerable communities and people, and exchange effective practice in deploying resources in partnership. It is particularly important that indicators available at the level of individual datazones are tracked over time. In this way, CPPs will be able to plan for and measure accelerated progress for communities in areas covered by the most deprived 15% of datazones. It is also important that appropriate targets are set for achieving accelerated progress in the most disadvantaged communities and for people experiencing poverty.

6. SOA Format

The format and template (Section 7) provided in this Guidance are designed to provide a consistent approach to the presentation of information from CPPs, with the objective of keeping the SOA concise and focused. Both the format and template should be informed by the information provided in Section 4. Clearly, the ability of the Scottish Government to respond consistently to the proposed SOAs is made easier by consistent presentation of the SOA documents.

However, this is guidance, and your CPP may present its SOA in another format if that better suits local needs, so long as the information identified in Sections 6 and 7 is clearly presented.

6.1 Purpose of the Agreement

- Confirms the purpose of the SOA as being the means by which the Community Planning Partnership agrees its strategic priorities for the local area and expresses those priorities as outcomes to be delivered by the partners, either individually or jointly, while showing how those outcomes should contribute to the Scottish Government's relevant National Outcomes.
- Expresses the joint commitment and mutual accountability of the Scottish Government, the statutory Community Planning partners and, at a minimum, other public bodies in the CPP, to the delivery of the agreed outcomes.
- Sets the SOA in the context of the new relationship between Scottish Government and local government, and of the outcome based approach for public bodies.
- Sets out key points from the Concordat, including the national outcome approach, greater local freedom, reduced ringfencing, less monitoring and reporting, and better partnership working.

6.2 Scope of the Agreement

- Confirms that the SOA covers all local authority services and all the public services which are the responsibilities of other partners in the Community Planning Partnership and which the Partnership has agreed should be covered.
- Confirms that the SOA will run on a three year rolling basis, while being subject to annual reviews.
- Confirms that the SOA sits within the Council's, public bodies' and Scottish Government's duties in relation to Community Planning, Best Value, equalities and sustainable development.
- Explains how stakeholders and the community have been engaged in development of the SOA..

6.3 Area Profile

An integrated profile of the social, economic and environmental conditions of the area is the basis of the SOA. The Area Profile forms the evidence base for identifying past trends and future challenges and opportunities, and then the strategic local priorities which will be expressed as local outcomes.

- The Area Profile should review and draw upon the material contained in the Community Plan, the corporate and service plans of the local partners and the first phase SOA.
- The Area Profile should provide an analysis of past and projected trends in local conditions, including long term trends. It should draw on information available for 2007-08 and on all the indicators which are relevant, robust and measurable, including locally relevant National Indicators.
- The Area Profile should also identify the qualitative information which evidences the views of local communities and the third and business sectors, including survey data and political priorities.

- On the basis of the evidence the Area Profile should identify the strategic local priorities, both for improved and maintained conditions.
- The strategic local priorities should be expressed as a meaningful and manageable number of local outcomes.
- The local outcomes should be cross referred in a table to the relevant National Outcomes, and to Purpose Targets if these are relevant.

6.4 Outcomes and Commitments – the SOA template (see section 7)

The SOA template should be completed, in whole or in part, for each of the 15 National Outcomes. A brief summary of relevant local conditions, drawn from the Area Profile, should be provided as the local context for each National Outcome – with a brief summary of progress and achievements in 2008-09. The Area Profile, with its identification of strategic local priorities, is the evidence base for determining the local relevance of the National Outcome.

Where the National Outcome is relevant to strategic local priorities, as is usually the case, the template should:

- Identify the local outcome/s now proposed for agreement with the Scottish Government.
- Identify the indicator/s by which the local outcome/s will be tracked, including any locally relevant National Indicator/s and relevant indicators from the Menu of Local Outcome Indicators.
- Establish the baseline condition/s for the indicator/s.
- Propose 'progress' targets for the indicator/s for 2010-11, recognising that circumstances will change from year to year and be accounted for in the annual review process for the SOA.
- Propose 'end' targets, where appropriate, by which achievement of the local outcome/s can be demonstrated.
- Provide a brief but clear line of sight to relevant plans and activities which lie 'below the waterline' and clearly support delivery of the local outcome/s. These can include national frameworks of outcomes and indicators for specific issues. Use of hyperlinks would be helpful.
- If necessary, identify any new and essential 'ask' having to be made by the Community Planning Partnership to the Scottish Government, which is critical to the overall delivery of the local outcome/s. This would be separate from the template and should be accompanied by a clear demonstration of need.

6.5 Governance

- Corporate and joint governance arrangements and scrutiny arrangements of the Council and Community Planning partners.
- Outlines the responsibilities and accountabilities of Scottish Government, the Council, the statutory Community Planning partners and, at a minimum, those other public bodies in the Community Planning Partnership, for the successful delivery of the SOA.

Further support on good practice on governance and accountability for SOAs, for use by Community Planning Partnerships, will be provided by the High Level Steering Group in December 2008.

6.6 Ongoing Development of the SOA

- Explains the arrangements for developing future iterations of the SOA.
- Outlines arrangements for securing and refreshing community and partners' ownership of the SOA.
- Outlines mechanisms for accommodating change and enabling future improvement and development of the SOA.

6.7 Performance Management

Briefly confirms that robust performance management arrangements will be in place for the delivery of agreed outcomes, with a very clear line of sight to supporting material 'below the waterline' - use of hyperlinks would be helpful here. Examples of such arrangements include:

- Relevant corporate and service plans.
- Self-assessment and collective assessment arrangements.
- Individual and shared performance management arrangements.
- The risk assumptions and risk management arrangements underpinning delivery of the SOA.

Further support on the alignment of performance management approaches for Community Planning Partnerships will be provided by the High Level Steering Group.

6.8 Reporting

Confirms that the prime focus of reporting is to communities and explains how the Council, on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership, will report and review progress:

- through an annual review process by which progress and changing circumstances can be considered;
- through Public Performance Reporting which both reports to communities on the delivery of outcomes within the local area and to the Scottish Government on the local contribution toward relevant National Outcomes and Purpose Targets; and

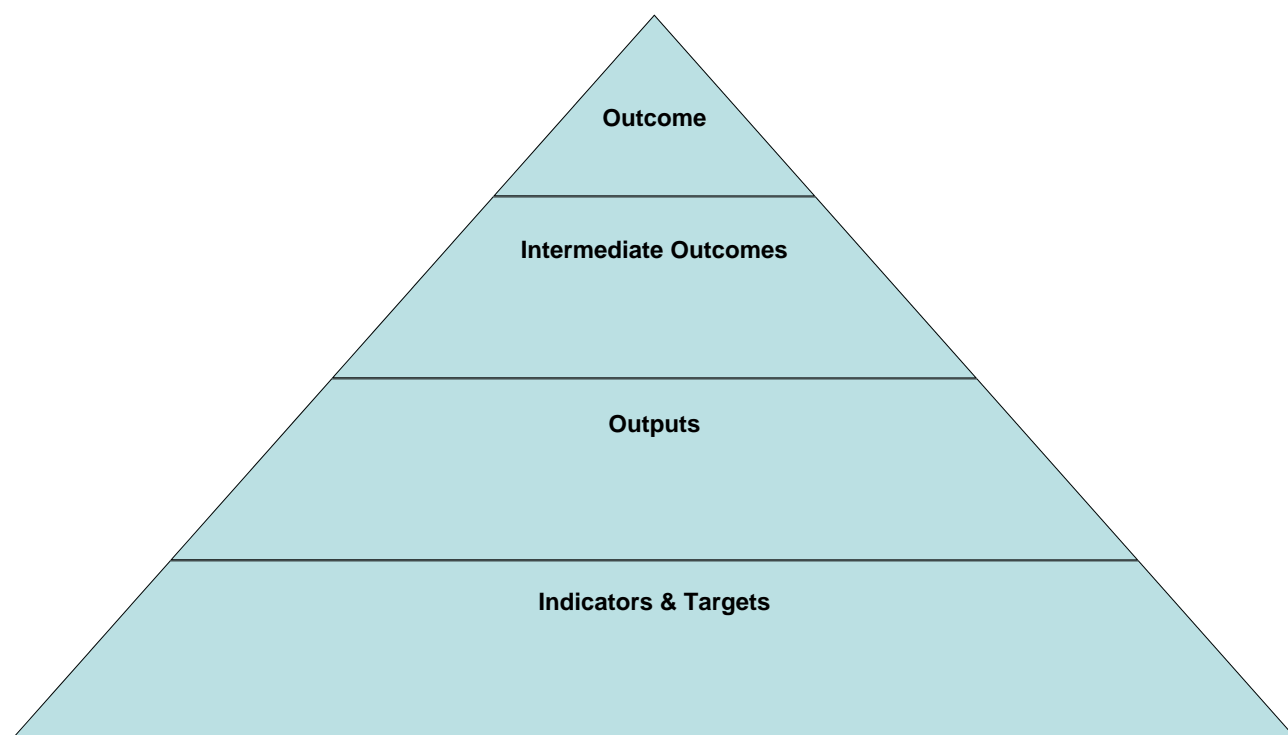
Further advice on the annual September report for Community Planning Partnerships will be provided by the High Level Steering Group in December 2008.

7. SOA Template

This template follows from the strategic local priorities evidenced in the Area Profile. It should be used for each National Outcome, to demonstrate its local relevance in relation to the Area Profile, showing whether and how the National Outcome is addressed through a local outcome/s.

National Outcome -				
Local context – briefly summarising evidence from the Area Profile; demonstrating the local relevance of this National Outcome; and summarising progress and achievements in 2008-09 :				
N.B. Links to other relevant National Outcomes may also be noted in this section.				
Local Outcome/s	Indicator/s <i>(noting frequency / type / source)</i>	Baseline at 2006-07	'Progress' target/s to 2010-11	'End' target/s & timescale/s
Brief links to relevant plans or other commitments of the local partners to support delivery of these outcome/s (with hyperlinks if possible)				

Key Terms



Term	Definition			
Outcome	<p>An outcome is the impact, or consequences for the community, of the activities of organisations or services over a number of years. Outcomes are the result of what you do, or what you enable communities to do for themselves, rather than descriptions of the activities or services you provide.</p> <p>Outcomes should focus on improvements in the quality of life and opportunities for citizens and communities, and improvements in the supporting social, economic and environmental conditions. Outcomes should reflect your strategic local priorities and their supporting evidence base in your Area Profile. <i>For example, 'our citizens live longer and healthier lives'.</i></p>			
Intermediate Outcome	<p>Intermediate outcomes measure the benefits and changes for citizens and communities resulting from the activities of an organisation or service over the medium term. Achievement of intermediate outcomes would be expected to lead to the achievement of an outcome in the long term. For example:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Outcome</u> Our citizens live longer and healthier lives</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;"> <p>←</p> <p>←</p> <p>←</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Potential Intermediate Outcomes</u> Fewer adults smoking More people with more active lifestyles Reduced alcohol consumption</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><u>Outcome</u> Our citizens live longer and healthier lives</p>	<p>←</p> <p>←</p> <p>←</p>	<p><u>Potential Intermediate Outcomes</u> Fewer adults smoking More people with more active lifestyles Reduced alcohol consumption</p>
<p><u>Outcome</u> Our citizens live longer and healthier lives</p>	<p>←</p> <p>←</p> <p>←</p>	<p><u>Potential Intermediate Outcomes</u> Fewer adults smoking More people with more active lifestyles Reduced alcohol consumption</p>		
<p><i>NB as both the outcomes and intermediate outcomes in your SOA are local outcomes there is no need to separate them in your completed SOA templates.</i></p>				

WHEN CALLING PLEASE ASK FOR: Karen Macrae 0131 474 9203

Term	Definition
	Outputs describe what an organisation or service actually gets done – i.e. what it produces or delivers. Outputs should clearly contribute to the achievement of an outcome. Examples of outputs include: ‘the number of people attending smoking cessation classes’; ‘the number of people undertaking physical activity’; and ‘reported levels of alcohol consumption’.
Indicator	An indicator is a measure of performance against the planned outcome or against an output which clearly contributes to the planned outcome. An outcome may have more than one indicator. Version 2 of the Menu of Local Outcome Indicators provides examples of indicators which Community Planning Partnerships may wish to use in their SOAs to measure progress against outcomes.

Target	<p>Indicators on their own don’t drive improvement - they simply measure performance. Targets are therefore used to challenge organisations and services to perform better and to make improvements. A target is a commitment to the achievement of a better quality or level of outcome or intermediate outcome over a specified time frame.</p> <p>When setting targets, it is not enough to just consider <u>whether</u> performance can be improved, but <u>how</u>. It is also important to gather baseline information prior to setting a target, so that an organisation or service can undertake trend analysis of past performance, to identify changes in direction in performance. This will provide the organisation or service with an understanding of how they have performed against an outcome over several years and it will enable them to set challenging, but realistic targets. A fully developed target should include a statement about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A baseline position: a numeric statement about what the most recent position is (e.g. 30% of the adult population smoked in 2006-07) • A declaration of improvement: a statement about what it is the Community Planning Partnership is trying to achieve in relation to the baseline (e.g. reduce the percentage of the adult population who smoke to 20%). This statement should be informed by a record of past performance. • A target position: a final statement of what will be achieved and by when the target will be achieved (e.g. reduce the percentage of the adult population who smoke to 20% by 2015). <p>The example above is an end target for an intermediate outcome, i.e. a commitment to demonstrate the full achievement of the intermediate outcome within a specified timescale. End targets should strike an appropriate balance between ambition and realism, based on the evidence of past and projected trends in performance and relevant conditions.</p> <p>Within a SOA, progress targets should be set for outcomes for 2010-11 (initially), to enable Community Planning Partnerships to monitor progress over the three year rolling duration of the SOA. An example of a progress target for the end target above would be ‘reduce the percentage of the adult population who smoke to 25% by 2010-11).</p>
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ANNEX 2

The National Performance Framework

Scottish Government's Purpose: to focus the Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth

Purpose Targets

Indicator	Target
GDP Growth	To raise the growth rate to the UK level by 2011 To match the growth rate of small independent EU countries by 2017
Productivity	To rank in the top quartile for productivity amongst our key trading partners of the OECD by 2017
Population Growth	To match average European (EU15) population growth over the period from 2007 to 2017, supported by increased healthy life expectancy in Scotland over this period
Solidarity	To increase overall income and the proportion of income earned by the three lowest three income deciles as a group by 2017
Cohesion	To narrow the gap in participation between Scotland's best and worst performing regions by 2017
Participation	To maintain our position on labour market participation as the top performing country in the UK and to close the gap with the top 5 OECD economies by 2017
Sustainability	To reduce emissions over the period to 2011. To reduce emissions by 80% by 2050.

National Outcomes

1. We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.
2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.
3. We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.
4. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
6. We live longer, healthier lives.
7. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.
8. We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.
9. We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.
10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
11. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
12. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.
13. We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.
14. We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.

15. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

National Indicators and Targets

Indicator 1: At least halve the gap in total research and development spending compared with EU average by 2011
Indicator 2: Increase the business start-up rate
Indicator 3: Grow exports at a faster average rate than GDP
Indicator 4: Reduce the proportion of driver journeys delayed due to traffic congestion
Indicator 5: Increase the percentage of Scottish domiciled graduates from Scottish Higher Education Institutions in positive destinations
Indicator 6: Improve knowledge transfer from research activity in universities
Indicator 7: Increase the proportion of school leavers (from Scottish publicly funded schools) in positive and sustained destinations (FE, HE, employment or training)
Indicator 8: Increase the proportion of schools receiving positive inspection reports
Indicator 9: Increase the overall proportion of area child protection committees receiving positive inspection reports
Indicator 10: Decrease the proportion of individuals living in poverty
Indicator 11: 60% of school children in primary 1 will have no signs of dental disease by 2010
Indicator 12: Increase the proportion of pre-school centres receiving positive inspection reports
Indicator 13: Increase the social economy turnover
Indicator 14: Reduce the rate of increase in the proportion of children with their Body Mass Index outwith a healthy range by 2018
Indicator 15: Increase the average score of adults on the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale by 2011
Indicator 16: Increase healthy life expectancy at birth in the most deprived areas
Indicator 17: Reduce the percentage of the adult population who smoke to 22% by 2010
Indicator 18: Reduce alcohol related hospital admissions by 2011
Indicator 19: Achieve annual milestones for reducing inpatient or day case waiting times culminating in the delivery of an 18 week referral to treatment time from December 2011
Indicator 20: Reduce proportion of people aged 65 and over admitted as emergency inpatients 2 or more times in a single year
Indicator 21: Reduce mortality from coronary heart disease among the under 75s in deprived areas
Indicator 22: All unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation by 2012
Indicator 23: Reduce overall reconviction rates by 2 percentage points by 2011
Indicator 24: Reduce overall crime victimisation rates by 2 percentage points by 2011
Indicator 25: Increase the percentage of criminal cases dealt with within 26 weeks by 3 percentage points by 2011

Indicator 26: Increase the percentage of people aged 65 and over with high levels of care needs who are cared for at home
Indicator 27: Increase the rate of new house building
Indicator 28: Increase the percentage of adults who rate their neighbourhood as a good place to live
Indicator 29: Decrease the estimated number of problem drug users in Scotland by 2011
Indicator 30: Reduce number of working age people with severe literacy and numeracy problems
Indicator 31: Increase positive public perception of the general crime rate in local area
Indicator 32: Reduce overall ecological footprint
Indicator 33: Increase to 95% the proportion of protected nature sites in favourable condition
Indicator 34: Improve the state of Scotland's Historic Buildings, monuments and environment
Indicator 35: Biodiversity: increase the index of abundance of terrestrial breeding birds
Indicator 36: Increase the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport
Indicator 37: Increase the proportion of adults making one or more visits to the outdoors per week
Indicator 38: 50% of electricity generated in Scotland to come from renewable sources by 2020 (interim target of 31% by 2011)
Indicator 39: Reduce to 1.32 million tonnes waste sent to landfill by 2010
Indicator 40: Increase to 70% key commercial fish stocks at full reproductive capacity and harvested sustainably by 2015
Indicator 41: Improve people's perceptions, attitudes and awareness of Scotland's reputation
Indicator 42: Improve public sector efficiency through the generation of 2% cash releasing efficiency savings per annum
Indicator 43: Improve people's perceptions of the quality of public services delivered
Indicator 44: Improve the quality of healthcare experience
Indicator 45: Reduce the number of Scottish public bodies by 25% by 2011

From the Chief Executive, Rory Mair



16 October 2008

Our Ref:

To : Chief Executives

Dear Colleague,

'ASKS' CONTAINED IN SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS

At its last meeting, the High Level Group on Single Outcome Agreements considered a report summarising the broad categories of 'asks' in the Single Outcome Agreements for 2008 and considered how best to deal with them. That report was copied to you by the Improvement Service on 22 September. This was followed up at the regular bi-monthly meeting between COSLA's Presidential team and the Scottish Government represented by John Swinney and Fiona Hyslop.

The agreed approach is as follows.

- **Strategic Asks**

Arrangements are in place for pursuing the small number of asks which are common across Councils and of strategic importance, requiring a national response from the Scottish Government. The mechanism for this is the bi-monthly political meeting and its officer group in the form of the SOA High Level Group.

- **Local Asks**

These are requests for locally distinct action from the Scottish Government. 'Asks' which are for individual Councils only will be taken up by the appropriate Scottish Government Director in their liaison role with Councils over their SOAs.

- **Policy Asks**

These are 'asks' in relation to issues where COSLA and the Scottish Government already have arrangements for their joint consideration at national level, for example, health inequalities.

- **Funding Asks**

'Asks' of a financial nature do not have a route for being progressed insofar as they seek additional resources when the local government settlement has already been agreed.

Your Scottish Government Director will advise you of the Scottish Government's response to, or handling of, each of the 'asks' in your first SOA. You will already be aware that the SOA High Level Group is concerned to promote a strategic focus for CPP SOAs for 2009-10 onward. It is therefore likely that any new 'asks' will be expected to demonstrate and evidence that they are critical to the overall delivery of the SOA.

I hope this information on the agreed approach is helpful. I'm happy to discuss this further and in addition there is a meeting planned for the High Level Group by the end of October so I'm very happy to provide any feedback which Councils may have.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Lindsay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Barbara Lindsay
Strategic Director