NATIONAL COMMUNITY PLANNING SELF-ASSESSMENT

National Community Planning Self-Assessment

Overview Report 2024

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1. Introduction

Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) play a leading role in delivering improved outcomes for the communities they serve. To support partnerships to critically review their 'fitness for purpose' in achieving shared outcomes, the Improvement Service proposed a new national self-assessment to be held every two years. An invite was sent to all 32 CPPs to participate, with 20 agreeing to participate in the 2024 self-assessment. A list of participating CPPs can be found in Appendix 2.

This self-assessment focussed on the strategic Board level of CPPs and is based on the well-established Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) Checklist Approach. Since 2016, more than half of CPPs have successfully undertaken a self-assessment using this approach. However, this is the first time that this approach has been applied across Scotland to provide a national overview of CPP Board activity that is working well and areas where improvements could be made across community planning in Scotland.

The key aim of self-assessment at this level is to support the Board of the CPP to ensure that the following areas of the self-assessment checklist are fit for purpose to achieve the outcomes of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

1. Shared Leadership

2. Governance and Accountability

3. Community – Needs and Empowerment

4. Effective Use of Joint Resources

5. Reporting of Performance Management and Outcomes

6. How the CPP is Making an Impact

The self-assessment checklist that CPP Board members were asked to complete acts as a 'can opener' for identifying areas of strength across the partnership and also potential areas for improvement, which can then be developed into an improvement plan for individual CPPs moving forward.

The checklist was issued as an electronic survey to all strategic Board members of the 20 participating CPPs across Scotland, with over 200 responses received.

1.1 About this Report

This national report presents the high-level self-assessment findings from across the 20 participating CPPs, providing an overview of CPP Board strengths and areas for improvement for partnerships across the six sections of the checklist. It is hoped that this report will not only be useful in itself as an indication of performance of CPPs across Scotland, but for CPPs themselves, to be able to judge their own strengths and areas for improvement against the national picture.

Each participating CPP will also receive their own individual Checklist Report which can be used to develop an improvement plan at a local level with an offer of facilitated support by the Improvement Service for those CPP Boards who request it. For those CPPs that request this support, they will be required to achieve at least a 50% response rate to the checklist from Board members to ensure a sufficient evidence base for the session.

2. Overview of Findings

2.1 Introduction

As this is the first of the National CPP self-assessments, the data in this report will provide a baseline upon which future National CPP self-assessments can be compared every two years. It is worth noting that this is the first time that such information about self-assessment findings of CPPs has been gathered, and it is hoped that this will provide not only CPPs, but a range of other stakeholders an insight into how CPP Boards at the strategic level operate across areas such as leadership, governance, etc.

This report will firstly provide an overview of the main findings from the checklist, with the remaining sections providing a deeper dive into each of the six themes noted in the introduction. As in all self-assessments, this is an opportunity for participants to consider what has been working well. As such, we will layout the areas that CPP Board members have identified where most progress has been made. Following this report, to consolidate this progress by CPPs, further work will be undertaken by the Improvement Service to identify examples of good practice in CPPs across Scotland, in order to share where significant progress and innovative work has been undertaken.

Self-assessment by its very nature is an opportunity to have an open and honest debate to identify areas where improvements can be made. As such, this self-assessment has asked CPP Board members across Scotland to provide their experience and understanding across a number of key areas for their CPP Boards. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those Board members who engaged with this process and contributed their insights to the process and this report.

2.2 Overall Results for Checklist

As we can see from chart 1 below, 65% of CPP Board members either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statements in the checklist. As such, with nearly 2/3rds of responses agreeing or strongly agreeing, it is clear that this initial National CPP self-assessment has much to be positive about. Given the wide range of work that CPPs across Scotland undertake to reduce inequalities within their communities, in addition to the current financial constraints and of course the recent pandemic, it is very encouraging that CPP Board members have responded so positively about the work of their CPPs in a number of key areas.

Nevertheless, nearly a fifth of CPP Board members either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' in a number of areas and we will examine these in some detail within the report. It is also worth noting that 16% of CPP Board members responded 'Don't Know' across a number of statements. Where this figure reaches a significant level in a particular area, we will look to provide further explanation where possible.

Chart 1 – Overall Collated Figures from 6 Sections of the Checklist
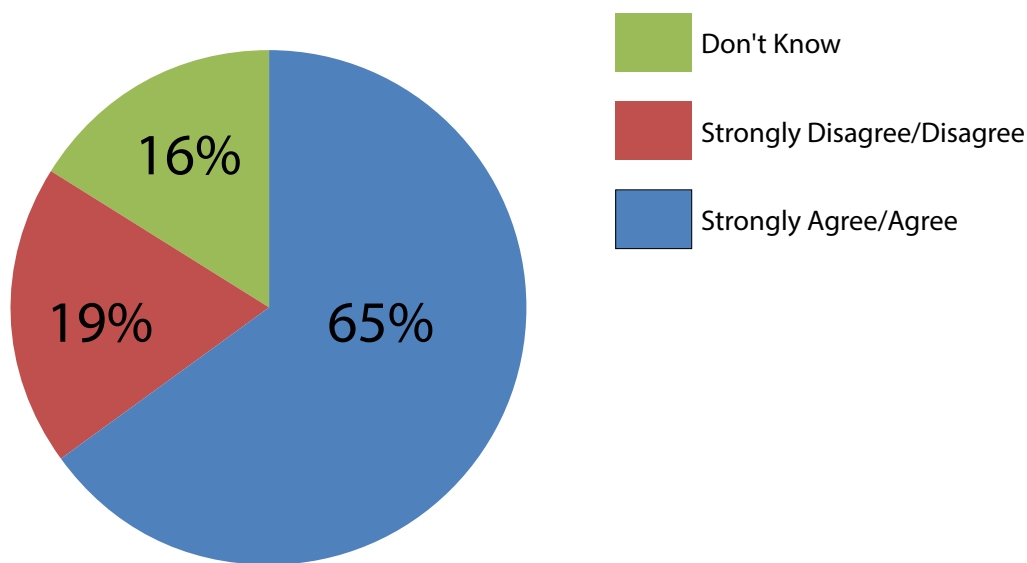
2.3 Individual Section Results

The table below summarises CPP Board member responses by each of the six checklist sections. As we can see, the most positive responses were provided in the Shared Leadership section, where over ¾ of respondents either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statements. Given the importance of shared leadership in terms of supporting partnership working across a number of organisations this is a very positive response for community planning.

Similarly, *Community Needs and Empowerment* also had very positive responses, which is very promising, given that much of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 focussed upon areas such as community capacity building and the involvement of individuals, seldom heard groups and communities in shaping the Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs).

In fact, only one section, that is *Effective Use of Joint Resources* scored under 50% in terms of 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' statements. For those involved in

community planning this is perhaps not surprising and based upon comments within the checklist is in large part explained by the challenging financial conditions that community planning partners are experiencing currently.

However, it is very encouraging to note that CPP Board members positively responded to the *How the CPP is Making an Impact* section. This indicates that many Board members agree that working in partnership within the CPP structure is yielding more benefits than working individually.

Nevertheless, two of the sections below, *Effective Use of Joint Resources* and *Governance and Accountability*, found that over a fifth of CPP Board members 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with statements in these areas. We will consider reasons for this within the individual sections later in the report.

Table 1 - Collated Figures for Individual Sections

	Agree/Strongly Agree	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Shared Leadership	76%	17%	7%
Governance and Accountability	64%	22%	14%
Community – Needs and Empowerment	72%	14%	14%
Effective Use of Joint Resources	49%	25%	26%
Reporting of Performance Management and Outcomes	65%	18%	17%
How the CPP is Making an Impact	59%	18%	23%

2.4 Individual Statements

Most Positive Responses to Statements

As we have noted, the most positive responses to statements by CPP Board members were in the *Shared Leadership* section. However, when we examine table 2 below, we can see that the top four most positive statements were drawn from across a number of sections. Ranked most positive with 92% either 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing', was statement 19, relating to Board members having a good understanding of the profile of their area. This strongly reflects that Board members are utilising datasets to understand their communities better, such as, Community Planning Outcomes Profile (CPOP, Improvement Service), Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPho), etc.

The second most positive statement (89% agree/strongly agree) is that partners demonstrate a commitment to the strategic vision of the partnership. Again, a very encouraging response reflecting how CPP Board members are buying into the collaborative vision to jointly achieve priorities identified within their localities. Similarly, a strong response in the 3rd highest ranked statement (87% agree/ strongly agree) reflecting that partnerships operate in a spirit of transparency and trust. These are important traits to encourage within the partnership, as the data shows that those CPP Board members who 'strongly agree' with this statement also score very positively with statement 39, *By working together, the partnership has delivered improvements which could not have been delivered by individual organisations*. Those Board members who disagreed with the statement about vision tended to score poorly in statement 39.

Finally, the 4th ranked most positive statement notes that agreed priorities in the LOIP reflect those identified in data analysis and community engagement.

Table 2 - Most Positive Individual Statements

	Statement	Checklist Section	Percentage of Agreement
1st	19 - The partnership has a good understanding of the profile of its area, including information relating to inequalities (eg. education, income, health) and protected characteristics (eg. age, race, sex)	Community – Needs and Empowerment	92% Agree
2nd	10 - Partners demonstrate a commitment to the vision and strategic direction of the partnership.	Governance and Accountability	89% Agree
3rd	5 - The partnership operates in a spirit of transparency, openness and trust.	Shared Leadership	87% Agree
4th	30 - Agreed priorities and outcomes in the LOIP reflect the key challenges of the area identified through the partnership's data analysis and community engagement activity.	Reporting of Performance Management and Outcomes	87% Agree

Lowest Ranked Statements

We will now examine the four lowest ranked statements across all 43 statements. While each CPP will have access to their own findings within their individual checklist reports, it is nevertheless interesting to understand some of the lowest scored statements and potential key areas for improvement as identified by CPP Board members at a national level. As we can see from the table below, the lowest ranked statement with 41% of CPP Board members either 'disagreeing' or 'strongly disagreeing' was about having a Development Programme in place to improve the skills of its members.

Given this has been raised as an issue for a number of CPPs across Scotland, it may be that a national solution could be provided across all 32 CPPs. The best practice work following this report may be very useful to identify the CPPs who have already successfully implemented such a Development Programme, which could then be shared with those CPPs needing support in this area, saving CPPs time and resources.

The second lowest ranked statement was in relation to partners contributing funds to the partnership (41% disagreeing/ strongly disagreeing). Given the challenging financial climate this is clearly a difficult area for Board members, and it is worth noting that the findings in this report highlight that other resources are contributed by partners to support the work of the CPP. As noted later in the report, facilitated self-assessments with Boards, offered to CPPs by the Improvement Service at no charge, may offer opportunities for candid discussions around such difficult topics and raise awareness about the range of financial contributions or resource-sharing arrangements across all partners.

The third ranked lowest statement is related to induction, with 40% disagreeing. Between induction and Development Programmes, these suggest that there may be demand by CPP Board members to get further support regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to community planning. It is worth noting that the Scottish Community Planning Network (SCPN) is working on a CPP induction pack that can be included into local inductions.

Finally, the fourth lowest ranked statement highlights a commonly raised issue during CPP self-assessments, that is, that all partners are making significant contributions to the partnership's work. In this case, over a third of CPP Board members disagreed with this statement. Much of the possible resolution to this issue may lie in some of what we have raised above, that is ensuring that new Board members have a suitable induction process and ongoing Development Programme that ensure they are clear about their roles, duties and responsibilities as a partner. Such induction and training would look to emphasise

and encourage CPP Board members to 'make significant contributions to the partnership's work' by bringing their experience to Board meetings and look to align the work of their organisation in the work of the Partnership wherever possible.

Table 3 – Lowest Ranked Individual Statements

	Statement	Checklist Section	Percentage of Disagreement
1st	15 - The partnership has an ongoing Development Programme to improve the skills and knowledge of its members.	Governance and Accountability	41% Disagree
2nd	24 - Partners contribute funds as the Partnership considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP.	Effective Use of Joint Resources	41% Disagree
3rd	14 - The Partnership has an effective induction in place for new Board members.	Governance and Accountability	40% Disagree
4th	2 - All partners provide leadership and make significant contributions to the partnership's work.	Shared Leadership	36% Disagree

2.5 Additional Information

It is worth noting that, in addition to the main findings noted above, the analysis of the National CPP Checklist examined the data by a number of other criteria, such as:

- Length of time CPP Board Members had sat on their Boards;

- CPP Board Members that represent those statutory partners with additional governance duties under s.13 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015;

- Where CPPs were located across Scotland;

- How many partners sat on the Board.

Where any points of interest emerged from these criteria they have been included throughout this report in the relevant sections. However, the following general points of interest in relation to these criteria can be made. In terms of the checklist findings when analysed by the length of time CPP Board members had been on the Board, we found that respondents who have been a board member for over 3 years are generally more positive. In addition, those Board members who had sat on the Board for less than a year tended to have much higher levels of 'don't know' responses than Board members who have sat on the Board between one and three years and over three years. As noted above, more systematic induction in place across CPPs in Scotland would serve to raise awareness for new Board members.

When the checklist is analysed by those CPP Board members who represent statutory partners with additional governance duties the responses tended to be more positive than other partners. However, it was notable that statutory partners with additional governance duties had higher levels of 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' around statement 24 - P*artners contribute funds as the partnership considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP* (14.6% 'strongly disagree' and 32.3% 'disagree' compared to 9.3% 'strongly disagree' and 18.5% 'disagree' for other partners). As noted later in the report, further discussion in CPPs, perhaps through approaches such as development days, facilitated self-assessments, etc, may assist in teasing out difficult issues such as financial contributions or resource-sharing arrangements across partners.

The National CPP self-assessment has also provided the opportunity to compare the sizes of CPP Boards across Scotland. We are often asked when facilitating CPP sessions how the size of one CPP Board compares to others across Scotland. As such, as a result of this analysis we can now say that the average

number of CPP Board members across the 20 CPPs who engaged in the self-assessment is 22. This ranges from 33 members, the largest number of CPP Board members on a Board to the smallest Board with 11 members. It is also worth noting that the average number of partners represented on a CPP Board is 15 (with the lowest having 6 partners and the highest 22). The data does not appear to show any difference in terms of the size of the Board and the responses to statements in the checklist. Also, the findings of the checklist were analysed by location, that grouped CPPs into North, South, East and West. However, there was no discernible difference in response to statements by location.

In terms of number of CPP Board meetings per year, the majority of CPPs have 4 meetings per year. In addition, a small number of CPP Boards have Development Days and an annual conference. We can also say that currently some 66% of Boards are chaired by elected members, 22% chaired by the NHS and the remaining 12% chaired by other partners (Chief Executives and rotating between Police Scotland/ Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the Council).

3. Shared Leadership

Within CPPs, a number of senior partners from a number of organisations have been tasked with working together in partnership in order to achieve collectively agreed priorities for their areas. Given the emphasis upon effective partnership working within CPPs, it is particularly important that they nurture a collective approach to shared leadership to achieve more as a group than they could hope to do individually. In this section, CPP Board members were asked to reflect upon how their CPP operated in terms of shared leadership.

As we can see from the Chart 2 below, CPP Board members either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with 76% of all the statements in this section. When compared to the overall figures across all statements in chart 1 (65% agree/ strongly agree), these figures in Shared Leadership are more positive. In fact, at 76%, the responses to the Shared Leadership statements are the most positive across all of the checklist's six sections. The positive response to the statements in this section is a strong indicator of how well the majority of CPP Board members perceive they are working together to achieve the aims of the CPP.

Chart 2 - Shared Leadership
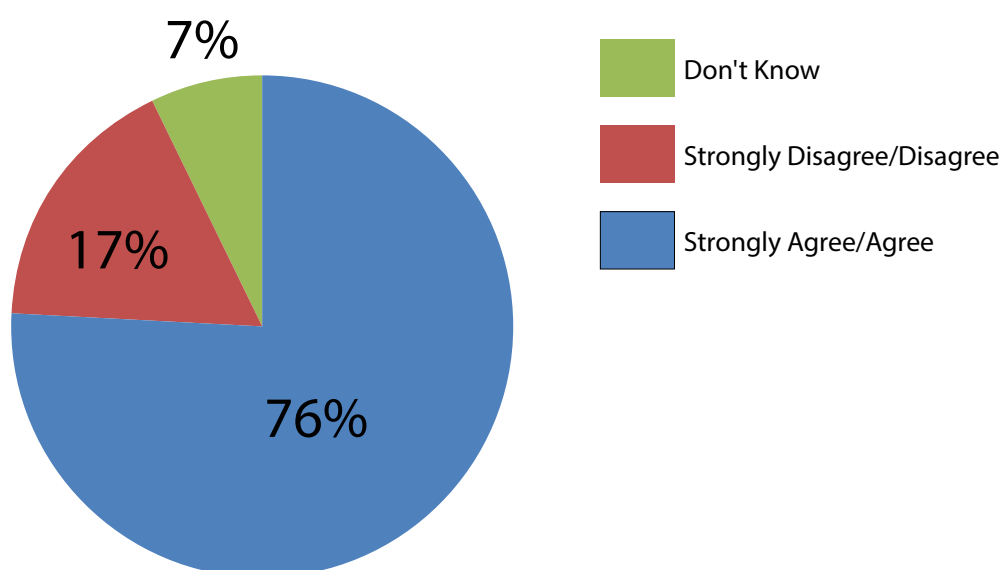
3.1 Strengths

The most positive of the statements in this section was statement 5: The partnership operates in a spirit of transparency, openness and trust. This statement scored 87% of CPP Board members either agreeing or strongly agreeing (see table 4 below). In fact, this was the 3rd highest ranked of all of the 43 statements in the checklist. It is also worth noting that statement 1, *The partnership has strong and effective leadership*, scored 86% of CPP Board members agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Table 4

5. The partnership operates in a spirit of transparency, openness and trust.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		34.31%
2	Agree		52.94%
3	Disagree		7.35%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.00%
5	Don't Know		5.39%

Clearly, there is much to be positive about in terms of CPP views around leadership. A recurring theme in the written responses is the emphasis on shared leadership and collaborative decision-making among partners. Various mechanisms, such as rotating chairs, co-chairing sub-groups, and strategic leadership involving diverse stakeholders, demonstrate efforts to distribute responsibility and foster joint ownership of initiatives.

It was also noted that the partnership structure encourages open communication, frequent meetings, and a culture of inclusion. Evidence of joint action planning, alignment of resources, and cross-sector collaboration highlights an active effort to ensure participation across statutory and non-statutory partners, as well as local communities.

The following table shows nearly 70% of CPP Board members agree or strongly agree that the partnership is striving to facilitate the shift to early intervention and prevention.

Table 5

8. The partnership is striving to facilitate the shift to early intervention and prevention for the outcomes set out in the LOIP.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		20.97%
2	Agree		48.92%
3	Disagree		21.51%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.00%
5	Don't Know		8.60%

Comments suggested that many initiatives prioritise early intervention, particularly in areas such as child welfare, poverty alleviation, and public health. This preventive approach aligns with strategic goals to address root causes of societal issues and improve long-term outcomes, often underpinned by strong data analysis and evidence-based planning. However, as can be seen in Appendix 1, statement 42 has just over a fifth of CPP Board members disagreeing that CPPs can evidence the desired shift to early intervention and prevention.

In terms of shared leadership challenges persist, such as inconsistent contributions from some partners and the need for stronger follow-through on collaborative initiatives. In addition, there are areas where partners still view leadership as too reliant on the local authority.

3.1b Impact of Effective Leadership on Outcomes

The importance of strong and effective leadership is clearly illustrated in the chart below. Here we can see that those CPP Board members who 'strongly agreed' and 'agreed' that the partnership has strong and effective leadership also scored very positively in terms of the partnership demonstrating how effective it has been in delivering real outcomes and impact in their areas. Conversely, those CPP Board members who 'strongly disagreed' or 'disagreed' that their partnership had strong and effective leadership, scored very poorly in terms of their partnership delivering outcomes and impact. This a powerful indication of the importance of strong and effective leadership in CPPs, as a precondition to delivering outcomes and impact much more effectively for local communities.

Chart 3 Impact of Effective Leadership on Outcomes
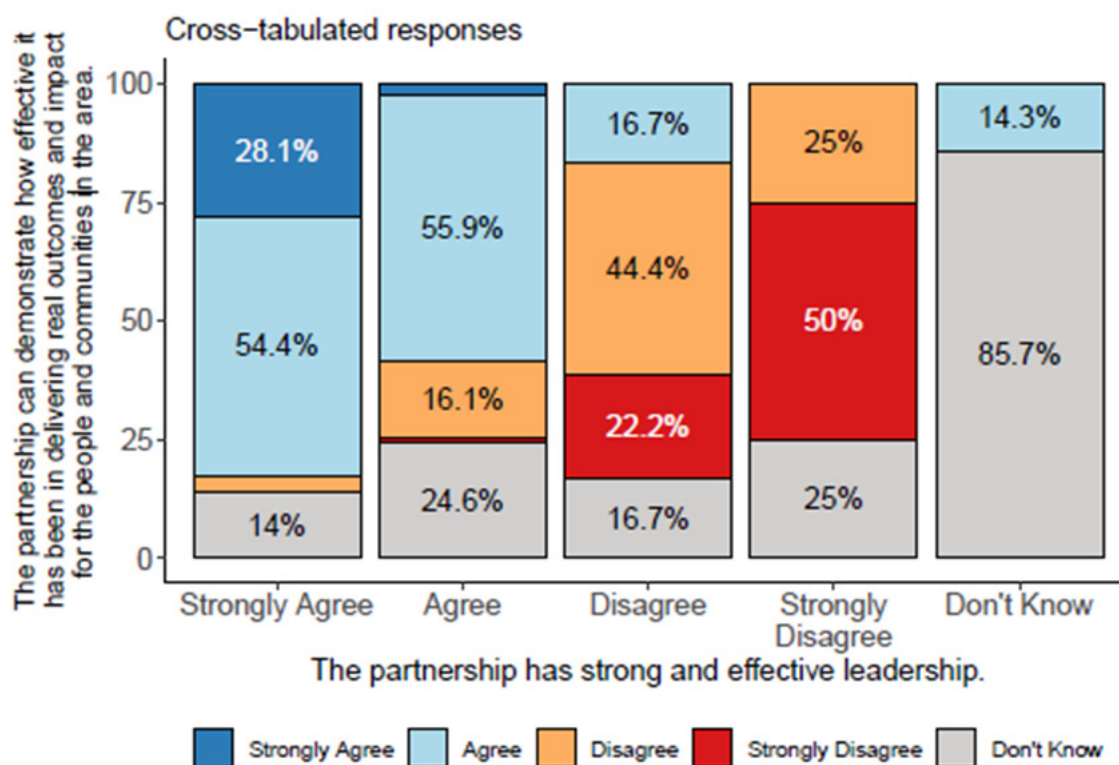
3.2 Areas for Improvement

While there is much in the Shared Leadership section from the Likert[1] scales and the written text that is positive, it is worth noting that CPP Board members have been asked, as part of the national self-assessment, to identify areas where they feel there is scope for improvement.

The main focus for improvement about leadership identified by CPP Board members was in relation to statement 2, *All partners provide leadership and make significant contributions to the partnership's work.*

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1   A Likert Scale is a type of rating scale that measures how participants feel and levels of agreement.

Table 6

2. All partners provide leadership and make significant contributions to the partnership's work.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	**Strongly Agree**		13.30%
2	**Agree**		45.74%
3	**Disagree**		32.98%
4	**Strongly Disagree**		2.66%
5	**Don't Know**		5.32%

As we can see, some 36% of CPP Board members either disagreed or strongly disagreed in this respect. A number of comments highlighted significant concerns about the imbalance of leadership responsibilities, with local councils seen as leading in many cases while other partners are less actively engaged. This highlights the need for a more distributed leadership model that includes elected members, senior officers, third-sector representatives, and community groups. Improved participation, engagement, and shared responsibility across partners were also seen as essential for building a collective approach to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs).

As we noted in table 5, nearly 22% of CPP Board members disagreed that the CPP is facilitating the shift to early intervention and prevention. In fact, this is

the 2nd lowest ranked statement in the *Shared Leadership* section. Given the importance of this area, not least to ensure that future demand upon health and social care services do not stretch such services beyond their capacity, it will be a key part of the work following this report to highlight good practice in those CPPs that are performing strongly in this area.

More widely, CPP Board members noted the need for CPPs to move beyond discussions and focus more on strategic action, clear priorities, and measurable outcomes. There is a call for better monitoring and evaluation, improved accountability, and a more streamlined focus on fewer key priorities to maximise impact. Moreover, early intervention and prevention strategies could be prioritised despite financial challenges, with efforts to focus on clear, practical, achievable goals that align with community needs.

Given the current financial context, it is not surprising that there are repeated references to resource constraints, time pressures, and budget constraints as barriers to the success of shared initiatives. The lack of sufficient funding and consistent senior engagement across partner organisations has resulted in limited outcomes and delays in addressing strategic priorities.

4. Governance and Accountability

Appropriate governance and accountability are important elements in the success of community planning partnerships. They ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of local communities and aligned to the priorities and outcomes identified within LOIPs. Without strong governance and accountability in place, partnerships risk a lack of effective scrutiny, loss of trust and failure to meet the needs of communities.

In this section, Community Planning Board members were asked to reflect upon the governance and accountability arrangements in place within their CPP. As we can see from the chart below, respondents either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with 64% of all the statements in this section. As such, the majority of CPP Board members agree with statements that there are appropriate structures and processes in place, that there is a commitment to the strategic direction of the partnership and that effective arrangements are in place for scrutiny and accountability. However, 22% of respondents either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with a number of statements within this section which we will consider below, and this is the second highest level of disagreement across the six sections of the checklist.

Chart 4 - Governance and Accountability

Legend:
- Don't Know
- Strongly Disagree/Disagree
- Strongly Agree/Agree

Pie chart values: 14%, 22%, 64%
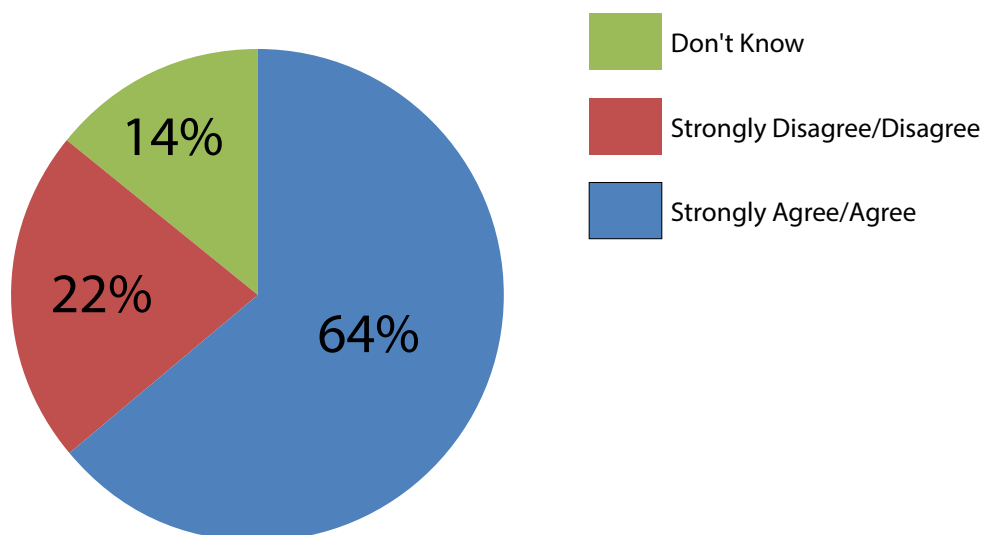
4.1 Strengths

Participants scored two statements within the Governance and Accountability section of the checklist as particularly strong. The highest, Statement 10 - *Partners demonstrate a commitment to the vision and strategic direction of the partnership,* had 89% of CPP Board members either agreeing or strongly agreeing (see table 7 below). This not only was the highest statement within this section of the checklist, but also the third highest scoring statement across all of the 43 statements within the checklist.

The majority of Board members stated that their CPP has a clear vision and plan, supported by strategic priorities which are outlined in the LOIP. This includes regular updates and reviews to ensure that the partnership remains focused on its goals. There is an ongoing effort to align actions and decisions with the vision, but some areas have experienced delays or outdated delivery plans that hinder full accountability and impact.

Table 7

10. Partners demonstrate a commitment to the vision and strategic direction of the partnership.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		25.73%
2	Agree		63.11%
3	Disagree		4.85%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.49%
5	Don't Know		5.83%

The second most positive statement within the Governance and Accountability section was Statement 9 - *The partnership has appropriate structures and processes to support shared effective decision making*, which had 79% of agreement from Board members. Most participants highlighted that clear governance structures are in place, with roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes clearly defined. This includes regular performance reporting and meetings for monitoring progress, ensuring accountability and transparency within the partnership.

4.2 Areas for Improvement

As mentioned previously, although there are many positives identified in the checklist findings in relation to Governance and Accountability, a number of challenges were also identified. There were two statements within this section in relation to Board members induction and ongoing development which were identified as issues for partnerships.

As can be seen in the table below, Statement 15 - *The partnership has an ongoing Development Programme to improve the skills and knowledge of its members*, had 41% of Board members either 'disagreeing' or 'strongly disagreeing'. This level of disagreement ranked Statement 15 as the most negative statement across all 43 statements in the self-assessment. This statement also had a significant number of 'Don't Know' responses from Board members at 31%. This can be explored in more detail at a local partnership level to understand the high levels of 'don't know'. This could simply be an awareness raising issue for Board members about a Development Programme, or it may be that there is not one in place.

Table 8

15. The partnership has an ongoing Development Programme to improve the skills and knowledge of its members.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		4.64%
2	Agree		23.18%
3	Disagree		36.42%
4	Strongly Disagree		4.64%
5	Don't Know		31.13%

Continuing on the theme of Board member development, the second most negative statement in this section was in relation to Board members induction. Statement 14 - T*he partnership has an effective induction in place for new Board members, had 40% of disagreement amongst Board members.* As noted in Table 3 in Section 2.4, statement 14 is ranked as the third most negative statement across the self-assessment.

It is clear from how participants scored these two statements and from their qualitative responses that these two areas could be improved. Board members noted the need for a better induction process for new members, as well as

ongoing training and development opportunities for Board members. Responses mentioned that members are unclear about the expectations and the role of the CPP, and there is a call for stronger support for the development of skills to enhance decision-making and leadership. Many believe that this would help improve the overall effectiveness of the partnership.

One final statement to highlight within this section is Statement 11 - *Members of the partnership offer constructive criticism and regularly challenge each other to achieve improved outcomes.* Almost a third of Board members disagreed with this statement with 28% either 'disagreeing' or strongly disagreeing'. Participants highlighted that some members may not feel as empowered to engage in meaningful challenge. Encouraging wider participation and ensuring that all voices feel heard and valued, could enhance the depth of discussions and lead to more constructive challenges. Also, while reporting structures are in place, there is a concern about over-reporting and the potential for discussion to be limited by this. Streamlining reports to focus on key issues and allowing more time for in-depth discussion of critical points could make meetings more efficient and encourage stronger challenge.

In addition to the Likert scale statements in this section, several responses highlighted the importance of involving a diverse range of stakeholders, including the community and other organisations, in decision-making processes. This would help ensure that the CPP is not overly reliant on the Council and that the voices of all relevant parties, including marginalised groups, are heard and acted upon. Strengthening community representation, especially through regular updates and meaningful engagement, is seen as vital for the success of the CPP's objectives.

5. Community - Needs and Empowerment

Community planning plays a critical role in understanding community needs by providing a forum that brings together stakeholders to collaboratively identify and address the challenges and priorities faced by communities. As set out in the Community Planning Guidance below, community participation and empowerment are crucial to the development and implementation of the LOIPs.

> *Part 1. What difference does the 2015 Act make to community planning?*
>
> *The participation of and with communities lies at the heart of community planning, and apply in the development, design and delivery of plans as well as in the review, revision and reporting. The 2015 Act and this guidance make it clear that consultation is no longer enough and that CPPs and community planning partners must act to secure the participation of communities throughout.[2]*

In this section, CPP Board members were asked to reflect upon how their CPP understands the needs of its communities and empowers them to support the delivery of LOIP outcomes. From the chart below, we can see that this section of the checklist scored positively by Board members with 72% of Board members either 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing' with the statements. In terms of disagreement, only 14% of respondents either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the statements, which is the least amount of disagreement across the six sections of the checklist. With the importance placed upon the participation of communities in community planning, it fits well with the aspirations of the Community Planning Guidance to see Board members score this section so positively.

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2   Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Part 2 Community Planning: *Guidance*

Chart 5 - Community - Needs and Empowerment

Legend:
- Don't Know (14%)
- Strongly Disagree/Disagree (14%)
- Strongly Agree/Agree (72%)
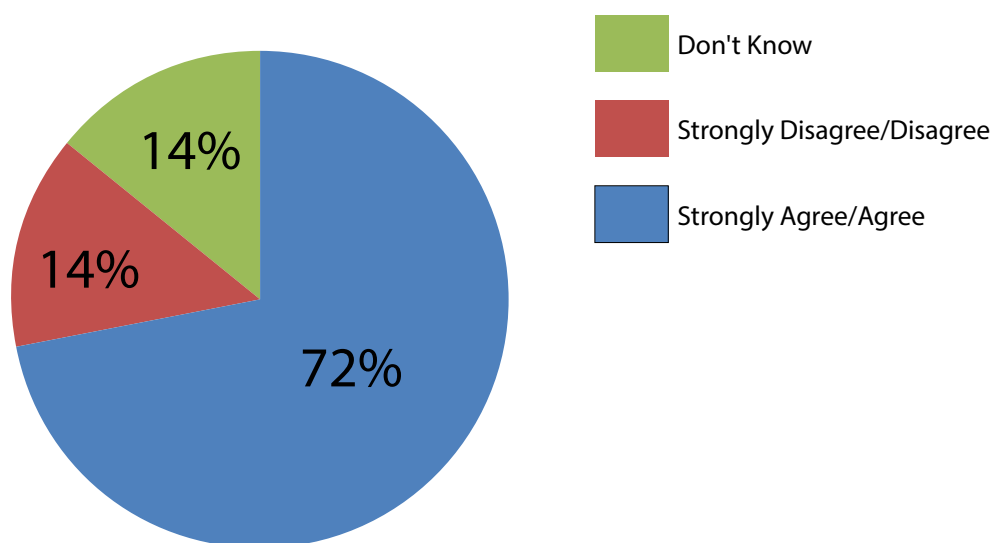
5.1 Strengths

As can be seen in the table below, Community Planning Board members identified Statement 19 - *The partnership has a good understanding of the profile of its area, including information relating to inequalities (eg. education, income, health) and protected characteristics (eg. age, race, sex)*, extremely positively, with 92% of participants either 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing'. This level of agreement means that Statement 19 is the most positive of all statements across the self-assessment.

In the text, Board members noted the strong emphasis placed on the use of data, both quantitative and qualitative, within their partnerships to understand community needs. The importance of keeping this data updated and using it for strategic decision-making was also highlighted throughout.

Table 9

19. The partnership has a good understanding of the profile of its area, including information relating to inequalities (eg. education, income, health) and protected characteristics (eg. age, race, sex)			Response Percent
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		42.39%
2	Agree		50.00%
3	Disagree		5.98%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.00%
5	Don't Know		1.63%

Another area of strength within this section was Statement 18 - T*he partnership has effective mechanisms for understanding the needs of individuals and communities*, which had 78% of Board members either 'agreeing' or strongly agreeing'. In the qualitative responses, participants focused on the various mechanisms and processes that their partnership have in place to ensure community members, including those with lived experience, are actively involved in the decision-making and planning processes. Examples included roadshows in localities, community conversations, Champions Boards and other forums. There is also an emphasis on engaging underrepresented and seldom-heard groups, such as young people, ethnic minorities, and people facing poverty.

The use of place-based and locality approaches was also highlighted as strengths of CPPs. Participants noted the use of locality planning to ensure that community planning is tailored to local priorities, addressing specific geographic or demographic needs with a strong focus on understanding the unique needs of different communities through local engagement and data analysis.

5.2 Areas for Improvement

As noted in the introduction to this section, the majority of statements within this area of the checklist scored well. However, the statement with the most disagreement was Statement 23 - *The partnership can evidence a coordinated and shared approach to community engagement across all communities, including those from seldom heard groups and lived experience*, which had 21% of Board members either 'disagreeing' or 'strongly disagreeing'. Many of the comments in the checklist report stress the need for better coordination between partners. This includes aligning engagement strategies, sharing resources, and developing a unified approach to community engagement. Some also point out the need to address overlapping responsibilities and ensure that engagement efforts are not duplicated or fragmented. There is also mention of the importance of involving local bodies, like community councils, in a more structured way, and strengthening relationships with the third sector.

Table 10

23. The partnership can evidence a coordinated and shared approach to community engagement across all communities, including those from seldom heard groups and lived experience.		
Answer Choices		**Response Percent**
1	**Strongly Agree**	**12.68%**
2	**Agree**	**44.39%**
3	**Disagree**	**18.05%**
4	**Strongly Disagree**	**3.41%**
5	**Don't Know**	**21.46%**

Another area highlighted for improvement throughout the comments in the checklist report is that communities should be supported to take a more active role in decision-making and leadership, with some calls for additional training or support for community members. Several comments also reflect on the importance of shifting from a top-down model to one that allows for more co-production and shared leadership, ensuring that communities are not just consulted but are actively involved in shaping the work of the partnership. There is a recognition that empowering communities requires more than just engagement; it also involves providing the tools, resources, and support structures necessary for them to meaningfully engage in community planning activity.

6. Effective Use of Joint Resources

Given the current financial climate, there are clearly challenges in the availability of resources from all partners to achieve the outcomes as prioritised by CPP Board members. Nevertheless, as noted in the legislation below.

> *Part 2. 14 Community Planning Partners: Duties*
>
> *(3) Each community planning partner must, in relation to a community planning partnership, contribute such funds, staff and other resources as the community planning partnership considers appropriate.[3]*

In this section, CPP Board members were asked to reflect upon how their CPP operated in terms of the effective use of joint resources. As we can see from the chart below, some 49% of CPP Board members either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with all the statements in this section. When compared to the overall figures across all statements in chart 1 (65% agree/ strongly agree), the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' figures in the Effective Use of Joint Resources section are less positive than the figures as a whole. Compared to the statements in the other five sections, this has the lowest figures for 'agree' and 'strongly agree' and the highest level of 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. Given the challenging financial climate facing all partners, these scores are perhaps not surprising.

---

3   Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Part 2, 14.
     Community Planning Partners: Duties

Chart 6 - Effective Use of Joint Resources

Legend:
- Don't Know
- Strongly Disagree/Disagree
- Strongly Agree/Agree

26%
25%
49%
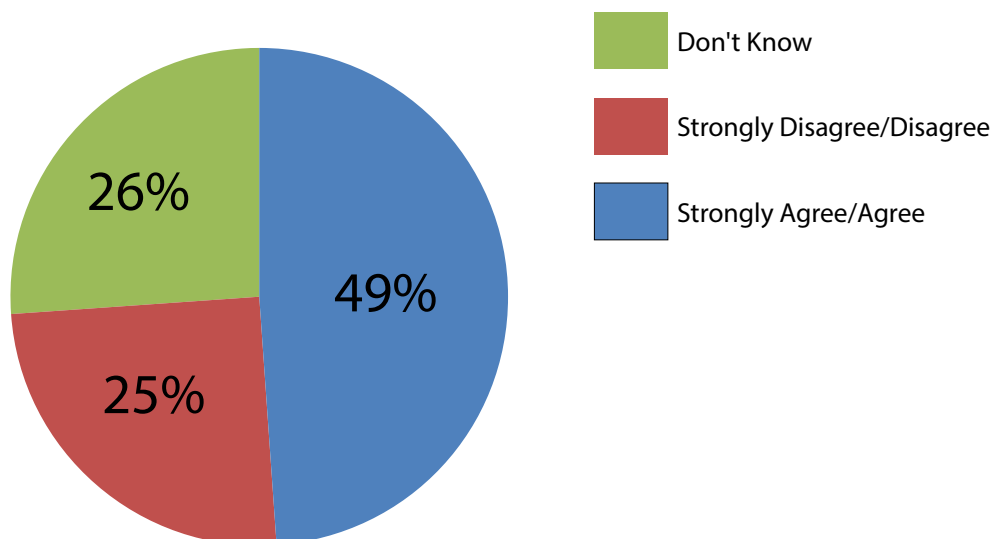
6.1 Strengths

Nevertheless, it is important to note that this section has a broader interpretation of resources than simply funding, such as use of data and staff time. It is interesting to note that in statement 25 - *Partners contribute staff and other resources as the partnership considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP*, 68% of CPP Board members agreed with this statement. This statement was the most positive across this section.

Table 11

25. Partners contribute staff and other resources as the partnership considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP.				
Answer Choices				**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree			12.06%
2	Agree			56.28%
3	Disagree			13.07%
4	Strongly Disagree			3.02%
5	Don't Know			15.58%

As such, as we note in table 12 below, 41% of CPP Board members feel that partners do not contribute appropriate funds to achieve local outcomes. Nevertheless, the majority of partners feel that support to improve local outcomes is provided by partners in other ways, with active participation and collaboration across various partners, contributing staff time and resources, demonstrating a strong commitment to joint working despite financial constraints.

Other strengths in this section in the qualitative comments identified some progress in sharing and using data effectively, such as locality profiles, joint strategic needs assessments, and specific data-driven projects like child poverty work and cost-of-living analysis.

6.1b Impact of Realigning Resources to Facilitate the Shift to Early Intervention and Prevention

In the chart below, we can see that those CPP Board members who 'strongly agree' and 'agree' that partners realign resources in order to deliver early intervention and preventative approaches also scored very positively in terms of the partnership being able to demonstrate evidence that their actions are facilitating the desired shift in these areas for the outcomes identified in the LOIP.

It is also clear from the chart below that those CPP Board members who 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' that partners realign resources to support this scored considerably poorer in terms of their partnership evidencing the desired shift towards prevention and early intervention. Given the importance of prevention and early intervention to mitigate future demand upon public services, it is clear from this table that those CPPs who are proactively realigning resources towards prevention and early intervention are in a much stronger position to be able to evidence the desired shift in this crucial area. The examples of good practice that will follow this report will be of great value to those CPPs who have identified themselves as needing support in this area.

Chart 7 Impact of Realigning Resources to Facilitate the Shift to Early Intervention and Prevention
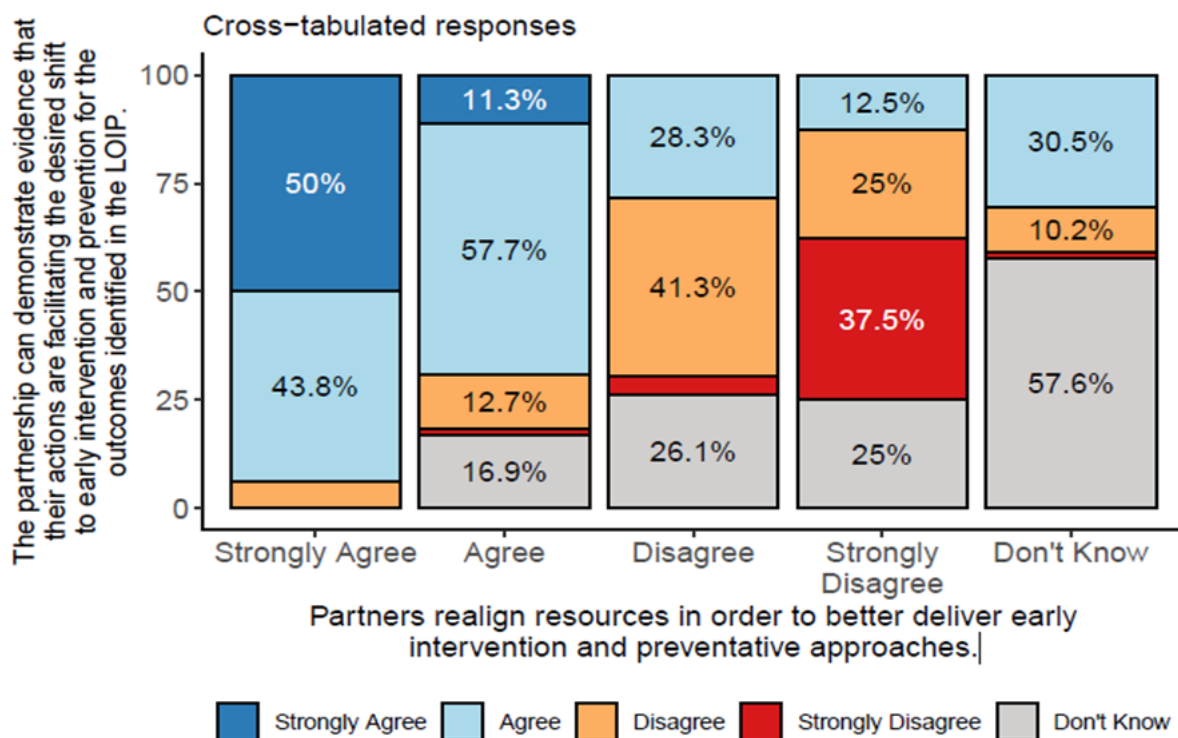
6.2 Areas for Improvement

As noted in the Overview section, the second lowest of all 43 statements in the checklist was the following: statement 24 - *Partners contribute funds as the partnership considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP*. Some 41% of CPP Board members either 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with this statement. We have noted above the challenging financial climate and also noted that CPP Board members acknowledge that other resources are being brought to the table to support the work of the CPP. However, given the clear expectation laid out in the legislation relating to partners contributing funds, it is clear that this is a significant issue for Boards to consider, alongside wider questions of the adequacy of funding streams made available for partners to achieve such challenging outcomes. In addition, there is also a perceived imbalance in contributions, which if not addressed, could lead to frustration amongst partners.

Table 12

24. Partners contribute funds as the partnership considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	**Strongly Agree**		6.21%
2	**Agree**		22.60%
3	**Disagree**		29.38%
4	**Strongly Disagree**		11.30%
5	**Don't Know**		30.51%

It is also worth noting in table 12 that 30.5% of CPP Board members answered 'don't know' for this statement. This suggests that this may be an area where Boards may benefit from having an honest discussion about which partners are contributing funds. As noted in table 11, partner contributions may take many forms in terms of contributing to achieving outcomes. Nevertheless, Board self-assessments may offer opportunities for candid discussions around such difficult topics and raise awareness about the range of financial contributions or resource-sharing arrangements across all partners.

Although some participants highlighted progress in relation to sharing and using data effectively, a number of issues remain. These include GDPR concerns, technical incompatibilities, and a lack of clear protocols that can hinder the ability of partners to share and utilise data effectively. Statement 29 notes that 30% of

CPP Board members disagreed that partners are able to share different datasets between each other to gain insights into the CPP area. These issues around the use of data can limit areas such as comprehensive needs assessments, strategic planning, and impactful decision-making for the Board.

It is also worthy of note that across the 43 statements in the checklist, the statement relating to data sharing had the highest level (38%) of CPP Board members responding, 'don't know'. Given the importance of datasets to support an evidence-based approach to CPP activity, this level of response indicates that there is much work to be done with CPP Board members around raising levels of awareness around the potential benefits of sharing and merging datasets where appropriate.

As such, despite the positive responses indicated by CPP Board members around shared leadership and vision across CPPs, the absence of clear mechanisms for joint resourcing arguably can prevent partnerships from achieving their full potential.

7. Reporting of Performance Management and Outcomes

Appropriate performance management in community planning partnerships can effectively assess progress in achieving LOIP outcomes, enhance accountability, improve decision-making, and ensure that the partnership's efforts are aligned with community needs and priorities. It fosters continuous improvement, builds community trust, and ensures that resources are used effectively to achieve long-term, sustainable success. By measuring and managing performance, community planning partnerships can demonstrate their impact and create more vibrant, resilient communities.

This section of the checklist asked Board members to reflect upon their partnerships use of performance information and how this supports the work of the Board. As shown in the chart below, 65% of Board members either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statements in this section, which is the third highest level of agreement across the six sections of the checklist. In terms of disagreement, 18% of Board members either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the statements in this section.

Chart 8 - Reporting of Performance Management and Outcomes

Legend:
- Don't Know
- Strongly Disagree/Disagree
- Strongly Agree/Agree

17%
18%
65%
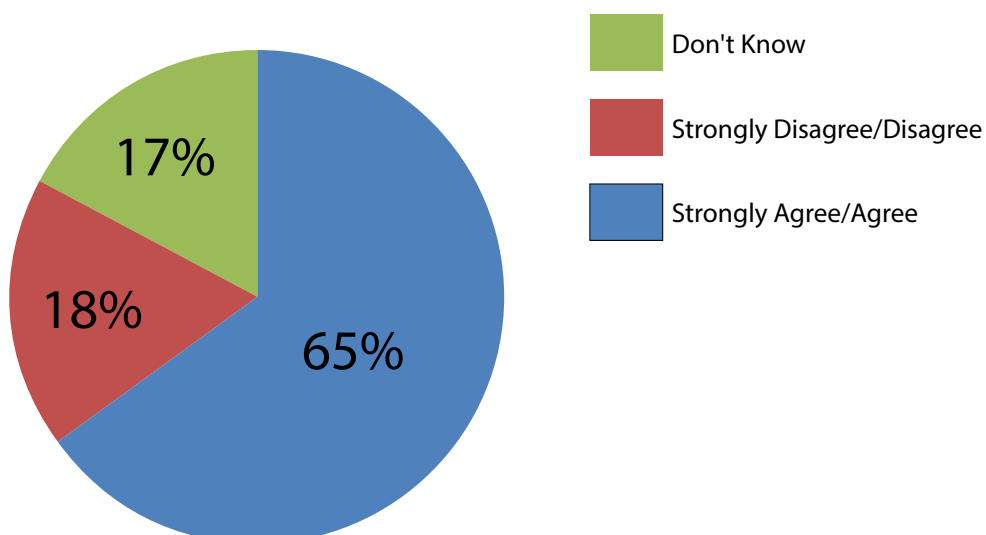
7.1 Strengths

The most positive statement within this section of the checklist was Statement 30 - *Agreed priorities and outcomes in the LOIP reflect the key challenges of the area identified through the partnership's data analysis and community engagement activity*. As shown in the table below, 87% of Board members either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with this statement which is the 4th most positive level of agreement across all the statements in the checklist. A number of participants highlighted in the comments that their partnership makes use of data to identify priorities, set targets for improvement and inform decision making.

Table 13

30. Agreed priorities and outcomes in the LOIP reflect the key challenges of the area identified through the partnership's data analysis and community engagement activity.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		24.19%
2	Agree		62.37%
3	Disagree		4.84%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.08%
5	Don't Know		7.53%

Another area which scored positively in this section was Statement 32 - *The partnership has identified and agreed which localities/communities it will prioritise in relation to reducing inequalities in outcomes*. For this statement, 74% of Board members either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with this statement. Some participants noted in the comments that data plays a central role in identifying localities or communities to prioritise for reducing inequalities in outcomes within their partnership. However, this tends to vary across partnerships with other participants highlighting that the effectiveness of this depends on the quality of data being used.

7.1b The Use of Short and Medium-Term Measures to Demonstrate Impact

The chart below is a clear indication of the importance of partnerships' long-term outcomes being supported by short and medium-term performance measures. From the chart, we can see that Board members who either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' that the partnership has short and medium-term measures in place, also scored very positively in terms of the partnership being able to demonstrate how effective it has been in delivering real outcomes. If we then look at Board members who either 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' that their partnership had these measures in place, these Board members also scored negatively for being able to demonstrate that the partnership has been effective in delivering real outcomes. This shows the importance of partnerships having suitable performance measures in place to be able to demonstrate that the work they are doing is having an impact on the outcomes they are trying to achieve.

Chart 9 - The Use of Short and Medium-Term Measures to Demonstrate Impact
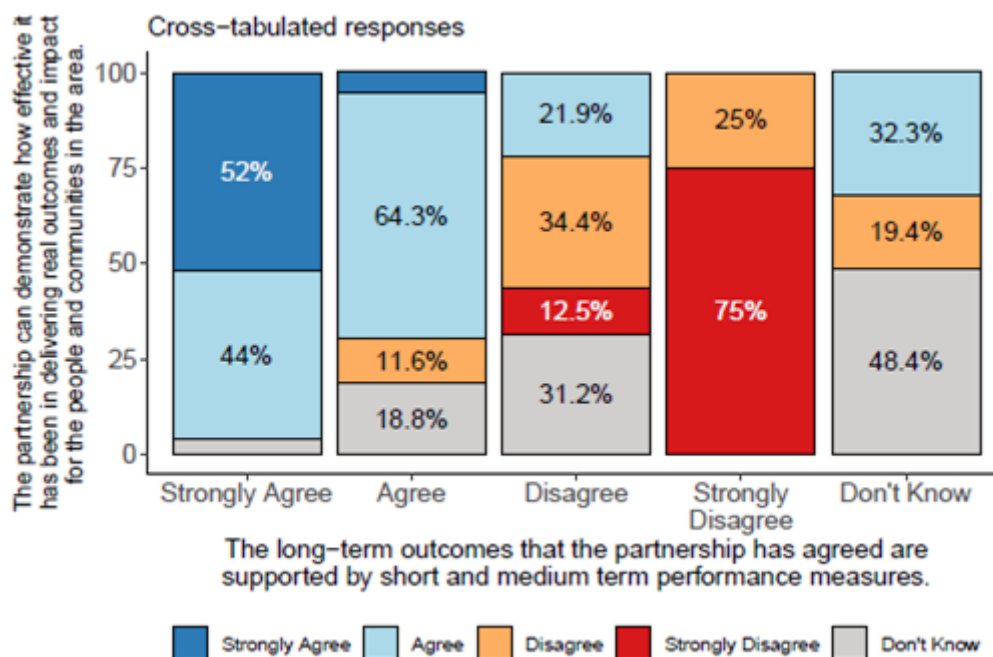
7.2 Areas for Improvement

In terms of how performance management could be improved across community planning, Board members identified a few areas. Firstly, the statement with the highest level of disagreement within this section was Statement 38 - *The performance information received by the Board is presented in a way that enables the partnership to effectively scrutinise performance.* For this statement, 27% of Board members either 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree', as can be seen in the table below. A number of Board members suggested standardised reporting formats, such as progress report templates or dashboards, could help improve the clarity and efficiency of performance reporting and support members to more effectively scrutinise performance.

Table 14

38. The performance information received by the Board is presented in a way that enables the partnership to effectively scrutinise performance.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		11.73%
2	Agree		45.06%
3	Disagree		22.22%
4	Strongly Disagree		4.32%
5	Don't Know		16.67%

The quality of data available to partnerships was also identified by some Board members as an issue. Statement 36 - *The performance data and information considered by the partnership is timely, relevant and provides a good measure of progress towards the desired outcomes and time specific targets*, had 24% of Board members either 'disagreeing' or 'strongly disagreeing' with it. Board members raised concerns around inconsistent data collection across partners and a reliance on national measures that may not fully reflect local outcomes. Comments highlighted a need for more granular and local data, with some respondents calling for better sharing of information across partners and communities. It is worth noting that the Improvement Service's Community Planning Outcomes Profile (CPOP) is a valuable tool that can provide a wealth of local information around areas such as, inequality, the pattern of outcomes in your area and can provide comparison with data between CPPs and across Scotland to support community planning activity.

Board members also identified challenges related to setting clear, measurable performance outcomes, particularly for long-term and qualitative changes. Some believe that performance reporting is overly focused on quantitative metrics, while more attention is needed on the qualitative and longer-term outcomes (e.g., prevention).

8. How the CPP is Making an Impact

As noted in the introductory section of Part 2 Community Planning in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015[4], the main purpose of community planning is improvement in the achievement of outcomes, with particular emphasis on reducing inequality.

In this section, CPP Board members were asked to reflect upon how their CPP is making an impact in areas such as closing the gap around inequalities, progress towards delivering the LOIP and demonstrating that they are delivering real outcomes for their communities.

As we can see from the chart below, CPP Board members either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with 59% of all the statements in this section. While it is positive that over half of CPP members feel that the CPP is making an impact in their local areas, compared to the other five sections, this has the second lowest figures for 'agreed' and 'strongly agreed' in arguably one of the most significant areas of the self-assessment. It is also worth noting that nearly a quarter of CPP Board members answered 'Don't Know' across this section. This certainly suggests that some work needs to be done in terms of raising awareness about the impact that the CPP is having.

Nevertheless, given the challenging financial climate and the recent recovery

4   Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Part 2 Community Planning, 5. *Socio-Economic Inequalities*

Chart 10 - How the CPP is Making an Impact

Legend:
- Don't Know
- Strongly Disagree/Disagree
- Strongly Agree/Agree

23%
18%
59%
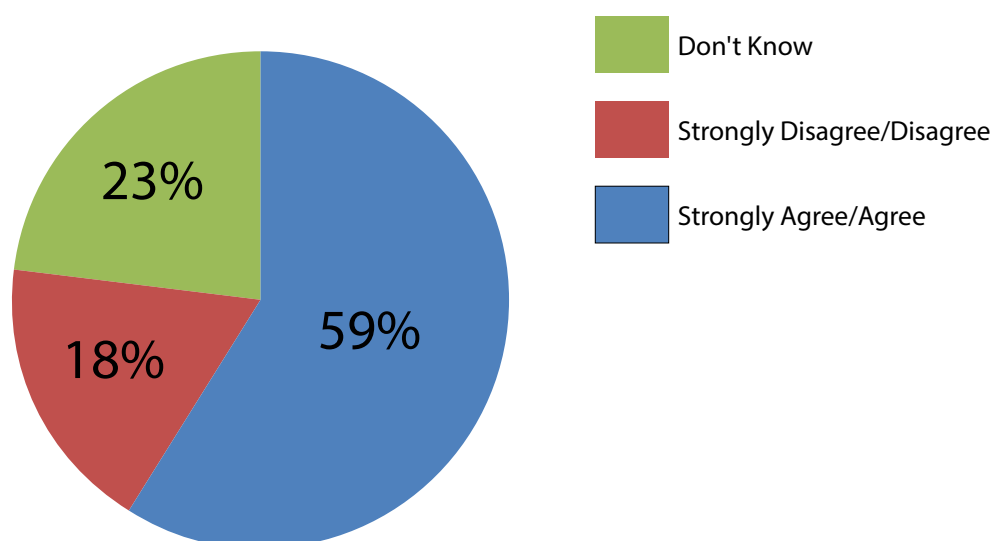
from the pandemic, it is worthy of note that the majority of CPP Board members are positive about the effectiveness and impact that the CPP is having.

8.1 Strengths

Given the legislative and policy aspirations that formed the basis of community planning, it is particularly heartening to note that the most positive statement in this section (see table 15 below) is as follows: Statement 39 - *By working together, the partnership has delivered improvements which could not have been delivered by individual organisations.* The statement had 74% of CPP Board members agreeing, with nearly a fifth 'strongly agreeing.' This is a strong indication of the collective understanding among many CPP Board members that the notion of partnership working embodied within community planning, has delivered more for communities than the more traditional organisational approach of largely working in silos.

Table 15

39. By working together, the partnership has delivered improvements which could not have been delivered by individual organisations.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	**Strongly Agree**		19.42%
2	**Agree**		54.85%
3	**Disagree**		5.83%
4	**Strongly Disagree**		0.97%
5	**Don't Know**		18.93%

Other strengths identified in this section noted that CPPs foster effective collaboration across diverse sectors, including health, education, housing, and third-sector organisations and how CPPs unite stakeholders to address complex issues collectively. In addition, a recurring theme is the prioritisation of preventative approaches, such as support for older people, healthy eating initiatives and early interventions for health and wellbeing. CPP Board members noted that many of these strategies aim to address issues before they escalate, benefiting individuals and reducing the burden on public services. Despite challenges in attribution, there are numerous examples of tangible outcomes, such as improvements in youth participation, targeted poverty reduction efforts, and cost-of-living support.

8.2 Areas for Improvement

Given the importance of CPP impact, it is noteworthy that a quarter of CPP Board members disagreed with the following statement: Statement 40 - *The partnership is making progress in closing the gap around identified inequalities within its area*. As we can see from the table below, 25% of responses answered 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. In addition, over a fifth of Board members said that they 'didn't know' if the partnership was closing the gap around inequalities within its area.

Table 16

40. The partnership is making progress in closing the gap around identified inequalities within its area.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		9.76%
2	Agree		42.93%
3	Disagree		22.93%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.95%
5	Don't Know		22.44%

Given one of the key aims of the legislation noted at the start of this section, that is, for CPPs to place particular emphasis on reducing inequality, many CPP Board members are clearly identifying this as an area to focus improvement work. However, these are complex areas with no simple solutions, for instance, it may be that awareness of the work being done by the CPP needs to be better communicated to those Board members who answered, 'don't know'. Or that the performance information is already provided to CPP Board members, but they simply do not have the time to be able to read and absorb the large amount of material that is produced in the community planning process. These are all areas that each CPP will have to consider when they reflect upon their own self-assessment data to consider how this critical area for the Board can be strengthened if required.

Comments from CPP Board members in relation to reducing inequalities noted that despite efforts and partnership initiatives, inequality continues to rise and that it is difficult to make a significant impact in addressing these issues. For instance, issues like reducing child poverty, inequality worsening across some CPPs, and challenges tied to external pressures such as the cost-of-living crisis emphasise this ongoing struggle. More generally, comments suggest

that external factors, such as economic uncertainty and systemic inequalities, complicate the CPP's ability to reverse trends and reduce disparities.

Many comments highlight the financial pressures facing CPPs, particularly as public sector funding becomes increasingly strained. Participants point out that there is a lack of funding, limited resources, and competing financial pressures across partner organisations. This has led to difficulties in sustaining long-term plans, focusing on prevention, and addressing inequalities. Phrases like "we are being asked to 'do more with less'" and "scarcer and scarcer resources" underscore this challenge. These resource limitations can impede the ability to implement strategies effectively and achieve long-term change.

9. Conclusion

From the self-assessment findings provided in this national report, we can see that the majority of CPP Board members across Scotland agree about the positive impact that community planning is having within local communities. In terms of meeting the aspirations of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, CPP Board members clearly feel that working together in partnership across a range of organisations is achieving more around a number of outcomes.

In particular, the findings have shown that over 3/4s of CPP Board members agree that there is a shared leadership in Boards, with almost 9 in 10 CPP Board members noting a commitment to the vision and strategic direction of the partnership. Similar figures emerged in terms of the partnership operating in a spirit of transparency and trust. Such positive findings around shared leadership are important. They indicate that partners are coming together to bring their collective resources and expertise to meet the aims of the legislation and to focus upon tackling inequalities in a range of areas across communities.

The critical importance of good shared leadership is most strongly illustrated in the findings in chart 3, where those CPP Board members who agreed the partnership has strong and effective leadership also scored very positively in how effective they are in delivering real outcomes and impact in their areas. To further emphasise the point, those CPP Board members who disagreed that their partnership had strong and effective leadership, scored very poorly in terms of their partnership delivering outcomes and impact. Quite simply, good leadership leads to positive outcomes.

One of the main drivers of the 2015 legislation was to ensure that the participation of communities was to lie at the 'heart of community planning'. As such, it is encouraging to note that nearly 3/4s of CPP Board members agreed with statements in the checklist that real progress is being made in this area. Most notably, the most positive response across all of the 43 statements from CPP Board members was that the partnership has a good understanding of the profile of its area, including information relating to inequalities and protected characteristics. With 92% agreeing with this statement, is a powerful indicator about the depth of understanding across the Board as to the needs of their local areas and demonstrates the strong emphasis on the use of data upon which such understanding is based.

It is worth noting that the use of data and the importance of performance management in CPPs was also a key finding in this self-assessment. In particular, a strength noted in the findings has been the use of data to identify the priorities and outcomes of the LOIP and also the use of data to identify and support collective decision-making to target which localities/communities the CPP will prioritise to reduce inequalities. To further emphasise the importance of effective performance management, the findings demonstrated that those CPP Board members who agreed that the partnership have short and medium-term measures in place, scored very positively in terms of the partnership being able to demonstrate how effective it has been in delivering real outcomes. As noted above, those Board members who disagreed that their partnership had these measures in place, scored very negatively around demonstrating that the partnership has been effective in delivering real outcomes.

As such, CPP Board members are clearly demonstrating in the findings the importance of strong shared leadership and effective performance management as a critical foundation to achieving CPP outcomes and impact. In relation to what impact the CPP is having, the findings demonstrate that over ½ of CPP Board members feel that their CPP is having a positive impact upon communities. Given the challenging financial climate and the recent recovery from the pandemic, these are positive responses by CPP Board members in terms of the difference that the CPP is making in communities. As noted, just under 3/4s of CPP Board members agreed with the statement – *By working together, the partnership has delivered improvements which could not have been delivered by individual organisations*. This is a strong reflection by CPP Board members of the worth of community planning and the practical benefits of working together to achieve shared priorities.

As with any self-assessment, participants were asked to identify areas for improvement in the work of CPP Boards. In particular, potential for improvements were identified by CPP Board members in areas such as: the induction for CPP Board members and Development Programmes to further improve the skills and knowledge around the work of the Boards. Progress in these areas would go a long way to mitigate another area for improvement noted by CPP Board members, that is to consider ways to ensure that all partners are making significant contributions to the work of the partnership. An effective induction and development programme will clarify expectations for Board members, and how they can contribute.

The only section that had less than ½ of CPP Board members positively responding to statements, was around the effective use of joint resources. A quarter of responses disagreed with statements in this section and over a quarter answered that they did not know. Clearly the current financial climate is impacting in this area, with many CPP Board members noting the serious challenges in

the availability of resources to achieve the outcomes as prioritised by CPP Board members. In particular, over 40% of CPP Board members disagreed that partners are contributing funds to the partnership. Nevertheless, many CPP Board members noted that partners contributed staff and other resources where possible.

This is clearly an area for Boards to reflect upon giving the existing and continuing pressures upon organisational budgets for the foreseeable future. The offer of facilitated self-assessments with Boards by the Improvement Service will allow opportunities for discussions around such difficult topics and raise awareness about the range of financial contributions or resource-sharing arrangements across all partners.

CPP Board members identifying the constraints that the financial context is having upon making more progress in closing inequality gaps does highlight the importance of areas such as prevention and early intervention in community planning. The focus on inequality being tackled through early intervention and prevention is a common theme running through many comments from CPP Board members. While there is much discussion about a number of the projects underway in this area, many comment that 'more weight and resource' needs to be invested in this area, not only from community planning partners, but from the Scottish and Westminster governments. Given the resource needs to drive such areas, the challenge for community planning partners is how to find this resource, possibly at the cost of other short-term considerations, in order to achieve the longer-term gain of prevention approaches 'downstream'.

What has been very heartening in analysing the findings from across over 200 CPP Board members, is the sheer scale of the positive projects underway in CPPs. As such, it is important to note that one of the main aims of this national CPP self-assessment is to identify examples of good practice across many areas, such as prevention, discussed in the report, and to shine a light upon good practice in community planning across Scotland. As noted in the next section on Next Steps, the Improvement Service will look to capitalise on this wealth of information and undertake further work to identify where CPPs have identified strong performance in reducing inequalities in many of the areas covered in this report for the benefits of all CPPs and the communities that they serve.

10. Next Steps

This national report is the first stage which provides a Scotland wide overview of what is working well and where improvements could be made across community planning. There are two main stages that will follow this national report. These will be the identification and development of good practice case studies and the facilitation of sessions with individual CPPs to develop local improvement plans.

10.1 Good Practice Case Studies

The Improvement Service will use the findings from this self-assessment to identify good practice across the six areas of the self-assessment checklist. From the self-assessment, we are able to identify CPPs which have scored themselves positively against areas which, at a national level, have been identified as a challenge for partnerships. We will work with those CPPs to identify what it is they are doing locally that is being received positively by Board members and look to share this. The aim is that these case studies will support learning across community planning and assist partnerships to drive improvements in how they operate.

Once these case studies are developed, the Improvement Service will collate these case studies into a national report so that all of the good practice identified can be viewed in one document later in 2025. The case studies will be shared on the Improvement Service website and also through the Scottish Community Planning Network (SCPN) channels. It is hoped that this report and the forthcoming case studies will help to focus discussion around the key areas that CPPs have highlighted as areas for improvement in this report. Forums, such as the SCPN, will be able to draw upon the best practice case studies to support CPPs to progress and make improvements in these areas going forward.

10.2 Facilitated Sessions

As well as identifying and sharing good practice, the Improvement Service has offered to work with individual CPPs to review their self-assessment findings and develop a local improvement plan. This process will take place through a facilitated session at which the CPP Board will be presented with their findings from the self-assessment. In the session, CPP Boards will consider how their findings, their CPP strengths and areas for improvement, compare to the national

figures. The output from these sessions will be an Improvement Plan for the partnership.

It will be for each individual CPP Board to decide, from their self-assessment findings, which areas they would like to prioritise as part of an improvement plan. The IS will work with the Boards to prioritise their areas for improvement and to develop them into an improvement plan covering areas such as actions, timescales, risks/costs, dates, measures, etc. Once developed, it will be the responsibility of the CPP to progress the actions identified within their improvement plan.

The majority of participating CPPs have indicated to the IS, that they would like to take up the offer of a facilitated session. As noted in the introduction, CPPs requesting this support are required to achieve at least a 50% response rate from Board members to ensure a sufficient evidence base. Following completion of these sessions, the IS will look to collate common improvements and themes that emerge from these sessions as prioritised by CPPs and where possible, facilitate learning on improvements and disseminate these across CPPs.

Appendix 1 - National CPP Self-Assessment Checklist Results

Introduction

How long have you been a Board Member on this CPP?			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Less than 1 year		23.84%
2	1 Year to 3 Years		42.38%
3	Over 3 Years		33.77%

Do you represent one of the Statutory partners with additional governance duties under s.13 of the 2015 Community Empowerment Act (The Local Authority, The Health Board, Scottish Enterprise/Highlands and Islands Enterprise/South of Scotland Enterprise, Police Scotland, The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)?			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Yes		64.00%
2	No		36.00%

1. Shared Leadership

1. The partnership has strong and effective leadership.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		27.80%
2	Agree		58.05%
3	Disagree		8.78%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.95%
5	Don't Know		3.41%

2. All partners provide leadership and make significant contributions to the partnership's work.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		13.30%
2	Agree		45.74%
3	Disagree		32.98%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.66%
5	Don't Know		5.32%

3. Partners work effectively together to agree and achieve a shared vision as set out in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP).

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		20.10%
2	Agree		58.82%
3	Disagree		13.73%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.98%
5	Don't Know		6.37%

4. Partnership meetings, events and activities are arranged to maximise attendance and contributions from all partners.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		24.47%
2	Agree		51.60%
3	Disagree		17.02%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.13%
5	Don't Know		4.79%

5. The partnership operates in a spirit of transparency, openness and trust.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		34.31%
2	Agree		52.94%
3	Disagree		7.35%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.00%
5	Don't Know		5.39%

6. The partnership actively encourages innovation and discussion around the best ways to achieve LOIP outcomes.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		20.97%
2	Agree		50.00%
3	Disagree		17.20%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.61%
5	Don't Know		10.22%

7. Non-officer members (Elected Members, community representatives, etc.) of the local authority are engaged in the leadership of the partnership.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		21.08%
2	Agree		58.33%
3	Disagree		9.31%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.94%
5	Don't Know		8.33%

8. The partnership is striving to facilitate the shift to early intervention and prevention for the outcomes set out in the LOIP.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		20.97%
2	Agree		48.92%
3	Disagree		21.51%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.00%
5	Don't Know		8.60%

2. Governance and Accountability

9. The partnership has appropriate structures and processes to support shared effective decision making.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		19.02%
2	Agree		59.51%
3	Disagree		14.63%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.46%
5	Don't Know		5.37%

10. Partners demonstrate a commitment to the vision and strategic direction of the partnership.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		25.73%
2	Agree		63.11%
3	Disagree		4.85%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.49%
5	Don't Know		5.83%

11. Members of the partnership offer constructive criticism and regularly challenge each other to achieve improved outcomes.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		10.22%
2	Agree		50.00%
3	Disagree		24.73%
4	Strongly Disagree		3.76%
5	Don't Know		11.29%

12. There are clear roles and lines of accountability established in relation to the partnership.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		14.56%
2	Agree		55.83%
3	Disagree		16.50%
4	Strongly Disagree		3.40%
5	Don't Know		9.71%

13. There are effective arrangements in place for the partnership's scrutiny and accountability.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		13.59%
2	Agree		50.97%
3	Disagree		16.50%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.43%
5	Don't Know		16.50%

14. The partnership has an effective induction in place for new Board members.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		8.55%
2	Agree		19.08%
3	Disagree		30.92%
4	Strongly Disagree		9.21%
5	Don't Know		32.24%

15. The partnership has an ongoing Development Programme to improve the skills and knowledge of its members.

	Answer Choices		Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		4.64%
2	Agree		23.18%
3	Disagree		36.42%
4	Strongly Disagree		4.64%
5	Don't Know		31.13%

16. The individuals involved in the partnership have the authority to make strategic decisions on behalf of their organisation or group to advance the key issues.

	Answer Choices		Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		14.56%
2	Agree		52.43%
3	Disagree		13.11%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.91%
5	Don't Know		16.99%

17. Partners collectively agree, monitor and take action to improve local outcomes.

	Answer Choices		Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		12.37%
2	Agree		59.14%
3	Disagree		17.74%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.08%
5	Don't Know		9.68%

3. Community - Needs and Empowerment

18. The partnership has effective mechanisms for understanding the needs of individuals and communities.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		17.65%
2	Agree		59.89%
3	Disagree		12.83%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.53%
5	Don't Know		9.09%

19. The partnership has a good understanding of the profile of its area, including information relating to inequalities (eg. education, income, health) and protected characteristics (eg. age, race, sex)			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		42.39%
2	Agree		50.00%
3	Disagree		5.98%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.00%
5	Don't Know		1.63%

20. Regular input from individuals and communities influences the activities undertaken and the way that these are delivered as set out in the LOIP.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		16.02%
2	Agree		51.46%
3	Disagree		15.05%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.97%
5	Don't Know		16.50%

21. The partnership has effective mechanisms for communicating with key stakeholders including communities.		
Answer Choices		**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree	13.17%
2	Agree	50.24%
3	Disagree	16.59%
4	Strongly Disagree	1.46%
5	Don't Know	18.54%

22. There is evidence of a commitment to community capacity building and empowerment from partners and communities within the partnership.		
Answer Choices		**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree	18.05%
2	Agree	56.59%
3	Disagree	7.32%
4	Strongly Disagree	1.46%
5	Don't Know	16.59%

23. The partnership can evidence a coordinated and shared approach to community engagement across all communities, including those from seldom heard groups and lived experience.		
Answer Choices		**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree	12.68%
2	Agree	44.39%
3	Disagree	18.05%
4	Strongly Disagree	3.41%
5	Don't Know	21.46%

4. Effective Use of Joint Resources

24. Partners contribute funds as the partnership considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		6.21%
2	Agree		22.60%
3	Disagree		29.38%
4	Strongly Disagree		11.30%
5	Don't Know		30.51%

25. Partners contribute staff and other resources as the partnership considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		12.06%
2	Agree		56.28%
3	Disagree		13.07%
4	Strongly Disagree		3.02%
5	Don't Know		15.58%
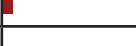
26. There is evidence of partners sharing/aligning resources on joint projects.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		8.11%
2	Agree		52.97%
3	Disagree		16.76%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.70%
5	Don't Know		19.46%

27. Partners realign resources in order to better deliver early intervention and preventative approaches.

	Answer Choices		Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		8.00%
2	Agree		35.50%
3	Disagree		23.00%
4	Strongly Disagree		4.00%
5	Don't Know		29.50%

28. Partners are aware of and can access relevant and useful data held by other partners.

	Answer Choices		Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		10.60%
2	Agree		43.71%
3	Disagree		16.56%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.99%
5	Don't Know		27.15%

29. Partners are able to share and merge different datasets between each other to obtain a full picture of the CPP area and gain insight.

	Answer Choices		Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		4.64%
2	Agree		27.81%
3	Disagree		26.49%
4	Strongly Disagree		3.31%
5	Don't Know		37.75%

5. Reporting of Performance Management and Outcomes

30. Agreed priorities and outcomes in the LOIP reflect the key challenges of the area identified through the partnership's data analysis and community engagement activity.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		24.19%
2	Agree		62.37%
3	Disagree		4.84%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.08%
5	Don't Know		7.53%

31. The partnership can clearly articulate its collective performance expectations regarding the necessary steps to reduce inequalities within and across its local communities.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		14.08%
2	Agree		45.63%
3	Disagree		20.39%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.46%
5	Don't Know		18.45%

32. The partnership has identified and agreed which localities/communities it will prioritise in relation to reducing inequalities in outcomes.			
Answer Choices			**Response Percent**
1	Strongly Agree		17.65%
2	Agree		56.68%
3	Disagree		9.63%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.60%
5	Don't Know		14.44%

33. The partnership has identified priority outcomes for these communities.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		11.83%
2	Agree		52.69%
3	Disagree		11.29%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.08%
5	Don't Know		23.12%

34. The long-term outcomes that the partnership has agreed are supported by short and medium term performance measures.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		12.20%
2	Agree		55.12%
3	Disagree		15.61%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.95%
5	Don't Know		15.12%

35. There is an efficient and robust system in place for recording progress made towards the achievement of outcomes and provides local context.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		10.75%
2	Agree		54.30%
3	Disagree		16.13%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.69%
5	Don't Know		16.13%

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

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		11.29%
2	Agree		44.09%
3	Disagree		22.04%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.15%
5	Don't Know		20.43%

37. The partnership actively uses performance data and information to facilitate constructive strategic discussion and, where required, to address gaps and challenges in achieving LOIP outcomes.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		11.29%
2	Agree		46.24%
3	Disagree		18.82%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.15%
5	Don't Know		21.51%

38. The performance information received by the Board is presented in a way that enables the partnership to effectively scrutinise performance.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		11.73%
2	Agree		45.06%
3	Disagree		22.22%
4	Strongly Disagree		4.32%
5	Don't Know		16.67%

6. How the CPP is Making an Impact

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

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		19.42%
2	Agree		54.85%
3	Disagree		5.83%
4	Strongly Disagree		0.97%
5	Don't Know		18.93%

40. The partnership is making progress in closing the gap around identified inequalities within its area.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		9.76%
2	Agree		42.93%
3	Disagree		22.93%
4	Strongly Disagree		1.95%
5	Don't Know		22.44%

41. The partnership publishes easy to read annual reports which show the progress that it is making to deliver the LOIP and locality plans through partnership working.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		15.12%
2	Agree		48.29%
3	Disagree		12.68%
4	Strongly Disagree		2.93%
5	Don't Know		20.98%

42. The partnership can demonstrate evidence that their actions are facilitating the desired shift to early intervention and prevention for the outcomes identified in the LOIP.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		7.80%
2	Agree		39.51%
3	Disagree		18.05%
4	Strongly Disagree		3.41%
5	Don't Know		31.22%

43. The partnership can demonstrate how effective it has been in delivering real outcomes and impact for the people and communities in the area.

Answer Choices			Response Percent
1	Strongly Agree		9.27%
2	Agree		49.27%
3	Disagree		15.12%
4	Strongly Disagree		3.41%
5	Don't Know		22.93%

Appendix 2 - List of Participating CPPs

Aberdeen City CPP

Aberdeenshire CPP

Angus CPP

Argyll and Bute CPP

Clackmannanshire CPP

Dumfries and Galloway CPP

Dundee City CPP

East Ayrshire CPP

East Lothian CPP

Edinburgh CPP

Falkirk CPP

Highland CPP

Midlothian CPP

Moray CPP

North Ayrshire CPP

Scottish Borders CPP

Shetland Islands CPP

South Ayrshire CPP

South Lanarkshire CPP

West Lothian CPP

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