

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 26 MARCH 2008

SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

Report by the Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To submit to Cabinet for consideration and endorsement the draft East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As reported to Cabinet on 20 February 2008, the Scottish Spending Review 2007 Concordat developed by COSLA and the Scottish Government sets out a new relationship between the Scottish Government and Local Government, based on mutual respect and partnership. The Concordat underpins the funding to be provided to local government over the period 2008/09 to 2010/11.
- 2.2 As a consequence of the above and to ensure a more streamlined approach to external scrutiny and effective performance management, it is the Scottish Government's intention that a Single Outcome Agreement be developed between the Government and each local authority area. Each council will require to submit a single annual report, around May each year, on the year just finished and plans for the year to come, starting in May 2009. The report will comment on progress and achievements towards the national outcomes. To commence the process, the first draft Single Outcome Agreement, effective from 1 April 2008, requires to be submitted by 31 March 2008.
- 2.3 In addition, it is the Scottish Government's intention that, by 2009/10, the Single Outcome Agreement will be developed between the Government and Community Planning Partnerships, rather than simply local councils. Within East Ayrshire, as a result of the sound and robust status of the Community Plan – 'One Council, One Plan', and as agreed by Cabinet on 20 February 2008, Community Planning Partners have also taken the view that we should work immediately towards the development of a Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement for the East Ayrshire Area, effective from 1 April 2008.
- 2.4 The SOA process is an integral part of the Scottish Spending Review 2007 financial settlement and associated Concordat document agreed between COSLA and the Scottish Government on 14 November 2007.

3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 Lead responsibility for developing and co-ordinating the Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement sits with the Community Planning and Partnership Unit. Since late January 2008, the Council's Head of Corporate Development and Communication has worked with the Unit and the Community Planning Research, Information and Performance (RIP) Working Group to develop a draft East Ayrshire Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). A full copy of the draft SOA (in 2 parts) is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 3.2 The concept of the SOA sits well with the East Ayrshire Community Plan and associated thematic action plans. As can be seen at Table 1 in the Appendix, our six thematic action plans match well with the Scottish Government's strategic direction. In summary, our draft SOA is structured around:
- our overarching East Ayrshire Community Plan > *matched to* >
 - the Scottish Government's 5 National Strategic Objectives > *underpinned by* >
 - the Scottish Government's 15 National Outcomes > *matched to* >
 - our 6 thematic community plan action plans and core education functions > *supported by* >
 - 45 National Indicators and Targets > *to be accounted for from a menu of* >
 - 55, or more, Local Outcome Indicators.
- 3.3 Within East Ayrshire therefore, we will build on existing strategic and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements as we make a seamless transition towards the Single Outcome Agreement process. The benefits of the SOA process and outcomes for East Ayrshire are summarised as follows:
- reduced ring-fenced funding;
 - efficiency savings retained;
 - reduced number of different funding streams;
 - rolled up Government Grant in the annual finance settlements;
 - new arrangements with the Fairer Scotland Fund;
 - more focused / more efficient services;
 - meeting communities' needs;
 - reduced bureaucracy; and overall greater opportunities for the Partnership.
- 3.4 The Scottish Government has indicated that it requires the Council to submit the draft 2008/09 SOA to them by 31 March 2008. Then, during the three month period 1 April to 30 June 2008, the Council's appointed Scottish Government Director, Graeme Dickson, Director, Primary and

Community Care, will work with the Council and our Community Planning Partnership to ensure full sign off of the SOA by 30 June 2008. Cabinet will be kept informed of any contextual changes made to the draft SOA.

- 3.5 To allow for full consideration of the draft SOA by all Partner agencies prior to sign off and submission to the Scottish Government by the due date of 31 March 2008, each Partner Agency is in the process of submitting the draft SOA to their respective Boards/Committee for consideration and endorsement.
- 3.6 To facilitate overall sign off of the draft SOA, the Community Planning Partnership Board has remitted the Joint Officers' Group to sign off the draft SOA at its meeting on 31 March 2008. This sign off will allow the draft SOA to be submitted to the Scottish Government immediately thereafter. A summary of the timeframe we are working towards is set out below:

Action	Timescale
Draft SOA submitted to individual Partner Agency Boards/Committees for consideration and sign off	20 - 28 March 2008
Draft SOA submitted to the Community Planning Joint Officers' Group to facilitate overall Partner Agency sign off	31 March 2008
Draft SOA submitted to the Scottish Government	31 March 2008
Consultation & Engagement with Communities of Interest, including voluntary organisations	April / June 2008
Process of discussion and sign off on draft SOA	April / June 2008
Overall sign off by the Council & its CP Partners; and the Scottish Government – Statement of Joint Intent	30 June 2008

- 3.7 The draft SOA in its current form has been discussed and agreed by the Council's Corporate Management Team.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Success in taking forward the East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement will assist in securing sustained Scottish Government funding needed to provide and further improve services to our communities. It will also help sustain reduced ring fenced funding and reduced funding streams, resulting in consolidated rolled up Government Grant distribution to the Council.

5. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement is founded upon Section 20 of the Local Government Scotland Act, 2003, which sets out the Council's general power to advance well-being for its area and persons within that area. This general power is also supported with Statutory Guidance issued under Section 21 of the Act and general guidance issued in support of the November 2007 Concordat.
- 5.2 The entire SOA process is built upon an understanding of joint intent and accountability between Local Government and the Scottish Government. The November 2007 Concordat – and by implication, the SOA, is not seen by COSLA, or the Council, as forming a contract.
- 5.3 It is the intention of the Community Planning and Partnership Unit to continue engagement with the community and voluntary organisations as the draft SOA is taken forward.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Cabinet is asked to:
- i) consider and endorse the draft East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement (SOA);
 - ii) note that to facilitate overall 'sign off' of the SOA by the due date of 31 March 2008, the Community Planning Partnership Board has remitted the Community Planning Joint Officers' Group to consider and sign off the draft Single Outcome Agreement at its meeting on 31 March 2008 and submit it to the Scottish Government immediately thereafter;
 - iii) note the intention of the Community Planning and Partnership Unit to continue engagement with community and voluntary organisations as the draft SOA is taken forward;
 - iv) note the Scottish Government's intention to have final sign off of the SOA by 30 June 2008;
 - v) remit officers to work with the appointed Scottish Government Director and to make any necessary contextual changes to the draft SOA;
 - vi) request a further report towards end June 2008, advising on the outcome of discussions with the Scottish Government in taking our draft SOA to a final agreed document; and
 - vii) agree to receive further update reports.

Fiona Lees
Chief Executive
20 March 2008
GB/JC

List of Background Papers

1. The Scottish Spending Review 2007 Financial Settlement Concordat document agreed between the Scottish Government and Local Government – 14 November 2007.
2. Single Outcome Agreement – Guidance, Format and Indicators for Scottish Local Government (February 2008); jointly supported by the Scottish Government, Audit Scotland, COSLA, SOLACE, and the Improvement services.

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers or to seek further information on this report should contact John Clayton, Head of Corporate Development and Communication (Tel: 01563 576165) or Gwen Barker, Community Planning and Partnership Manager (Tel: 01563 554602)

Implementation Officer: John Clayton, Head of Corporate Development and Communication.