

REPORT TO: COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARD – 07 MAY 2009

SUBJECT: NEW COMMUNITY PLAN

BY: COMMUNITY PLANNING OFFICER

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The Community Planning Board is invited to consider and agree the proposed format, content and timeframe for the new Community Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Board agrees to the following criteria in respect of producing the new Community Plan:**
- (i) the recently identified Partnership priorities should be used as the main basis for the document, rather than the themes, as previously**
 - (ii) the Plan should be differentiated from the SOA by presenting a more ‘user-friendly’ and accessible interpretation of the SOA content**
 - (iii) the Plan should be presented in a similar format to previous Plans in an A4 full colour booklet**
 - (iv) the timeframe for the Plan should cover the period 2009-12**
 - (v) the main audience for the Plan should continue to be Community Planning stakeholders with the Plan also being available on the website to enable access by the wider public**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In November 2008 a revised Community Plan was published to reflect the changes brought about by the introduction of the Single Outcome Agreement (2008/09). The revised Plan was based around the five themes and replicated the information contained in the SOA on the national and local outcomes and how these would be addressed. A copy of the Partnership Agreement was added as an appendix to the Plan.
- 3.2 It is now time to consider producing a new Plan to take account of the new SOA (2009/10) and the ten identified priorities, which inform the work of the Partnership.
- 3.3 In considering this matter, a review has been undertaken of Community Plans in the other Community Planning Partnerships throughout Scotland. The key findings of this review are as follows:

- the majority of Community Plans were produced prior to the advent of Single Outcome Agreements
- ours is the only Community Plan, which covers a one-year timeframe – all other Community Plans cover at least a three-year period, some five, some ten and a few 12/15 years
- with the exception of Angus, which focuses on six priorities, all other Community Plans are based around themes, varying in number from four to seven
- the majority are fairly concise documents, which provide some contextual background on the key issues to be addressed and, in broad terms, how these are being tackled
- given the longer timeframe for these Plans, most do not contain statistical information (which dates) or significant detail in terms of performance information and targets
- all Plans contain information on how Partnerships consult and engage with their communities
- a number of Plans contain examples of projects/initiatives, identified as good practice
- a number of Plans contain information on key projects/initiatives being carried out in local areas by local partnerships

3.4 It should also be noted that a number of Partnerships have decided not to produce a new Community Plan, in that all relevant information is deemed to be contained within the SOA. These include East Dunbartonshire and Highland with Aberdeenshire and Scottish Borders looking to adopt a similar approach.

3.5 At present the Scottish Government has not adopted a definitive stance in relation to the production of Community Plans. There is no statutory requirement to produce one and it is for each area to identify the timeframe, content and format of its own Plan, should it decide to continue to produce one.

3.6 In respect of the areas, which have decided to continue to produce a Community Plan, some see it as providing a long-term vision with the SOA setting out the outcomes and actions to contribute to that vision, others see it the other way round with the SOA providing the strategic vision and the Community Plan the detail of how it will be achieved. Some areas are now looking to combine the Council's Corporate Plan with the Community Plan, and, by extension, other partner plans, but this is likely to produce a very complicated document. A further differentiation in some areas is that the Community Plan provides an opportunity to provide a simpler, more accessible interpretation of information presented in the SOA.

3.7 In the light of the above information, it is proposed that Moray's Community Plan is revised to provide a more 'user-friendly' interpretation of the SOA. Board members are invited to consider the following questions in taking this forward:

3.7.1 What is the anticipated audience for the Community Plan?

Previous Community Plans have been circulated to a broad range of Partnership stakeholders, including partners, Theme Groups, Area Forums etc with limited circulation to the public via copies available in designated public places and on the Your Moray website.

Widening the circulation of the Plan would obviously entail producing more copies with associated cost implications. Given that the new Community Plan will again be available for downloading from the website, do we really need to make more hard copies available?

3.7.2 What should be the main content of the Plan?

Previous plans have provided a brief overview of the key issues/concerns across the area and how these have been determined, an outline of how these issues will be addressed and delivered under the themes and the difference anticipated as a result, a synopsis of how Moray's communities are engaged in the process and details of how to find out more.

In view of the emphasis of the new SOA on addressing priorities as opposed to themes, it may be appropriate to consider using the priorities as the main basis of the document, setting out the key issues around each and how these will be addressed.

3.7.3 How should the Plan be presented?

Previous Plans have been presented in full colour A4 booklet format with a selection of photographs reflecting the focus of the themes and a corporate cover design.

This format appears to have worked well, although there may be a case for considering a different 'look' to differentiate the new Plan from previous plans. It is also essential that the Plan is kept simple and written in clear and understandable language.

3.7.4 Are there elements of the current Community Plan, which should be retained?

As outlined in 3.2 the current Plan basically repeats the main content of the SOA, together with a copy of the Partnership Agreement.

As mentioned in 3.7, one of the proposed reasons for the continuation of the Community Plan is to present information contained in the SOA, but do so in a more 'user-friendly' and accessible manner.

3.7.5 What should be the timeframe for the next Plan?

The current Community Plan covers a one-year time period.

Given that the SOA local outcomes are predominantly longer-term and unlikely to change much over the next few years, perhaps the next Community Plan should cover a three or five year time frame to reflect this?

- 3.8 In view of the continuing work to identify appropriate actions and targets around the priorities in the SOA (2009/10), it is anticipated that the new Community Plan would be drafted during July/August for publication in September 2009.

4 **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Community Plan / Theme Plans / Partner Plans

The Community Plan is a key document for Community Planning Partnerships, which sets out identified key priorities to be addressed and outcomes achieved over a given timeframe.

(b) Policy and Legal

As stated in the Community Planning Statutory Guidance, produced in conjunction with the Local Government in Scotland Act (2003) local authorities are required to “develop and set out a joint vision with agreed objectives for the area, normally in the form of a Community Plan”

(c) Resources (Financial, Staffing and Risks)

The financial cost of publishing the Community Plan is dependant on the format agreed as well as the number of copies produced. Previous Plans have cost around £2.5k for a print-run of 500.

(d) Consultations

The Improvement Service was consulted to determine the Scottish Government’s view of the future of Community Plans in the light of the introduction of SOAs. Its comments have been incorporated into the report.

5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 **The Community Plan 2008 is due to be revised in the light of the new SOA (2009/10). The Board is invited to consider and agree the content, format and timeframe for the new Community Plan.**

Author of Report: Roy Anderson, Community Planning Officer

Background Papers:

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