

Published November 2009

Safer Communities Programme

*A series of guidance, support
and tools for partnership working*



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SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

1. Introduction

Welcome to the **Safer Communities Programme**. The programme provides a framework for partnership support and is aimed at partner organisations who contribute to making Scotland safer and stronger. The model is not prescriptive in any way and is intended to provide a meaningful framework for national guidance and support.

Safer Communities Programme



The programme has been developed to support:

- Multi-agency strategy level groups dealing with issues relating to community safety. This might be the Executive Board of a Community Safety Partnership or a Safer and Stronger Community Planning Thematic Group.
- Staff from partner organisations who play a key role in providing support to the partnership and delivering partnership activity.

The Safer Communities Programme has been designed to support the community planning process, Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) and Best Value 2 and is designed around four key partnership principles:

- Leadership
- Governance & Accountability
- Evidence
- Better Outcomes for Communities

Guidance and support for partnerships will be tailored around the four key principles with communications, skills and knowledge embedded throughout. It is important that partnerships at a local level seek to continuously strengthen each partnership principle. In doing this we realise that success will look and feel different across Scotland and for this reason a broad range of tools and techniques will be promoted within each guidance note to ensure there is something for everyone.

The guidance will draw directly from a range of research and consultation exercises undertaken by the Scottish Government's Community Safety Unit including:

- Visits Programme
- National Community Safety Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Literature Review

The National Community Safety Convention in September 2009 provided an opportunity to present the model and engage partners in the wider debate about the capacity of national stakeholders to provide support. The National Community Safety Strategic Group met on the 9th November 2009 and formally endorsed the Safer Communities programme.

The guidance will draw on a wide range of literature on partnership working from across the UK to ensure that the content is based on sound principles and credible research. Where beneficial, guidance will be supplemented by relevant and current case studies of partnership working in Scotland. Case studies will be developed through learning sites and action research.

A wide range of guidance and support is already available on partnership working. The best approach in many cases may be to synthesize or adapt existing guidance material from elsewhere or to simply provide a signposting service. This approach is intended to help transfer learning across the multitude of partnerships that exist and in turn to help these partnerships work more effectively together.

The model is supportive of a number of key partnership guidance documents and frameworks, for example:

- SOA Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships (CoSLA, October 2008)
- SOA Development and Self Assessment Toolkit (Improvement Service, February 2008)
- A New Framework for Local Partnerships on Alcohol and Drugs (published April 2009): This is a joint Scottish Government, CoSLA and NHS framework which clarifies the roles, responsibilities and accountability of all bodies involved in tackling alcohol and drugs problems.
- A Partnership Approach to Tackling Violence Against Women in Scotland. Guidance for Multi-Agency Partnerships (due to be published late 2009): Prepared by the Multi-Agency Partnership sub group of the National Group to Address Violence Against Women.
- Multi-agency Early and Effective Intervention. Implementation Guidance (Scottish Government, July 2009)
- Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020 (Scottish Government, June 2009)
- Scottish Community Fire Safety Study to be published by the end of 2009.

2. Phasing of guidance

It is anticipated that the guidance will evolve over time as the community safety sector develops. The partnership themes have been allocated into three phases with guidance in phase one being published first. This is subject to ongoing consultation and will be amended to reflect any changes in the sector's collective priorities in the future. The development of each guide is also dependent on the relevant expertise being available and sufficient capacity within national stakeholder organisations. In addition, a range of stakeholders provide support through their current and planned activities (see Section 3).

	Phase One (2009/10)	Phase Two (2010/11)	Phase Three (2011/12)
(1) Leadership		Vision and strategic direction	Board level/political leadership Officer leadership Community leadership
(2) Governance & Accountability	Roles and responsibilities Partnership models and structures	Communicating and reporting (public and partners)	
(3) Evidence	Strategic analysis Risk management	Data collection Information Sharing Joint response planning Problem solving	Joint resource allocation
(4) Better Outcomes for Communities	Strategic planning Evaluation	Managing and improving performance Engaged and confident communities	Integrated services

The National Community Safety Strategic Group will produce an annual progress report.

3. Tasters

This section provides a taster of what's to come.

3.1 Leadership

Leadership within a partnership context has been referred to as 'collaborative', 'collective' or 'distributed' leadership' in the past, but there is limited understanding of what these terms actually mean. Leadership is required at many different levels and requires many different skills. It is clearly not an end in itself, but a means to delivering better outcomes for communities.

What does this principle cover?

- Vision and strategic direction
- Board level/political leadership
- Officer leadership
- Community leadership

What kind of questions will it answer?

- How can the partnership's senior members effectively communicate the vision and strategic direction to the public and front-line staff (including the role of innovation)?
- Which partner organisations should lead and in what situation?
- What skills and qualities should your executive board display?
- Do you need to understand the theory of leadership to display strong joint strategic leadership?
- What barriers can prevent effective leadership and how can they be overcome?
- Is the partnership strategically connected to other partnerships?

What is currently being delivered in this area?:

- The Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Scottish Government published a report based on a seminar held in 2009 to inform better leadership, and leadership development, in the future¹.
- There are five Best Value 2 (BV2)² pathfinders, which will run until the end of 2009. These pathfinder audits will refine the BV2 characteristics, and a related set of audit tools and other guidance. Vision and strategic direction and community leadership are key corporate characteristics of a Best Value council.
- The Improvement Service and its partners have developed local leadership and member development programmes exploring leadership issues supported by a range of guidance materials.
- The 14 day modular programme 'Collaborating for Outcomes in the Public Sector' is designed to engage emerging leaders from across the Public Sector in a common understanding of the Government's Purpose, the leadership challenges it presents and their organisations' roles within it.
- Delivering For Mental Health, the agenda for improving mental health care, led to the development of the leadership programme 'Leading Change'.
- There are a number of national groups that provide strategic leadership, including the ACPOS Community Safety Sub-Committee, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) Community Wellbeing and Safety Group and Executive Group and the National Community Safety Strategic Group.



¹ http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/ESRC_PP_Scot_final_tcm6-32117.pdf

² <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/BV2/>

- The Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) is the principle voice of police leadership. 'Shaping Policing in Scotland 09/10' sets out a clear commitment to create effective partnerships to collectively address the fundamental issues facing our communities.
- The Chief Fire Officers Association in Scotland (CFOAS) offers the professional view of fire officers in Scotland and provides leadership across the range of related functions. In terms of community safety, direction is provided through a dedicated portfolio, supported by principal and senior officers. This arrangement provides a common approach to support national direction and acknowledges the crucial role of fire and rescue services in making our communities safer.

3.2 Governance and Accountability

Structures, decision making, policies, membership, roles and relationships are a few things that should be carefully considered by any partnership. This can often be a complex task due to the multitude of partnerships that exist.

What does this principle cover?

- Roles and responsibilities
- Partnership models and structures
- Communicating and reporting (to the public and partners)

What kind of questions will it answer?

- What are the principles of good governance and what actions can your partnership take to implement them?
- Who are your partners and what can they bring to the table?
- What 'statutory duties' are partners required to fulfil in relation to community safety?
- Who should attend partnership meetings and at what level of seniority?
- What are the pros and cons of different partnership models?
- How do you decide what the best model of partnership is for your area?
- What does a good communications strategy look like?
- How can you promote joint accountability for your performance?

What is currently being delivered in this area?:

- The BV2 pathfinders will refine the BV2 characteristics, and a related set of audit tools and other guidance. Governance and accountability are key corporate characteristic of a Best Value council.
- The Improvement Service and its partners have developed local leadership and member development programmes exploring governance and accountability issues supported by a range of guidance materials.
- In February 2009 the Scottish Government circulated a guidance note 'Governance and Accountability for SOAs' to Community Planning Partnerships to set out what councils and their partners are committing to in signing a SOA and the subsequent implications to them of these commitments³.
- In 2006, the Scottish Executive commissioned the report 'Community Planning – Legal Issues and Frameworks' which sets out the potential advantages and disadvantages of different partnership models and structures.

³ <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/library/download-document/2228-soa-governance-and-accountability-guidance-letter-feb-2009/>

3.3 Evidence

Community Safety Partnerships are well progressed in using evidence to inform decisions and actions. The guidance will seek to build on current practice as well as support emerging practice, particularly in relation to strategic assessments and joint tasking arrangements.

What does this principle cover?

- Data collection
- Information sharing
- Strategic analysis
- Risk management
- Joint response planning
- Problem solving
- Joint resource allocation

What kind of questions will it answer?

- How do you develop a data collection plan?
- What does a good information sharing protocol look like?
- What is the role of strategic analysis?
- What level of analytical skills does your partnership require?
- How do you conduct a risk assessment of your partnership?
- How do you set up and run joint tasking meetings?
- How do you use problem solving to encourage new responses to long-term problems?
- How can your organisation better manage its mainstream and partnership resources?

What is currently being delivered in this area?:

- The BV2 pathfinders will refine the BV2 characteristics, and a related set of audit tools and other guidance. Use of resources is a key corporate characteristic of a Best Value council.
- The Scottish Police College run a number of courses for police and partner organisations. These courses touch on all aspects of the partnership model, but are particularly strong on an evidence-led approach. The Strategic Community Safety Management Course, Partnership Development Course and Strategic Assessment Course for Community Safety Partnerships provide valuable support to the community safety sector.
- Community Planning Partnerships are required to develop an area profile as the basis of the SOA, which is an integrated profile of the social, economic and environmental conditions of the area. This forms the evidence base for identifying past trends and future challenges and opportunities, and then the strategic local priorities which will be expressed as local outcomes.
- Collaborative IT systems are being developed by criminal justice partners to improve efficiency and provide quicker justice for victims, witness and suspects.

3.4 Better Outcomes for Communities

Delivering better outcomes for communities is the ultimate goal and everything covered so far supports this.

What does this principle cover?

- Strategic planning
- Integrated services
- Managing and improving performance
- Evaluation (of partnership working and of partnership activity)
- Engaged and confident communities

What kind of questions will it answer?

- How do you use analytical products to develop strategy?
- How do you know your planned activity is having a direct impact on your agreed outcomes?
- How does your strategy complement partner organisation's and other partnership's strategies?
- How can you use the SOA process to manage and improve performance?
- How and when should you undertake evaluation?
- How can you make best use of the National Standards for Community Engagement?

What is currently being delivered in this area?:

- The Improvement Service is developing the Public Service Improvement Framework for partnerships. This is a self-assessment tool, which encourages organisations to conduct a systematic and comprehensive review of their own activities and results.
- The BV2 pathfinders will refine the BV2 characteristics, and a related set of audit tools and other guidance. Community engagement and performance management and improvement are key corporate characteristics of a Best Value council.
- The Scottish Community Development Centre has developed a Community Engagement Toolkit⁴.
- The Improvement Service and its partners have developed local leadership and member development programmes exploring community engagement issues supported by a range of guidance materials.
- Participatory Budgeting Pilot Fund announced by CoSLA. Projects to be announced in November 2009.
- The Improvement Service and Scottish Government are leading on a capacity building project in relation to SOAs.
- ACPOS has taken steps to better integrate the Scottish Policing Performance Framework indicators within the SOA process.
- Fire and Rescue Authorities deliver services in line with Integrated Risk Management Plans. These plans promote safer communities across Scotland by providing a proportionate response to local risks and linking directly with the SOA process and wider community planning agenda.
- The Local Outcome Indicators Project led by the Society Of Local Authority Chief Executives and supported by the Improvement Service⁵.

⁴ <http://www.scdc.org.uk/national-standards-community-engagement/support-materials/>

⁵ <http://www.communities.idea.gov.uk> (requires registration)

- The Planning and Performance Improvement Framework provides a voluntary framework for management information to support local areas in their work to address offending by young people.
- Scottish Government and CoSLA launched an Outcomes Toolkit for Alcohol and Drugs Partnerships in 2009.
- NHS Health Scotland are leading on the development of a Mental Health Improvement Outcomes Framework.
- NHS Health Scotland has produced a number of outcome-based tools including outcomes triangles, results chains, multiple results chains and outcomes frameworks (logic models).

4. Promoting self-improving partnerships in Scotland

The table below promotes a set of key criteria under each partnership principle and is intended to support the Best Value 2 framework. This is intended to provide a common framework for the 32 local partnership arrangements. There are many self assessment/evaluation tools available and this will be explored further in the guidance on evaluation. Through the identification of strengths and weaknesses it is hoped that partnerships will better understand their own support needs.

Partnership Principle	Key Criteria
(1) Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leaders of the partnership clearly articulate the shared vision and sense of purpose to the public and front-line staff • The partnership promotes new and innovative ways of addressing long term problems • There is involvement and commitment of all partners • There is evidence of the influence of the partnership on all partners • There is political/board level leadership and involvement • There is officer leadership and involvement • There is community leadership and involvement • Equalities issues are understood and taken into account
(2) Governance & Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear shared vision and purpose • There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities • There are sound accountability arrangements • The partnership has adopted an effective model of partnership working • Partnership structures are coherent and rational and constantly reflect the partnership's new and emerging priorities • Decisions are informed, transparent and subject to public scrutiny • The capacity and capability of the people involved in the partnership are continuously developed • There is a joint communications strategy for internal and external communication

<p>(3) Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities and actions are evidence-based and focus on identified need • There is a shared approach to risk management • Appropriate information is collected, shared and acted upon under robust information sharing protocols • The analytical capacity of the partnership is sufficient to undertake meaningful strategic and operational analysis • A form of risk assessment of the partnership is carried out • Barriers have been addressed in terms of information quality, accuracy, availability and governance • The partnership encourages a problem solving approach • There is evidence of joint resource allocation or pooling of budgets (both human and financial)
<p>(4) Better Outcomes for Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partnership's vision is translated into priorities and actions • The partnership's plans influence partner organisation's plans and vice versa • The partnership has set out clear outcome-based measures which allow progress to be tracked • Performance information is used to proactively manage and improve partnership performance • There is effective reporting of partnership performance to stakeholders • The partnership has delivered its intended outcomes • Evaluation is embedded across partnership's activity to maximise the use of resources • The impact of partnership working is evaluated • The partnership adopts a systematic approach to continuous improvement through self-assessment or third-party assessment • The partnership is committed to community engagement • The partnership understands and reflects communities' needs and aspirations • The partnership builds (community) capacity and involves communities • Joint consultations across partner organisations are carried out to minimize duplication



Contact us

Visit www.scotland.gov.uk/communitysafety and follow the link to “Information for practioners” for access to the latest community safety information, tools and guidance.

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