

Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan Evaluation

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Introduction

The Community Planning Partnership

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) brings together all public bodies in the Falkirk area to create a mechanism for joint working, driving improvement and addressing potentially deep-rooted social issues in the area. Partners work with each other and their communities to identify key issues that are affecting the Falkirk area; whether they affect the whole area, specific communities or communities of interest and target the causes rather than the consequences of inequalities.

In Falkirk, Community Planning Partners include:

- CVS Falkirk
- Falkirk Community Trust
- Falkirk Council
- Forth Valley College
- The Health and Social Care Partnership
- NHS Forth Valley
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- SESTran
- Skills Development Scotland

Governance

Over the last year there have been many changes to reporting structures within the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership. Following a self-assessment review, the CPP Strategic Board and CPP Executive Groups merged into the Community Planning Board to provide overall leadership and make best use of resources. Reporting to the Board, the Community Planning Improvement Group was established to provide operational support to the Board. It bring together officers from different organisations and delivery groups to ensure joint identification of needs, a shared approach to engagement, and to develop the Falkirk Plan.

The Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan

Each Community Planning Partnership in Scotland must have a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan which identifies outcomes to improve, a description of planned improvement and a time period to achieve this. This plan will show how the partnership will target resources to tackle these issues and how it will measure outcome improvements. In Falkirk, this is currently the Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan (SOLD) 2015-2020:

Our Vision: Falkirk is 'the place to be'

Key Priorities

- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Maximising job creation and employability
- Minimising the impact of substance misuse

- Addressing the impact of poverty on children

Outcomes

- Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live
- We will grow our local economy to secure successful business, investment and employment
- Our children will develop into resilient, confident and successful adults
- Our population will be healthier
- People will live full, independent and positive lives within supportive communities
- Our area will be a safer place to live

The Falkirk Plan

The Community Planning Partnership is currently developing the Falkirk Plan, to update and replace the Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan. The Community Planning Improvement Group is currently researching and planning this process, which includes:

- Strategic Needs Assessment: The group is researching inequalities in the area through data and community lived experience. This assessment will highlight key issues in Falkirk.
- Community Participation: the group is developing a new approach to community conversations so a dialogue can be maintained with different groups throughout planning and delivery of the Falkirk Plan.
- Co-production: the plan will be developed alongside the local community and anyone who wants to be involved in the decision-making process, can be.

In order to measure outcomes, a performance management framework, monitoring schedule, and robust performance indicators will be established. These will be evaluated annually, and published in a report to ensure the Community planning Partnership is accountable to its communities.

Evaluation

An evaluation template was distributed to SOLD Delivery Groups to measure progress over the SOLD period. The templates asked groups key questions about:

1. The Delivery Group and its achievements;
2. The SOLD and its delivery;
3. The Falkirk Plan and what the group sees as priorities, including Covid-19 recovery.

This evaluation summarises the responses.

Section 1: The Delivery Group

This section asked each group about the delivery group itself, to understand its membership and any challenges and achievements it had. Most groups reported positive experiences of partnership working, both within and between the groups.

Chair and Membership

There are 5 delivery groups that are chaired by Falkirk Council – Fairer Falkirk, Falkirk Economic Partnership, the Children’s Commission, The Public Protection Chief Officers Group and the Local Employability Partnership are all chaired by Falkirk Council. The Health and Wellbeing group is chaired by the NHS and the Mental Health and Wellbeing group and Alcohol and Drugs Partnership are both chaired by the Health and Social Care Partnership. The latter was previously chaired by the Council until late 2019.

Each group has a wide variety of partners which are relevant to the subject matter, and different services from across the Council. Additional organisations are also included when particularly relevant, for example the Falkirk Economic Partnership has private sector partners. Most groups have strategic links to one another and membership spans various groups, for example the deputy chair of the Health and Wellbeing group also sits on the Children’s Commission, and the Co-ordinator for the ADP also sits on the Mental Health and Wellbeing group. There are many other examples of this cross-working which shows the delivery groups working across themes.

Main Achievements during the SOLD period

Group Governance and Activity

Group Membership

Some groups mentioned the need for membership to be revised in order to make sure all relevant officers and organisations are represented. This is something the the groups could revisit particularly following the development of the new Falkirk plan and associated conversations which will involve new partners and community representatives.

Partnership Events

- The Health and Wellbeing Group hosted an event in February 2018 with over 50 partners attending, to seek fresh ideas and partnerships to tackle our 5 trickiest and most challenging issues: Physical activity and young people; Physical Activity and adults; Smoking and pregnancy; Breastfeeding; and Food availability and skills. This informed the Delivery Plan for the next 2 years.
- The Children’s Commission had a highly positive GIRFEC/ ICSP visit from Scottish Government in May 2019. The group was highlighted as a strength in driving children’s planning and the visit highlighted a refocus on GIRFEC and Family Support was needed which were then by the Commission Leadership Group.
- A number of public protection events were delivered to the public and to staff across the partnership.

Development of Partnership Plans

- Towards a Fairer Falkirk 2019-2024
- Falkirk Economic Strategy 2015-2025
- The Integrated Children's Service Plan 2020 to 2023, and previously 2017-2020
- NHS Forth Valley Primary Care Improvement Plan 2018-2021
- Falkirk HSCP Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022
- Falkirk Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan 2020-2023
- Falkirk Child Poverty Action Report 2019

Group Action Delivery

Each delivery group is a multi-agency group. These partners have all worked together over the SOLD period of 2016-2020 to improve outcomes for key priorities and achieved the following:

Improving Mental Health and Wellbeing

- The Partnership funded Decider Skills Training programmes to teach adults and children the skills to understand and manage their own emotions and mental health. Based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and dialectical behavioural therapy (DBT), it has the potential to be adapted for a range of service settings including adult mental health, child and adolescent, learning disability, substance misuse and prisons.
- Since 31 January 2019, Mental Health Acute Assessment and Treatment Service (MHAATS) have been providing pre-hospital triage for people who come to the attention of the Police. The aim is to reduce unnecessary Emergency Department visits, reduce police time in Emergency Department and improve the experience for the patient.
- The Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) arranged training for the Primary Care Mental Health Nurses in relation to the delivery of Alcohol Brief Intervention. The team was provided with Recovery Resource Kits, which contain all of the relevant resources required to support the recovery of those affected by substance use.
- Primary Care Mental Health Nurses (PCMHN's) have been introduced in 7 clusters and 40 practices in Forth Valley. For the Falkirk Partnership, they are now working in 19 practices.

Case Study: Mental Health Acute Assessment and Treatment Service

This service was introduced on 31st January 2019 and provides a pre-hospital triage system for people that come to the attention of the Police. It is for people suspected of suffering from a mental health issue, or where the individual discloses symptoms which warrant an emergency mental health assessment, for example reporting suicidal intent. The service aims to reduce the number of unnecessary trips to the Emergency Department, which saves resources at the hospital, reduces police time spent going to the hospital, and improves the experience of the patient by getting them more appropriate treatment earlier.

On average, 65 people are seen by the service every month and in 92% of cases the team can provide support without needing an Emergency Department visit. There is no accurate measurement for efficiencies for Police Scotland but it is likely it reduces police time spent going to the hospital.

Maximising Job Creation and Employability

- Implemented the Fair Start Scotland Employability Programme supporting over 600 local residents with significant barriers to employment over the initial 2 years, now entering the final third year.
- Introduced Foundation Apprenticeships in Falkirk schools with all eight secondary schools involved and 199 starts in 2019/20; one of the highest numbers in any Local Authority in Scotland.
- Implemented the Parental Employment Support Fund to provide specialist support to families experiencing poverty both in pre-work and in-work poverty situations.
- Implemented the Project Search programme for young people with learning disabilities; two programmes ran in partnership with Forth Valley College, NHS Forth Valley, SERCO & Falkirk Council resulting in a number of supported employment opportunities.
- Introduced the No One Left Behind schools transitions provision across all secondary schools, replacing activity agreements.
- Ongoing participation in a national group to improve employment outcomes for care experienced young people.
- Secured funding to recruit a Family Firm Co-ordinator and Care Experience Assistant to further develop a family firm approach with corporate parenting partners.

Case Study: Project Search

Project Search is a one-year internship programme for adults aged 18-24 with learning disabilities, which provides experience in a variety of roles within the Forth Valley Royal Hospital in Larbert. The programme offers a mix of workplace learning and classroom activities, with the support of a College lecturer, job coach and hospital staff.

In the first year of the programme in 2018-19, there were eleven interns taking part in the programme, during which one withdrew from the programme. Upon completion, one intern secured paid employment with SERCO, and the remaining nine secured paid employment with other organisations.

The programme continued in 2019-20, and so far three interns have secured paid employment. The programme has been approved by all partners to continue for a third year and partners continue to work closely with NHS and SERCO to identify further work placements and job opportunities for Interns.

Minimising the Impact of Substance Misuse

- Delivered the Social Influence Programme in schools leading to a marked reduction in tobacco, alcohol and drug use in secondary age pupils.

- Delivered two research projects, one to understand non-engagement with our services, and one to understand the circumstances relating to Non-Fatal Overdoses, in an attempt to reduce Drug Deaths.
- Provided and promoted opportunities for recovery via Recovery Cafes which has led to increased footfall.
- Developed employability opportunities through ADP Funded Peer Support Project to support those in recovery, in partnership with Cyrenians.
- Improved support for children diagnosed with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders by implementing a universal pathway for more concise diagnosis of the condition, and campaigns to reduce alcohol consumption during pregnancy.
- Promoted awareness of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders through workforce development and encouraged early referral.
- The HSCP introduced an Alcohol Related Brain Injury Team, to which the FADP provided additional workers to support rehabilitation.

Case Study: The Social Influence Programme

This programme was delivered between 2014 and 2019 and aimed to reduce substance use in pupils by challenging perceptions of how much their peers used substances, which may influence their own decisions. It was run across the Forth Valley with 14 participating secondary schools: 7 from Falkirk, 4 from Stirling and 3 from Clackmannanshire. Initially S1-S3 participated but later the focus was S2 and S3 due to low reported use among that year group. The table below shows the number of pupils that reported using tobacco, alcohol or cannabis, or having been drunk in the last 30 days at the beginning of the programme and after the 6 week intervention.

Substance	Before	After	Improvement
<i>Tobacco users</i>	210	97	54%
<i>Alcohol users</i>	469	235	50%
<i>Drunkenness</i>	238	122	48%
<i>Cannabis users</i>	93	49	47%

Addressing the Impact of Poverty on Children:

- Supported people through the roll-out of Universal Credit
- Supported community organisations to provide food and activities to families during school holidays
- Revised charges for people on income-related benefits which resulted in the expansion of free school meals and removal of breakfast club and music tuition fees for people on income related benefits from August 2020
- Introduced free period products across the area
- Implemented Advice and Support Hubs focused on supporting people in or at risk of poverty
- Increased understanding of poverty across the partnership through listening to people's lived experiences. This led to an increase in the school clothing grant from £50 to £120 per child.

Case Study: Holiday Food Provision

Children with free school meal entitlement have guaranteed free meals during term time, but during the school holidays low income families are at a higher risk of food poverty and insecurity because of the extra cost of providing these meals themselves.

In 2019/20 a budget of £40,000 was allocated to support community groups and foodbanks provide activities and food to reduce holiday hunger. This included:

- £15,000 allocated to Community groups providing Holiday Clubs during the 2019 school holidays. This provided support for 2348 Children and 852 Adults in attendance, and provided 15,570 meals.
- £8,496 allocated to Falkirk Community Trust to deliver a week's free sport coaching and food during Easter and summer 19. This provided 210 children with a week's sport coaching, 40 children with breakfast over a seven-week period, and 30 children with lunch over a seven-week period.
- £4,782 allocated to Falkirk foodbank, to provide families with a 10 day food parcel during summer 2019, which provided food for 331 adults and 541 children, totalling 9,920 meals.

Main Challenges

Groups were also asked about their main challenges over this period. This could have related to partnership or group issues, bureaucracy or social issues they were trying to tackle. Main challenges impacting groups and their functions included:

- Reduced budgets, different funding streams and reduced staff capacity have been a challenge to delivering actions.
- Changes to national strategies has further stressed capacity of partners.
- The SOLD having a wide variety of outcomes and priorities has made co-ordinating delivery across the partnership complicated.
- Partnership working and engagement is often positive, yet challenging to translate this into significant meaningful input to the communities and residents of Falkirk.
- Covid-19 has presented a new challenge for all, which will remain a challenge through development and implementation of the Falkirk Plan.

Main challenges with regard to social issues, included:

- Continued roll out of welfare reform changes impacting on people living on a low income, particularly universal credit, personal independence payments and reductions in tax credits.
- Drug-related deaths has increased, which remains a focus for the partnership.
- The launch of Suicide Statistics reported an increase by 104 probable deaths across Scotland, and that Falkirk reported a 45.9% increase in suicide rate in data for 2004-2008 to 2014-2018. Male suicide rate increased by 26% and Female suicide rates by 138%.
- Number of local employers, entry level jobs and fair and sustainable employment opportunities.
- Breadth and diversity of support required to assist individuals with multiple barriers to engage in employability support and progress towards employment.

The Effects of Covid-19

Each group was asked how the effects of Covid-19 will impact up on delivery group's main client group, service or industry. The response was overwhelmingly that the pandemic will likely exacerbate each of the issues or industries related to each group.

Data has already shown more people are losing their jobs, signing up for Universal Credit and being pushed further into poverty. It is anticipated that local unemployment will increase by more than 13,000 claimants locally over the next 6 months. Mental health is being affected through isolation, as is physical health from spending more time indoors and the closure of sport and exercise venues, greatly impacting the stress on health services. Each of these issues also are more likely to affect those who are already at risk, low-income or in deprived areas widening the existing gap between the most and least deprived. Vulnerable people will need to be targeted through the Falkirk plan to ensure we are not only targeting the biggest issues, but the most affected groups.

One group added that there has been a positive to come from Covid-19, which is community activism. During the lockdown, new groups emerged where people wanted to help the most vulnerable in their communities, helping deliver food parcels, shopping or prescriptions, many of which have since become constituted community groups. It has also strengthened the relationship between communities and public services through mutual support. This provides a great opportunity to utilise these relationships to create a plan alongside the community and utilise the knowledge of the communities themselves.

Section 2: Evaluating the SOLD

Reporting on outcomes across the groups is not consistent. A shared reporting template with clear aims and measures specified will be developed by the Community Planning Improvement Group to help this for the next plan. A smaller set of actions, informed by community views and agreed by the partnership will ensure a more focussed plan that drives the actions of delivery groups.

Key Actions

Each group was asked if the key actions in the SOLD were what they considered to be the most relevant for their group. Most said they were appropriate but needed refreshed; though one group indicated the priorities were set by the group before membership changed and were appropriate but not necessarily what the new members would have chosen. One group responded that the key actions identified within the SOLD were not referred to at any point when planning collective activity within their delivery group. This again highlights the need for consistency in the way actions are developed.

Improved Outcomes

Five groups identified improved outcomes over the SOLD period, from 2015-2020, including:

- Reduction in overall unemployment of 0.1%.
- Increase in employer engagement locally with more opportunities for disadvantaged groups to access employment opportunities.
- Although poverty has risen in Falkirk, this has occurred nationally and recent research shows it has risen slightly less in the Falkirk area when compared to the whole of Scotland.
- Increased access to Recovery Cafes across Falkirk.
- A Substance Use Needs Assessment was carried out in 2018, to ensure that all population needs relating to substance use were defined clearly for strategic planning purposes.
- The Health and Wellbeing group saw improved outcomes across their priority groups, and where improvement was not being seen they held a partnership event to get fresh ideas.

Lessons Learned

A number of principles for developing the Falkirk Plan can be taken from the experience of the delivery groups:

- Working with communities is essential to developing a plan that will provide meaningful change. Lived experience can provide something that data alone cannot, and working with communities ensures their awareness and participation in the delivery of the plan.
- Engagement needs to be far more participatory than it has in the past, using true co-production methods, and developing priorities with the community.
- Communities are doing more for themselves, suggesting a lighter touch from statutory organisations, and cutting through red tape can be beneficial. One group stated there is “too much ‘planning’ and not enough ‘community’ in community planning”. It is critical that communities are supported and provided adequate resources to take on this role.
- A clear reporting schedule is necessary to provide accountability and a template for reporting should be provided to ensure consistency. This appears to have been stuck to at the beginning of the SOLD being in place, but for the most part was not continued.
- One group stated there may not have been an appropriate monitoring arrangement in place, meaning outcomes measurement has not been possible. This must be fully developed for

the new Falkirk Plan so we can measure and report on the outcomes and impact we are making as a partnership.

- A smaller set of actions, informed by community views and agreed by the partnership, will ensure a more focussed plan that drives the actions of delivery groups.

Section 3: The Falkirk Plan

Groups agree the Falkirk Plan should be much more focused on communities than the SOLD, and the development and delivery of the plan must be in partnership with communities. There has been great partnership with communities and community groups through the SOLD period, and this has grown through the pandemic so these links and relationships must be built upon.

The Vision

The vision will be developed with the wider Falkirk community, but groups were asked what they think the themes of the vision should be. Partners suggested:

- Understanding, engagement and involvement
- The most vulnerable in our communities that need additional support and help accessing services
- Alignment and integration of services

Priorities

The current SOLD has 6 outcomes and 4 priorities. Many partners have warned that this spreads the focus of the partnership too widely and having a smaller number of priorities would allow the partnership to focus resources on tackling the greatest problems more efficiently.

The evaluation proposed that poverty, mental health and wellbeing, and economic recovery and employment could be a good place to start, as initial feedback from communities and early data research suggest these could be the main issues for post-Covid-19 recovery. Groups were asked their opinion on these initial priorities.

Most agreed, with one group suggesting these are amended slightly to employment, poverty and community wellbeing as that could cover existing priorities relating to health and wellbeing as well as wider needs within local communities.

Two groups used the space to highlight issues related to their own group's priorities, which will be considered during the Strategic Needs Assessment, and one group issued a concern regarding highlighting issues prior to engaging with the wider community. They stated, 'If a co-production approach has been put forward communities either place or communities of interest they have not been involved up until this point, therefore we can't really say it is co-production approach.' This group also highlighted the need to relate priorities to the National Performance Framework, which is also stated in the Community Empowerment Act, and local Community Action Plans.

Focus for the First Year

Groups were asked what they considered to be priorities on which to focus for the first year of the new Falkirk Plan, concerning recovery from the impacts of Covid-19. Some groups reiterated the priorities from the previous section. Other suggestions included:

- Health and wellbeing, including mental health, gender-based violence and substance use
- Ensuring support for people on a low income

- Skills Development
- Emerging vulnerabilities that may be unforeseen

Some groups chose to highlight principles that the partnership should adhere to when developing priorities, such as:

- Service redesign around people's needs with involvement of communities, place or interest, within service redesign
- Engagement and building community capacity
- Prevention and early intervention
- Focussed on making a real difference

Groups also highlighted the third sector and community groups in particular, noting that one positive that has come from the pandemic was the response that came from communities. People have come together to help their neighbours and we should ensure we are supporting communities and groups to provide support within those communities, and ensure these groups are sustainable. We must also learn from our own response and build on the relationships we have built with our communities.

Covid-19 Recovery Plan

Many services and organisations within the Partnership are developing their own response plans for Covid-19 recovery. Groups were asked what role the CPP could take to add value in the recovery process. Most groups agreed that a separate CPP Covid-19 recovery plan was not necessary, but it would be helpful for the CPP to review existing plans. This could be to identify common themes, to provide a summary for partners, or to identify any additional value the partnership can contribute together.

Partner recovery plans should help inform the recovery actions within the new Falkirk plan by identifying where a multi-agency approach could add value.

Comments

People used this opportunity to emphasise a few key points for the Falkirk Plan. The Plan must:

- Be clear, concise and simple
- Have a clear link from communities up to the National outcomes
- Be outcomes-focussed
- Build on the momentum of change that occurred from the pandemic
- Have a strong monitoring plan

SOLD Evaluation: Summary

The Delivery Groups

- Each Group reported positive achievements over the last 5 years covering the SOLD period. Some groups had more robust measurement in place, particularly when the group has their own policy or plan in place.
- Although the groups are clearly linked to the SOLD plan and its priorities and outcomes, the link is not always consistent. For example there are 8 delivery groups that directly link into an outcome or priority, which were reported on, but there is no specific group for outcome 5 'People live full, independent and positive lives within supportive communities', and the Child poverty priority is shared between the Fairer Falkirk and Children's Commission Groups. Again, this is not necessarily an issue but consideration should be taken for the next plan to have consistent reporting from groups on priorities.
- Many of the groups reported issues with resources and funding, and at the moment there aren't any specific shared budgets for achieving outcomes.

The Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan

- Actions were not created consistently across delivery groups. They vary in number and specificity so measurement would be quite difficult.
- Some groups used actions that were in their existing plans, others developed plans based on the SOLD actions, and some groups did not refer to the SOLD when delivering partnership actions. This highlights the need for a robust reporting plan so each group understands how they are contributing to the plan.
- Outcomes were not consistently measured so a monitoring plan should be developed alongside the Falkirk Plan. The Children's Commission delivered the 'leading improvement and evidencing outcomes programme' to partners involved in policy development which was valuable for learning to develop measurement of outcomes. This consistency of language and approach should be built in to the Community Planning Partnership from the Board so each partner is using it.
- Engagement approaches were reported by many groups as inconsistent and at times weak. This is something that needs to be at the forefront of developing the Falkirk Plan.

The Falkirk Plan

- The plan should be focussed on outcomes, and target the most vulnerable within our communities.
- It must be built on community participation and capacity building.
- It should have fewer priorities on which to focus, and consideration should be made as to how these priorities will be resourced.
- The SOLD was developed around the same time as the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act was published and was likely published before the guidance. There is a better opportunity to more closely follow this guidance now, for example linking the outcomes to the National Performance Framework, and tackling the biggest issues rather than catch-all outcomes.