Shetland’s

Single Outcome Agreement

with

The Scottish Government

In partnership with
Shetland Community Planning Partners

HIE Logo
1. Purpose of the Shetland Single Outcome Agreement

- Shared Purpose between National and Local Government

“The Shetland Resolution” sets out our vision in its introduction;

“We shall work together for a future that’s better and brighter. In particular, we aim to create a secure livelihood, look after our stunning environment and care well for our people and our culture.”

The resolution then goes on to describe more detailed aims for our Economy, Environment and Society. It sets out the key “outcomes” for Shetland and is therefore the starting point for any agreement between Shetland and the Scottish Government, who have now also chosen to adopt this “outcome” approach.

- Shared National and Local Objectives

There are 5 National Strategic Objectives which support the governments overarching purpose to enhance sustainable economic growth. They are;

- **WEALTHIER & FAIRER** - Enable businesses and people to increase their wealth and more people to share fairly in that wealth.
- **SMARTER** - Expand opportunities for Scots to succeed from nurture through to life long learning ensuring higher and more widely shared achievements.
- **HEALTHIER** - Help people to sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to health care.
- **SAFER & STRONGER** - Help local communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer places to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life.
- **GREENER** - Improve Scotland’s natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it.

They, and the National Outcomes which underpin these are also very much in line with the objectives set out in the Shetland Resolution and already reported against through the information published in “**Sustaining Shetland**”

- Shared Improvement and Communications

As “Sustaining Shetland” already reports trends, improvements and issues across Shetland Society, Economic, Environmental and Cultural trends it will be adapted and extended to include the monitoring of improvement targets on the indicators selected to manage the Shetland Single Outcome Agreement.
2. Background to Single Outcome Agreement

The Concordat, published by the Scottish government on 14th November 2007, sets out the terms of a new relationship between the Scottish Government and local government, based on mutual respect and partnership.

It underpins the funding to be provided to local government over the period 2008-09 to 2010-11. The new relationship is represented by a package of measures, introduced in the concordat, and is endorsed by both the Scottish Ministers and by the COSLA Presidential Team. The Scottish Government and local government, through COSLA, will work together to develop policy in areas where local government has a key interest. Both sides will also work together to discuss and agree implementation and resource issues relating to these policy areas. It is recognised that, in some instances, whether through the development of new policy initiatives or for other reasons, there may be exceptional funding pressures which local authorities are unable to meet. It is clearly impossible to anticipate all the pressures at the start of the process. In such cases, both sides agree that any difficulties will be addressed jointly between the Scottish Government and local government, as part of a developing mature relationship.

A central proposal of the Concordat was the creation of a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) between each Council and the Scottish Government, based on 15 key national outcomes agreed in the Concordat. The national outcomes reflect the Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework, but they also reflect established corporate and community plan commitments across Scotland’s Councils and Community Planning Partnerships. As importantly, progress on the mutually agreed outcomes for Scotland as a whole (the ‘national’ outcomes) cannot in most cases happen unless progress is made at local level. Through the Concordat, Councils are committed to supporting progress at national level through improvement in outcomes at local level.

Key Points from the Concordat

The following bulleted points are the key areas proposed in the package of measures held within the Concordat,

- Each local authority would aim to reach a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) with the Scottish Government at the earliest opportunity, however by the 31st March 2008 at the latest, based on the national outcomes and, under a common framework, local outcomes to take account of local priorities.

- In 2007-08, funding to local government was provided in the local government finance settlement and in a series of ring fenced specific grants. In 2007-08, these specific grants (which include Police Grant) totalled £2.7 billion. As part of the package proposed, a considerable
number of these specific grants will be rolled up and transferred into the local government settlement.

- In particular, the Scottish Government will work with local government on a new performance reporting system which over time will replace the myriad of existing systems and will provide regular, timely and transparent reporting to the Scottish Government on progress against national outcomes, and to local communities on progress against related local outcomes (and indicators). Each council will be required to submit a single report around the turn of the financial year on the year just finished and plans for the year to come, starting in 2008-09, setting out progress and achievements towards the national outcomes. Over and above these, with the exception of the requirements associated with statutory requirements, any agreed transitional arrangements in moving to an outcomes based approach, ongoing statistical returns and formal inspections, local authorities will not be asked to submit any other monitoring returns or plans to the Scottish Government without prior agreement.

- That local authorities will be able to retain – for the first time - all their efficiency savings to re-deploy against ongoing pressures.

- That COSLA and the Scottish Government will put in place arrangements jointly to oversee and monitor the new partnership and, as part of this, to assess how the new arrangements are working, how each side is fulfilling the commitments made, and how any significant new pressures associated with the ongoing development of government policy might best be accommodated.

For the entire package to remain intact, and as part of their contribution to the new relationship, the Scottish Government, local government and community planning partners will each do what is required to ensure delivery of key government policies and programmes.

3. **Scope of the Agreement.**

   The Shetland Single Outcome Agreement has been developed to include all aspects of local authority services, including those delivered with partners. Full Community Planning partnership engagement has been obtained through relevant strategic groups and the Shetland Community Planning Board have endorsed the agreement at its meeting on the 10th March 2008.

4. **Community Planning, Best Value, Equalities & Sustainable Development Duties.**

   As part of their obligations under the Local Government Act (2003) the Council and our Community Planning Partners are committed to meeting a
range of duties relating to Community Planning, Best Value, Equalities & Sustainable Development.

The Shetland Single Outcome agreement seeks to reinforce our commitment to discharging these duties through its inclusive development with Community Planning partners, its governance, consultation and communication methods and its specific outcome commitments to key indicators of equality and sustainable development.

- **Commitment to Equality**

As part of our obligation under the Local Government Act (2003) the Council and our Community Planning Partners are committed to ensuring that equal opportunities exists for all, throughout all our services. We, the council and our Community Planning Partners, have also committed to decreasing any inequalities, which may exist within Shetland.

- **Commitment to Sustainable Development**

Shetland Islands Council believe that we must meet our present needs without impinging on future generations. We view sustainable development as economic development, social development, environmental protection and cultural development.

On a day-to-day level, sustainable development is about incomes and money, health, housing and education, a safe and pleasant environment, how we use and manage biodiversity and access to transport, leisure and other services: and about these areas working in balance rather than in competition for resources.

It is not about specific actions so much as believing in a set of values based on:

- The wise use of all resources (economic, human and natural);
- A strong commitment to inclusive local decision making and democracy; and
- More integrated working.

Generally, people have a natural desire to improve their quality of life. Sustainability means that, in doing so, progress in (for example) the quality of jobs, housing, transport and amenities is shared by all and does not come at the expense of the environment or earth’s resources. Tomorrow is important, in terms of the economy, communities and the environment but a sustainable approach also offers benefits for today\(^1\).

- **Commitment to Best Value through ensuring we are being efficient in everything we do**

\(^1\) Report to SIC Executive Committee, 20.06.06
We are committed to ways of improving our business to make sure that the priorities outlined in the plan can be delivered in an efficient and sustainable way.

5. Stakeholder Consultation & Community Involvement

The Shetland community was consulted in 2004 on what it felt were the most important issues for Shetland over the next 20 to 30 years (Long-range Forecast). The produced “The Shetland Resolution” and the detailed results of this exercise, as well as the feedback from “Your Voice” (a panel of 600 volunteers from Shetland) and other data sources went into creating “Sustaining Shetland”. This document sets out the key measures of social, economic, environmental and cultural trends in Shetland.

From this data, a set of “Shetland Priorities and Targets” were developed by the Community Planning Board, as a way of setting some long-term aspirations for Shetland. The Community Planning Board agreed these on 2nd April 2007. The Shetland Islands Council, as a lead member of the Community Planning Board, agreed on the 4th July 2007 to help achieve and support these aspirations. These Targets and Priorities, which align effectively with the purpose targets set out in the Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework, are set out in “Sustaining Shetland”.

The “Shetland Resolution” has been widely circulated, “Shetland Priorities and Targets”, were put on partners internet sites and the Council’s intranet, handed out to local shops and put up as flyers around council offices to initiate and encourage debate. There are different mechanisms which will be used for engaging with wider Shetland community to enable ownership of the Single Outcome Agreement. The Council and Its partners propose to achieve this by engaging with various local groups and media resources. This could be – but is not limited to - Local Service Delivery Groups, Dialogue Youth, Local Youth Clubs, WRVS, Schools, use of the local radio, newspapers and online bulletins and Shetland council of Social services.

6. Governance of the Agreement

As required at this stage, the Shetland Single Outcome Agreement is a formal relationship between Shetland Islands Council and the Scottish Government. However it has been developed with the understanding that neither National or Local outcomes can be delivered by individual agencies. Governance arrangements for the Shetland Single Outcome Agreement are also expected to develop over time.

As a key strategic document the SOA will be agreed by a meeting of the full Shetland Islands Council, and initially monitoring and scrutiny
arrangements are the official responsibility and obligation of the Council. In practice these sign-off, monitoring and scrutiny arrangements will be discharged from the outset in full co-operation with Community Planning partners through the Shetland Community Planning Board, and the strategic groups which deliver Community Planning on the ground.

Examples of these groups are:
- Community Health Partnership,
- ZetTrans,
- Environmental Action team,
- Community Safety Partnership,
- Regeneration Partnership and
- Health Action Team.

Broadly speaking each outcome, or group of outcomes, has been identified as the lead responsibility of one or more local agencies or strategic groups to deliver, although it is readily acknowledged that many require the concerted effort of a number of groups.

These strategic groups are Community Planning in practice and already have established monitoring and scrutiny arrangements in place with Council Committees, NHS Board, Northern Constabulary and other partners.

These arrangements will remain in place and it will be the week to week responsibility of these strategic groups to co-ordinate the delivery of the actions required to achieve the outcomes we seek. They will gather the data that informs the indicators and targets we have agreed, and report progress to the relevant Council committee or other partner board. They will also propose and bring forward recommendations on the actions of partners required to bring outcomes on track as necessary.

It is proposed that the Community Planning Board’s performance management framework will move away from independent performance reporting by each strategic group, to a twice yearly shared update of “Sustaining Shetland” which will include Single Outcome Agreement performance information. This will provide the opportunity for performance across all outcomes to be discussed by the full Community Planning Partnership, and further priorities, actions or targets debated and agreed.

Issues requiring the routine or more immediate attention or action by partner organisations will be dealt with through a core group of key officers and office bearers from the main agencies meeting on a frequent and regular basis.
7. Partnership and Best Value Focus

These governance proposals start from the basic assumption underlying the concept of a Single Outcome Agreement. That it is the shared objective of the Scottish Government and Shetland Islands Community Planning Partners to minimise bureaucracy and focus all possible resources and efforts on delivering the best services to the advantage of Scotland and Shetland’s citizens.

They are therefore set out to move locally towards the most streamlined arrangements which will meet all partners needs for accountability and transparency, and be the most effective at delivering the desired outcomes with the minimum overhead in duplication or repetition.

It is anticipated that the Scottish Government adopts the same overall approach in management of the SOA.

8. Ongoing Development of the SOA

At whatever point formal relationships with Community Planning Partnerships come within the scope of Single Outcome Agreements these governance arrangements will be updated and adapted. It is expected that the practical joint working, planning and progress monitoring of partners will have become that much more embedded by that stage.

Until that point is reached it is not expected that the Governance arrangements of partners can be changed. Therefore the translation of Single Outcome Agreement priorities and targets into actions will require independent partner endorsement in line with their own arrangements.

Once there is a full integration of all partners within the Single Outcome Agreement arrangements it is anticipated that the Council will no longer be required to develop and monitor an independent Corporate Plan. Indeed at that stage the fully integrated development of the strategies and action plans of partnership strategic groups may render departmental and service plans of many parts of the Council, or other organisations also largely redundant.

9. Refreshing Community Ownership of the SOA

The democratic accountability of the Council and the commitment of the Council and all its partners to meaningful consultation with communities and individual service users will continue to be the fundamental basis for the establishment of priorities and key actions. A significant number of priority national and local outcomes can only be measured through canvassing customer or citizen’s opinions. We shall also seek to continue to update our understanding of individuals and communities opinions and aspirations when doing that work.
10. **Change and Development**

The agreement of significant changes to the content or prioritisation of the Single Outcome Agreement will require formal adoption by Shetland Islands Council at this stage. However the Council will also require adequate consultation to have been held with relevant Community Planning Partners.

11. **Local Context, Outcomes and Commitments**

This is covered through a combination of the Shetland Outcomes, Indicators, Targets and Actions table and “Sustaining Shetland” which are appended to this Report.

In “Sustaining Shetland” (appendix 2) we have;

- A comprehensive profile of Shetland drawing on a wide range of indicators
- Trending and comparative information set out simply and clearly against these.
- National Strategic Objectives Cross referenced to Shetland Priorities and Targets,

In “Shetland Outcomes, Indicators, Targets and Actions” (appendix 1) we have;

- National Outcomes cross referenced to Local Outcomes.
- Improvement targets for Local Outcomes where appropriate.
- The selected National and Local Indicators by which local outcomes will be tracked.
- Actions and commitments by the Council, Community Planning Partners and the Scottish Government to enable delivery of the local outcomes as shared priorities.

The data in Sustainable Shetland provides a comprehensive report on all main factors affecting quality of life outcomes in Shetland.

The Shetland Single Outcome Agreement highlights those outcomes with particular improvement targets, and the relevant actions and commitments required locally, and from the Scottish Government, to deliver them.

12. **Performance Management**

The Councils current performance management framework requires progress against the Shetland Island Councils Corporate Plan to be formally reported and monitored twice yearly to the full Council. During the
initial implementation of the Single Outcome Agreement this twice yearly cycle will become a joint performance reporting requirement against the Councils Corporate Plan and an update of Sustaining Shetland provided to all Community Planning Partners as the SOA monitoring vehicle.

This will allow the Council to focus on those areas and actions where it specifically needs to take action in this interim phase. As far as possible the Councils Service planning and Service performance will be integrated to the reporting of Strategic Groups with any duplication being eliminated. This may result in the remaining Service plan and performance information only needing to be reported in a simplified form through the management chain rather than through an independent series of member briefings.

This alignment of performance reporting should ensure that the significant overlap between the Councils Corporate Plan and the Shetland Single Outcome Agreement does not require dual reporting and that the multiple planning. It should also mean reporting of the same information does not need to be done by strategic groups and services in so many local and national forums.

The Council and other partners continue to have independent financial arrangements but all will more towards a unified cycle of Single Outcome Agreement Update, Strategic Plan Review, budget setting, and as long as still necessary, Corporate and Service Planning.

13. **Self-Assessment and Collective Assessment**

The principle self-assessment activity will be the bi-annual update of Sustaining Shetland, which will highlight those areas where outcomes and / or the actions required to achieve them are off plan.

The full range of Community Planning Partners will produce this update, including critical contributions by the Scottish Government, particularly in respect of nationally collated data and required national actions.

It is assumed that the Scottish Government will require external scrutiny and inspection regimes to migrate towards Single Outcome Agreement arrangements and will conduct their activity on that basis.

14. **Risk Management**

The Councils risk management arrangements will be updated to align Corporate and Community risks alongside the Single Outcome Agreement arrangements. Community Planning Partners will be invited to share and participate in those activities.
15. **Arrangements for Arbitration & Dispute Resolution**

It is anticipated that national guidance on these aspects will be provided where the Scottish Government is involved or that where governance and accountability issues determined nationally are potentially affected.

16. **Public Reporting**

*Sustaining Shetland* will continue to be published in full and summary form. Further consideration will be given to its dissemination, and to the publication of any commentary and/or update provided by the Scottish Government on their progress.

From:

- The self-assessment activity undertaken around “Sustaining Shetland”,
- Any relevant adjustment identified through Council or Community Planning Partners scrutiny or monitoring,
- Consultation with communities and individuals and
- Any external assessment,

17. **Annual Review**

An annual update to the SOA will be prepared based on analysis and recommendations made by the relevant strategic groups, services and agencies.

This update will be the basis for discussion and agreement between local partners within their organisations and in the Community Planning Partnership, and then final discussion and agreement with the Scottish Government.