

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL RESPONSE

The Finance and Public Administration Committee has launched an inquiry, *Ambitions into Action*, looking into the National Performance Framework (NPF). The Committee is looking at how the National Outcomes shape Scottish Government policy aims and spending decisions, and in turn, how this drives delivery at national and local level.

Please submit your views using the [online submission form](#). We welcome written views in English, Gaelic, Scots or any other language. The deadline for submissions is **Thursday 14 April 2022**.

For ease of reference, the key questions the Committee are seeking views on are reproduced below:

1. To what extent do the National Outcomes shape how your organisation works?

Our priorities are driven by the things that are important to the people of East Ayrshire, although these local priorities tend to align closely with the National Outcomes.

A new Strategic Council Plan, covering the period 2022-2027, is currently in development and will reflect both local and national priorities.

National Government Funding drives work which is targeted to achieve the National Outcomes. This is particularly true of ring fenced funding, although greater local flexibility is preferred.

We align our performance reporting to the National Outcomes, where appropriate, to assist Scottish Government to identify local contributions to the national agenda.

2. How do you know which National Outcomes your organisation contributes towards? How do you demonstrate this to your organisation and more widely to others?

Our Local Outcomes Improvement Plan represents the highest level of partnership performance reporting for East Ayrshire and our identified local outcomes are mapped against the National Outcomes.

We developed a new LOIP last year, as part of a wider review of our Community Plan. 2021/22 will be our first year reporting on the new LOIP and will reflect our contribution to national as well as local outcomes. This performance report will be developed in partnership with our wider stakeholders and presented for endorsement by our CPP Board and Council in September before being published and circulated more widely.

3. How empowered is your organisation to do something different (should it wish) to achieve the National Outcomes relevant to you?

Ring-fenced funding from Scottish Government limits to some extent the scope that we have locally to direct funds to support different approaches – we would welcome more freedom to determine best local use of the available resources.

Current and anticipated financial constraints also make it difficult to fund new ways of working, when all of the available resources are needed to address the immediate challenges facing our local communities.

Short term year on year funding awards can also prevent the longer term investment which would allow us to test new approaches over time.

However, as a council and as a community planning partnership we are committed to prevention and early intervention, and our local leadership has demonstrated a willingness to support innovative new approaches with anticipated longer term impacts, notwithstanding the fiscal constraints previously mentioned. This is particularly evident in our approach to children and young peoples services.

4. How is your organisation held to account for how your actions and decisions impact on the National Outcomes?

We report publicly on progress towards local and national priorities through our Local Outcomes Improvement Plan Annual Performance Report and are held to account on this by local Elected Members, our CPP Board, external audit through the Best Value regime and our wider communities.

Specific financial returns require the Council and its partners to evidence to Government spend toward national priorities.

5. How are the National Outcomes reflected in everyday decision taking?

As previously stated, our work is driven by the needs of our local communities and our commitment to deliver best value in the services that we provide. However we are strategically aware of national as well as local outcomes, and this is reflected in decision making at every level in our organisation: from the Community Plan and Local Outcomes Improvement Plan down through our local partnership thematic Delivery Plans and the service planning arrangements that we have in place within the Council.

6. When it comes to spending priorities or providing funding to others, what role do the National Outcomes play?

National funding is allocated in line with the requirements of the individual funding stream which is generally aligned to the National Outcomes. We will also seek to direct the available collective local resource to maximise the impact of any investment on both local and National Outcomes.

7. To what extent is any public sector funding you receive contingent upon demonstrating your contribution to delivery of the National Outcomes?

As a local authority the largest element of our funding comes direct from the Scottish Government and a significant element of the funding is ring-fenced or provided on a one-off basis to achieve prescribed policy and initiatives to deliver National Outcomes.

Where it is agreed that local government will implement or deliver the policy, the funding is provided with conditions and reporting requirements which requires us, along with our partners, to evidence demonstrable outcomes, both on a national and local basis.

8. Where do the National Outcomes sit within the range of priorities and demands on your organisation?

As previously stated, our priorities are driven by the needs of our local communities. However we are strategically aware of the National Outcomes and seek where possible to align our local activity to this national framework.

9. To what extent do you work collaboratively with other organisations in delivering the National Outcomes relevant to you?

Strong relationships exist across our community planning partnership and collaborative working is business as usual for us – the covid-19 pandemic response brought us closer together than ever and that collaborative approach continues to drive our recovery and renewal work which is aligned to the National Outcomes.

10. Please share any examples of good practice, areas for improvement or practices that have not worked so well

We have welcomed the flexibility given by Scottish Government to focus local activity on those National Priorities which have greatest relevance locally, rather than being required to demonstrate progress against each one.

We report annually to the Council, CPP Board and our wider communities on our work through our Local Outcomes Improvement Plan annual performance reporting framework, including examples of the good practice being taken forward by the Council and its community planning partners. The most recent reports are available [here](#).