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Police and Fire and Rescue Authority Conveners
Chief Constables
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15th May 2012

Dear Colleagues

**REVIEW OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS:
IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICE AND FIRE REFORM**

I am delighted that the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Bill successfully completed its passage through Stage 1 on 10 May. This is a significant milestone in the reform programme and I am very grateful for your continued support and leadership, in preparing your organisation for transition.

As you will be aware the Scottish Government, in collaboration with COSLA, has been undertaking a review of community planning and published a Statement of Ambition on 15 March. The drive to improve outcomes through partnership-working, early intervention and local engagement underpins the police and fire reform programmes, as well as the review of community planning, and we are mindful of the need to ensure coherence across reform workstreams.

In your capacity as a partner in community planning, you will have received a joint letter from the Scottish Government and COSLA, outlining three core proposals for implementation of the review:

- Strengthening duties on individual partners
- Placing formal requirements on Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs)
- Establishment of a joint group at national level

There are a number of common themes in these proposals and those set out in the police and fire reform programmes, particularly in a shared emphasis on improving outcomes, rather than the processes through which they are delivered, and developing a framework to enable the delivery of better services, aligned to the needs of communities.

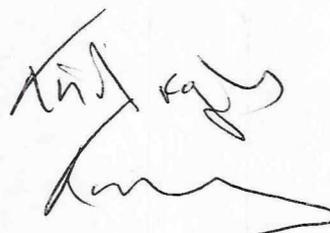
Some of these proposals, such as the strengthening of statutory duties for community planning, will be taken forward in future legislation, following formal consultation on specific recommendations involving all community planning partners. In advance of that wider engagement, it would not be possible or appropriate to include specific amendments to the duties for police and fire and rescue services in this Bill, other than to require that community planning responsibilities be delegated to local senior officers and local commanders. However, I am confident that the Bill and the reform delivery projects already underway will ensure that both services are well placed to take on strengthened community planning duties, both locally and nationally.

The local scrutiny and engagement framework provided in the Bill will better integrate with community planning arrangements and the proposals outlined above will complement and enhance those scrutiny and engagement arrangements. They also share an enabling approach, which affords local partners flexibility to assess local needs, engage with communities and build relationships. National bodies and local partners will have flexibility to determine how to deliver improved outcomes that require a partnership-based or integrated approach.

The local scrutiny and engagement pathfinders are already trialling the new local arrangements, which the Bill will enable. The wide range of models and approaches being piloted is testament to the flexibility of the legislative framework and, crucially, allows those arrangements to be designed to meet local needs and contexts. As the community planning proposals develop, we will be working to ensure that there is clear coherence with the new local planning requirements placed on local commanders and local senior officers, to prevent duplication.

It is also important to note that these proposals will be implemented within the existing lines of accountability of partner organisations. For police and fire & rescue services, we will work to ensure that new governance and accountability frameworks established by the Bill will dovetail with, rather than be duplicated by, subsequent reframing of community planning duties.

I hope that this provides clarity about the emerging elements of community planning review, as they relate to the police and fire reform programmes. Your contribution to the review will be important and I would encourage you to remain closely involved in shaping the implementation of these proposals.



KENNY MACASKILL