

Community planning in Scottish Borders



Prepared for the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland
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The Accounts Commission

The Accounts Commission is a statutory, independent body which, through the audit process, requests local authorities in Scotland to achieve the highest standards of financial stewardship and the economic, efficient and effective use of their resources. The Commission has four main responsibilities:

- securing the external audit, including the audit of Best Value and Community Planning
- following up issues of concern identified through the audit, to ensure satisfactory resolutions
- carrying out national performance studies to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in local government
- issuing an annual direction to local authorities which sets out the range of performance information they are required to publish.

The Commission secures the audit of 32 councils and 45 joint boards and committees (including police and fire and rescue services).

Auditor General for Scotland

The Auditor General for Scotland is the Parliament's watchdog for helping to ensure propriety and value for money in the spending of public funds.

She is responsible for investigating whether public spending bodies achieve the best possible value for money and adhere to the highest standards of financial management.

She is independent and not subject to the control of any member of the Scottish Government or the Parliament.

The Auditor General is responsible for securing the audit of the Scottish Government and most other public sector bodies except local authorities and fire and police boards.

The following bodies fall within the remit of the Auditor General:

- directorates of the Scottish Government
- government agencies, eg the Scottish Prison Service, Historic Scotland
- NHS bodies
- further education colleges
- Scottish Water
- NDPBs and others, eg Scottish Enterprise.

Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000 under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. It provides services to the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission. Together they ensure that the Scottish Government and public sector bodies in Scotland are held to account for the proper, efficient and effective use of public funds.

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Commission findings



- 1.** We are grateful to Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership for volunteering to take part in one of the three early audits of community planning, especially at this time of significant change.
- 2.** These findings should be considered alongside the Commission's general conclusions on community planning in Scotland, published in our accompanying report. Community planning provides a clear opportunity to deliver a step change in the performance of public services. We have found that partnership working is well established and there are many examples of joint working that are making a difference for specific communities. But Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) are not yet able to demonstrate that they have had a significant impact in delivering improved outcomes across Scotland.
- 3.** The need to improve performance goes beyond individual CPPs. Delivering change to help meet the demanding requirements of the Statement of Ambition for community planning will require strong and sustained leadership at national and local level.
- 4.** This will not be straightforward: the outcomes that CPPs are trying to improve are complex and deep rooted. CPPs therefore need to be clearer about their priorities for improving their area. They need to focus their efforts through using their combined resources, skills and expertise.
- 5.** We acknowledge that there is a long record of partnership working in the Scottish Borders, with evidence of some improvements for local communities. But there is little evidence of significant impact against strategic outcomes.
- 6.** The partnership has recognised the need for clearer leadership and is taking steps to improve governance. The governance of community planning as a formal committee of the council will require careful leadership by the council to ensure sustained commitment from all partners, particularly NHS Borders. The partnership needs to better integrate the effective work in the Community Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 7.** We encourage the partnership to focus on getting its new arrangements to work in practice. In doing this, the partnership needs to address a significant shortcoming in a lack of effective performance management arrangements. Clarity in responsibilities and accountability will be an important cornerstone for the partnership, to help it provide a sharper focus on a manageable number of improvement priorities for the Scottish Borders.

The audit of community planning



Background

1. Community planning is the process by which councils and other public bodies work together, with local communities, the business and voluntary sectors, to plan and deliver better services and improve the lives of people who live in Scotland.

2. Community planning was given a statutory basis by the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 (the Act). Under the Act:

- Councils have a duty to initiate, facilitate and maintain community planning.
- NHS boards, the police, the fire and rescue services, and the enterprise agencies (Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise) have a duty to participate in community planning. This duty was later extended to Regional Transport Partnerships.¹
- Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) are required to engage with communities, report on progress, and publish information on how they have implemented their duties and how outcomes have improved as a result.²
- Scottish ministers, through the Scottish Government and its agencies, have a duty to promote and encourage community planning.
- They can invite other bodies such as colleges, higher education institutions, business groups, voluntary organisations and community groups to take part in community planning, although these are not statutory partners.

3. All councils have established a CPP to lead and manage community planning in their area. CPPs are not statutory committees of a council, or public bodies in their own right. They do not directly employ staff or deliver public services. Under Section 19 of the Act, it is possible for the CPP to establish the partnership as a legally distinct corporate body. Some CPPs have considered this option but, to date, none has taken it forward.

4. The structure of CPPs and the areas they cover vary considerably, depending on the size and geography of the council area, socio-demographic factors, the local economy and local political priorities.

The Christie Commission and the Scottish Government and COSLA review of community planning

5. Between 2011/12 and 2014/15, the Scottish Government's spending will fall by 5.5 per cent (£1.5 billion) in real terms.³ Reductions of this scale are a significant challenge for the Scottish public sector. The Christie Commission report on the future of public services highlighted the need for a new, more radical, collaborative culture throughout Scotland's public service. It called for a much stronger emphasis on tackling the deep-rooted, persistent social problems in communities across the country to enable public bodies to respond effectively to these financial challenges.⁴

6. The Scottish Government's response to the Christie Commission included a commitment to review community planning. That review led to the publication of a Statement of Ambition for community planning which stated that effective community planning arrangements will be at the core of public service reform.

CPPs will drive the pace of service integration, increase the focus on prevention and continuously improve public service delivery to achieve better outcomes for communities.⁵ The Statement of Ambition also emphasises the need for all partners to have collective accountability for delivering services. This includes being accountable for their own contribution to local planning.

Previous audits of community planning and partnership working

7. Audit Scotland's national report *Community planning: an initial review*, 2006, found that there had been some progress with community planning, but that important issues needed to be dealt with:

- The complexity of community planning structures and different accountabilities could be a barrier to effective working.
- Performance management and monitoring processes were not well developed.
- Community engagement could be more sustained and systematic.
- CPPs should be clearer about the resources required to achieve their outcomes.⁶

8. Audit Scotland's 2011 national report *The role of community planning partnerships in economic development* found that:

- CPPs had supported local economic developments
- the introduction of Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) had improved how CPPs monitor and report progress.

1 Transport (Scotland) Act 2005.

2 *The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 – Community Planning: Statutory Guidance*, Scottish Executive, 2004.

3 Table 6.02 – Departmental Expenditure Limits, applying the following deflators: 2012/13 = 2.5 per cent; 2013/14 = 2.7 per cent; 2014/15 = 2.7 per cent, *Scottish Spending Review 2011 and Draft Budget 2012-13*, Scottish Government, September 2011.

4 *The Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services*, Christie Commission, June 2011.

5 *Review of Community Planning and Single Outcome Agreements: Statement of Ambition*, Scottish Government and COSLA, March 2012.

6 *Community planning: an initial review*, Audit Scotland, 2006.

9. However, it also found that many of the problems identified in 2006 persisted.⁷

10. Audit Scotland's 2011 national report on Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) found that approaches to partnership working had been incremental and there was a cluttered partnership landscape. CHPs were set up in addition to existing health and social care partnership arrangements in many areas. This had contributed to duplication and a lack of clarity of the role of the CHP and other partnerships in place in a local area. Partnership working for health and social care requires strong, shared leadership by both NHS boards and councils. Differences in culture, planning and performance management arrangements are barriers that need to be overcome.

About the audit

11. The role of community planning in improving Scotland's public services has become increasingly important. The Scottish Government therefore asked the Accounts Commission to lead development work to prepare an outline case on how external audit and inspection might hold CPPs to account for their performance and help them to deliver better outcomes.

12. The Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland worked with their scrutiny partners (Education Scotland, Care Inspectorate, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS), the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and Healthcare Improvement Scotland) as well as the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Scottish Government. The Accounts Commission and the Auditor General developed an audit framework designed to strengthen the accountability of CPPs and

supporting improved performance. Those proposals were submitted to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth in June 2012.

13. Aberdeen, North Ayrshire, and the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnerships agreed to participate in three early audits to help the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland test the CPP audit framework. For the first time, these audits focus on the work of the CPPs, rather than the work of individual organisations.

14. The overall aim of our audit was to assess the effectiveness of community planning in each of the local areas. We did this by gathering and evaluating evidence to allow us to answer the following four questions:

- **Strategic direction** – has the CPP set a clear strategic direction, with clear improvement priorities, agreed by all partners, which reflect the needs of the area, and are based on effective community engagement?
- **Governance and accountability** – does the CPP have effective governance and accountability arrangements, and is it able to demonstrate effective shared leadership which drives improved outcomes for the area?
- **Performance management and use of resources** – has the CPP established effective performance management arrangements which are delivering performance improvements (including effective self-evaluation arrangements) and securing best use of public resources (including service integration)?
- **Impact and outcomes** – can the CPP demonstrate that its actions are making a difference for the area and delivering improved outcomes for local people?

15. The audit of Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership was carried out in September 2012, by a team from Audit Scotland, with support from the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland. We gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and assistance provided to the audit team by all the CPP partners and representatives involved in the audit. We are particularly grateful for the constructive approach adopted by the CPP to the audit process at a time when the CPP is undergoing significant change and development in response to the Scottish Government/COSLA review of community planning.

Summary



16. Community planning is at an important crossroads in the Scottish Borders. It was first established in the late 1990s and has gone through a number of significant changes since then. A significant amount of joint working has taken place across the Scottish Borders which has led to improvements for specific communities and groups. But there is currently little evidence to show that the CPP has had a significant impact on delivering improved outcomes across the Scottish Borders area.

17. In recent months the partnership has recognised that it needs to provide much stronger collective leadership if it is to deliver on the expectations of the Statement of Ambition. Following a recent review, it is now implementing a number of important changes to improve its governance and performance management arrangements. This should help ensure that the partnership is working more effectively and is better able to demonstrate its impact on improving outcomes.

18. Scottish Borders is a good place to live and work. People are generally healthy, the area has low levels of crime, educational attainment is good, and life expectancy is high. It faces a number of strategic challenges that include supporting the local economy, maintaining vibrant and sustainable local communities, mitigating the impact of welfare reform on local people, addressing the health and social care challenges of an ageing local population and reducing the outcome gap between the most and least deprived communities in the Borders. The partnership recognises these challenges and is focusing its partnership activity towards them. In doing this the partnership should develop its joint approach to consultation and engagement to assure itself it is delivering what local communities need as it develops its new Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) as a true 'plan for place'.

19. Community planning was first established in the Scottish Borders in 1999 when the New Ways Partnership was established with key partners in response to the closure of a manufacturing plant and the impact of unemployment on local communities. The partnership arrangements were revised in 2003 and again in 2008. Despite community planning being in place for over a decade the most recent review highlighted some ongoing significant weaknesses in its arrangements which included the lack of leadership by councillors and non-executive board members and poor governance and performance management arrangements. The partnership is currently implementing a number of significant changes to address these weaknesses.

20. Partnership working is well established in the Scottish Borders in a number of important areas. There is a significant amount of joint working taking place, much of it focused on prevention, which is leading to improvements for local communities. The Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP) is well established as is the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. There are a number of successful initiatives designed to improve services for older people by helping them retain their independence and remain living within their local communities. But these developments are not clearly linked to the community planning framework and weaknesses inherent in performance management currently prevent the partnership demonstrating how they are contributing to improving agreed local outcomes.

21. The partnership needs to be clearer about what its improvement priorities are for the Scottish Borders. It should focus on delivering greater impact through areas where it can make a difference through working together to address the complex challenges facing the area. This is especially true where there are

significant differences between the least and most deprived communities in relation to aspects of employment, health and education.

22. The recent community planning review has resulted in new governance arrangements being established which provide a clearer distinction between strategic partnership planning and performance management (Community Planning Strategic Board), strategic resource allocation and oversight of delivery (Community Planning Joint Delivery Team), and programme delivery (three Programme Delivery Teams). The partnership needs to clarify how these new arrangements will work in practice and ensure that all partner agencies are clear about how their new roles will operate, what is expected of them and how the new governance proposals will deliver change and improvement in their own organisations.

23. The council has been driving the recent changes to community planning but while the council has a lead role in community planning, reflecting its legal responsibilities, partner agencies need to be involved in all aspects of community planning. The partners are all committed to working together for the good of the area. However, to be an effective partnership, partner agencies need to engage constructively and take responsibility for decisions. The NHS has a critical role in community planning and this needs to be reflected in its contribution. The CPP needs to become a genuine board with clear and joint accountability for delivery and a culture that involves partners holding each other to account for their contribution to local planning and the delivery of local plans.

24. The challenges facing CPPs are complex. Deep-seated social issues can take many years, if not decades, to resolve. In addition, with many factors at play, it can be difficult to match partnership actions

and investments with subsequent changes in community outcomes such as health and deprivation. Together, local partners spend about £470 million a year, with a further £289 million spent by the Department of Work and Pensions. The CPP has not had a significant impact on redirecting resources towards partnership priorities and there is little evidence to show that increased partnership working has had any significant impact in tackling the sharp inequalities within the Scottish Borders.

25. Effective performance management arrangements need to be put in place as a matter of urgency if the partnership is to achieve the improvements identified in the Statement of Ambition. To date the partnership has lacked effective performance management and shared accountability. The partnership should translate recently agreed strategic themes into a jointly agreed delivery plan that sets clear and explicit improvement goals focusing on where joint working will improve outcomes for communities.

26. The partnership has a real opportunity to deliver more impact from partnership working, making the best use of scarce resources at a time of increasing demand on public services. Partners need to agree and share the costs, and management, of the complex range of programmes and activities that delivery teams are likely to generate.

27. The CPP has set itself a challenging improvement agenda and has the basis of a good framework for taking forward. However, the partnership recognises that it has much work to do before it meets the aspirations set out in the Statement of Ambition. The partnership needs to ensure it has the capacity to effectively implement strategic change and deliver improved outcomes for local communities.

Part 1. Local context



Scottish Borders is generally a good place to live in but there are a number of key challenges for the partnership

28. The Scottish Borders covers an area of approximately 1,800 square miles. It is located in the south-east of Scotland close to both Edinburgh and Newcastle city regions. The area is largely rural and is one of the most sparsely populated in Scotland, with 0.23 people per hectare compared to the Scottish average of 0.65 people per hectare. The population has risen by almost ten per cent, over the last 20 years, to about 113,000 in 2011 and is forecast to rise above 125,000 by 2024. The largest towns are Galashiels and Hawick, where just over 25 per cent of the population live (Exhibit 1).

29. Scottish Borders is a good place to live and work in:

- Life expectancy is better than the Scottish average and is increasing.
- The number of people under 75 dying from coronary heart disease, cancer and cerebrovascular disease is well below the national average.
- Young people are generally achieving more qualifications than the national average.
- Unemployment is below the Scottish average.
- Communities generally feel safe.

30. However, there remain a number of key challenges which have been recognised by the CPP:

- The population is forecast to rise by over ten per cent by 2024. Over a third of the population live in settlements of less than 1,500 people. Almost a quarter of the population is over 65. The area has a higher proportion of people who are of pensionable age and children (61 per cent) than the estimated Scottish average (52 per cent). This will particularly impact on preventative and early intervention services to older people.

Exhibit 1

Scottish Borders map

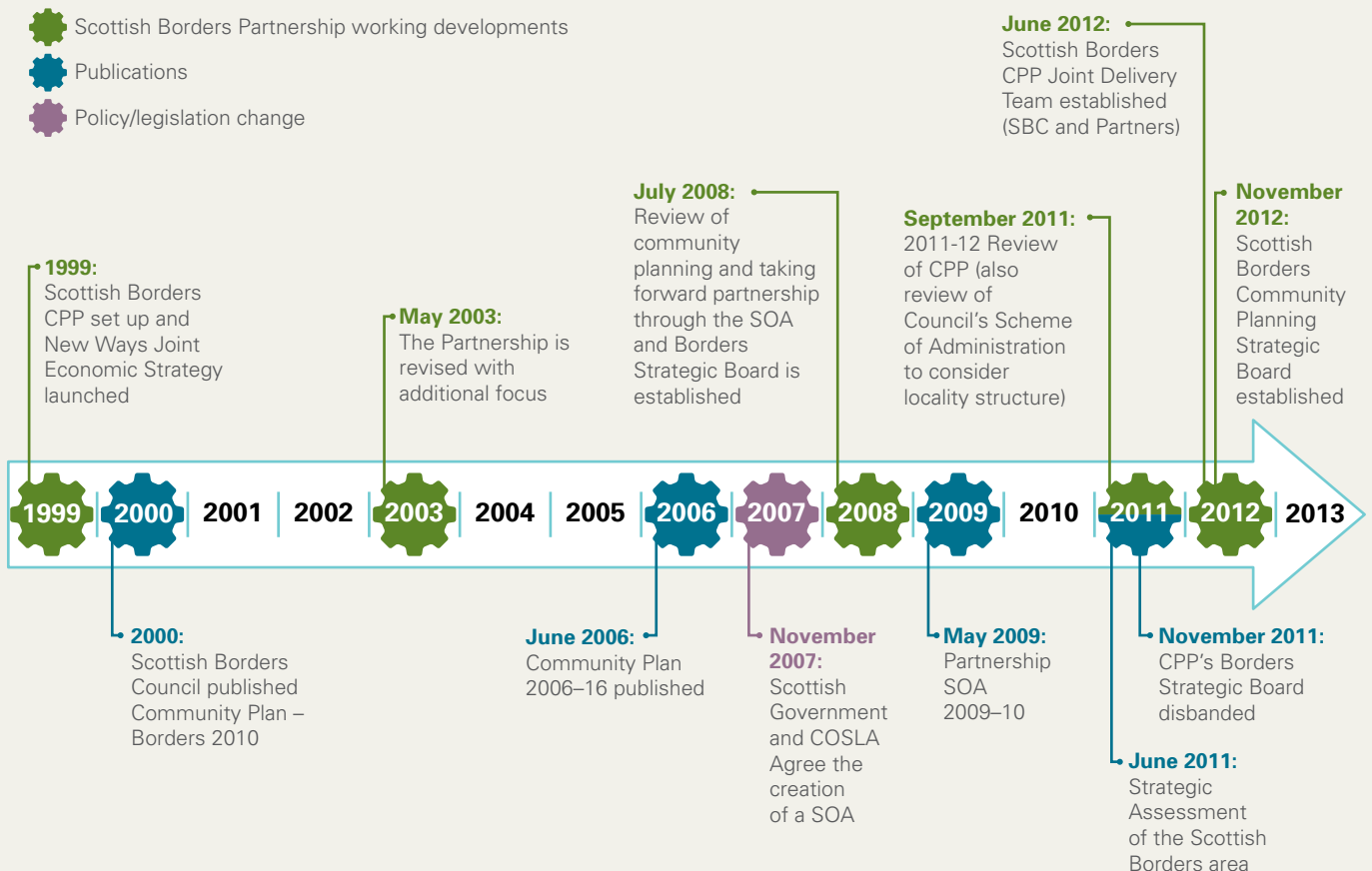


Source: Scottish Borders Council

- While the area is relatively affluent, there are pockets of deprivation particularly in the largest towns of Hawick and Galashiels where five data zones are among the poorest in Scotland. There are significant disparities between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods in terms of health, income, employment, benefit claimants, crime rates and educational attainment.
 - The welfare reform agenda will have a considerable impact on the Scottish Borders communities. There will be significant changes to the amount of benefit paid to individuals and how that benefit is paid. This could potentially remove almost £10 million from the local economy.
 - The economy of the Scottish Borders is reliant on small businesses and the public sector, principally Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders. The private sector economy is dominated by small businesses.
 - The Borders has a lower percentage of its population who are of working age, compared to the Scottish average and outward migration of 16 to 29-year-olds contributes to this.
 - Public transport is limited, particularly across the region. But, the Borders Railway Project is under way to re-establish a passenger rail link from Edinburgh through Midlothian to Tweedbank in the Scottish Borders.
- Community planning in the Scottish Borders has gone through a number of changes over recent years**
- 31.** Community planning was first established in the Scottish Borders in 1999, when the New Ways Partnership was set up in response to the closure of a large manufacturing plant and the impact of unemployment on the Borders communities. Since then, the CPP has gone through a number of significant changes ([Exhibit 2](#)). In 2008, for example, following the national Concordat agreement between the Scottish Government and local authorities, the New Ways Partnership was replaced by the Borders Strategic Board. Through the establishment of a SOA, this sought to combine local and national priorities and to provide a more structured

Exhibit 2

Scottish Borders Partnership working developments



approach to setting targets and monitoring progress.

32. A further review of community planning was initiated in September 2011. This was to address the identified weaknesses of its arrangements which included the lack of political leadership and engagement with community planning by councillors who had tended to see community planning as separate from and peripheral to the 'core' work of the council. Other weaknesses included the limited engagement and participation of non-executive board members from partner agencies, as well as poor governance and performance management arrangements. The review was also designed to reflect the changes to the external environment. In particular, partners needed to work together to address reduced funding of local public services and the increased emphasis on early intervention and prevention arising from the Christie Commission report.⁸

33. Following the review there is a renewed political and managerial drive within the council to make community planning core to its business. The partnership needs to ensure a similar and complementary level of engagement is taken by all partner agencies.

34. The new governance arrangements for community planning established following the review seek to provide a clear distinction between strategic partnership planning and performance management (Community Planning Strategic Board), strategic resource allocation and oversight of delivery (Community Planning Joint Delivery Team), and programme delivery (three Programme Delivery Teams).

35. The four strategic themes for partnership working agreed as part of the review are:

- early intervention and prevention
- place and communities
- economy and infrastructure
- future model of public service delivery.

36. The Joint Delivery Team is responsible for the delivery of the 'future model of public service delivery' programme. This includes significant cross-cutting issues such as welfare reform, integration of health and social care, joint asset and resource planning and development of the third sector and communities.

Part 2. Strategic direction



Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership understands the needs of the area well, but now has to convert this understanding into a clear and ambitious shared vision for improving local outcomes

37. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 requires CPPs to develop and set out a joint vision supported by shared objectives for the area and jointly agreed, challenging performance outcomes that improve services.⁹

38. The first community plan for the Scottish Borders was published in 2000, with a revised version published in 2006 *Our Scottish Borders, Your Community*. It incorporated a clear vision for the future and was supported by six key outcomes ([Exhibit 3](#)).

39. During 2007, the Scottish Government and Local Government agreed a Concordat which included the development of a SOA, based on a set of national outcomes. The Scottish Borders SOA was published in 2009 and replaced the community plan. The Borders Strategic Board identified seven strategic priorities and 21 local priority outcomes ([Exhibit 4](#)). The priorities generally reflect the challenges facing the area.

40. The Community Planning Joint Delivery Team has identified a strategic objective for community planning: 'To work in partnership with other key public, voluntary and private bodies together with communities and businesses to maintain and improve the quality of life and meet the needs of Borders residents and their communities through the delivery of high quality public service, projects, advocacy and other actions.'

Exhibit 3

Scottish Borders vision and key outcomes (2006)

By working in partnership, we will ensure that:

- our communities are strong and inclusive
- our economy is dynamic and provides opportunities for everyone
- our precious environment is respected, protected and enhanced.

To work towards this vision, we believe there are six key outcomes that must be achieved:

1. Strong, inclusive and safe communities.
2. A robust and dynamic economy.
3. A protected and enhanced natural environment.
4. Improved health and wellbeing.
5. Learning for everyone.
6. A well-connected Borders.

Source: Scottish Borders Council

Exhibit 4

Scottish Borders CPP Strategic Priorities 2009/10

- Develop greater economic resilience for those who live and work in Scottish Borders.
- Reduce alcohol-related problems among young people and adults and the harmful impact on communities in Scottish Borders.
- Improve health and wellbeing of Scottish Borders population.
- Develop greater environmental resilience within Scottish Borders.
- Increase connectivity of Scottish Borders.
- Increased and more effective integrated planning for the demographic challenges of the older population living in Scottish Borders.
- Develop greater community resilience within Scottish Borders.

Source: Scottish Borders SOA 2009/10

41. This broad strategic objective essentially summarises the rationale behind community planning. What it does not do is to set out a clear and ambitious vision for the area which is aspirational and builds on the foundations already in place in the Scottish Borders. The vision should focus on addressing the key challenges for the area, particularly reducing inequalities. A clear vision will help the partnership articulate its strategic objectives and partners to effectively align their service objectives. It will also help the partnership explain to communities what it aims to achieve for the Scottish Borders area.

There is a strong commitment to engaging with local communities but it is not clear how this helps inform priorities

42. The statutory guidance encouraged collective approaches by partnerships to engaging communities. The Statement of Ambition built on that and placed an expectation on CPPs to have a strong understanding of their communities. In the past Scottish Borders communities have been consulted on the community plan and the SOA. The SOA identifies that partners need to develop community engagement.

43. There is extensive community consultation at an individual partner level on a wide range of issues such as flood prevention and how people will access local health services as a result of the Patients Rights Act. There is also some evidence of joint consultation and communication on single issues, for example the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership consulted with communities to inform its priorities for the 2012–15 strategy and the Children and Young People’s Planning Partnership has consulted to inform its service plan. The council and NHS

Borders undertook a joint survey in July 2012 to find out how difficult it was for older people to access key services, particularly in relation to healthcare.

44. There is the potential for the partnership to more effectively direct consultation activity, limiting the potential for duplication and consultation ‘fatigue’ among communities. The results of consultation activity could be more effectively used to influence and inform the partnerships’ strategic priorities.

The new governance arrangements and the introduction of area forums have the potential to improve community engagement and empowerment but further work is required to clarify the role of partners

45. In August 2012, Scottish Borders Council agreed that the existing area committees be disbanded and new area forums be set up. The creation of these area forums is aimed to ‘gain an understanding and obtain community views on their own locality, establishing community need and priorities, as well as identifying impediments and barriers to local service provision’. Area forums will scrutinise the local impact and performance of council and other services and the community planning process in their own locality. While the area forums provide a potential vehicle for the partnership to develop arrangements around joint engagement and consultation, service redesign and the better targeting of service to local needs they should have been developed by the partnership rather than the council. The partnership needs to clarify how the area forums will be used to inform local planning and service delivery.

46. The Place and Communities Programme Delivery Team has a specific project focusing on community engagement. The delivery team should ensure it includes use of the newly developed area forums in this project. The planned Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill aims to support communities to achieve their own goals and aspirations through taking independent action and by having their voices heard about decisions that affect their area. This Bill will significantly impact on expectations of how CPPs interact with communities.

47. The partnership does not yet have a clear approach to community empowerment. The Place and Communities Programme Delivery Team plans to develop a collective approach which will help prevent duplication of effort and provide a strong evidence base for developing outcomes to meet the needs of its communities.

The partnership needs to convert its strategic themes into clear and measurable targets for improving outcomes

48. The Community Planning Joint Delivery Team has identified four strategic themes ([Exhibit 5](#)) for future community planning work in the Borders. These policy themes were selected following a strategic review undertaken by the council. Community responses were obtained through the Scottish Household Survey and the Scottish Borders Household Survey and these were considered as part of the strategic review. While the themes cover the key local challenges faced by the partnership such as the economy, demographic changes and transport infrastructure they are very wide-ranging and cover all aspects of

Exhibit 5

Scottish Borders Community Planning Strategic Themes 2012

Places and communities

- Whole town plans
- Safety – pathfinder project
- Community resilience
- Community engagement
- Delivery of cultural services for Borders residents

**Early intervention and prevention**

- Early years
- Getting it right for every child
- Adult support and protection
- Older people reshaping care
- Health improvement
- Physical disability strategy

**Economy and infrastructure**

- Low carbon economy – development of strategy
- Poverty and social exclusion
- Land use and strategic infrastructure planning
- Borders railway
- Tourism strategy
- Broadband next generation access
- Positive destinations and tackling youth unemployment

**Future model of public service delivery**

- Development of third sector and communities
- Joint asset and resource planning
- Welfare reform
- Sustainable transport
- Integration of health and social care
- Self-directed support



Source: Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership

community life. There has been no community consultation on the strategic themes; however, the local implications of them have recently been discussed at area forum meetings.

49. The partnership now needs to clarify what improvements it anticipates in the thematic outcomes and specify how it will use joint working, and align resources, to deliver them. These should be incorporated within the next SOA creating a 'plan for place' as detailed in the Statement of Ambition.

Part 3. Leadership and governance



New governance and accountability arrangements have been established for the partnership, but these need to be reflected in partner organisations' own governance structures

50. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 clearly sets out the importance of shared leadership in community planning. It states that leadership should be carried out by the organisation best placed to perform this role and that partners should be encouraged to lead on appropriate themes.¹⁰ The Scottish Government and COSLA's joint Statement of Ambition for community planning reinforces the importance of shared leadership. It emphasises that CPPs should be genuine boards, with all the associated authority, behaviours and roles that this implies, for both them and constituent partners.

51. Councillors previously had limited involvement in community planning and partner agency non-executive board members had no involvement. The new structures ([Exhibit 6, overleaf](#)) aim to increase the participation of councillors and non-executive board members from partner organisations, while at the same time establishing officer delivery teams to take forward improvement activity linked to the identified needs of the area and the broader public service reform agenda.

The council will need to manage its leadership role carefully to create a culture of shared leadership

52. While the council has a statutory duty to initiate, facilitate and maintain the community planning process it must ensure it is doing this in the true spirit of partnership working.

53. Partners have been involved in strategic discussions about the new approach, as well as aspects of the detailed design and delivery of the new approach. But, some partners have spoken about community planning being 'council-centric' and

there not being a representative number of members from partner agencies at all levels of the new structure, especially the thematic groups which are all led by senior officers of the council.

54. Scottish Borders Council agreed in August 2012 that the Community Planning Partnership Strategic Board should be established as a formal committee of the council. The rationale was that this will raise the profile of community planning within the council and ensure that partnership working is more effectively aligned with the council's strategic themes. There is a potential risk that some partners will view the committee as being accountable to the council, rather than a partnership of equals. This risk, if not managed carefully, may create leadership tensions. The partnership needs to monitor the implementation of the new arrangements carefully to ensure that it delivers shared effective leadership of partnership working.

55. Partners need to be clear about how the Strategic Board conducts its business. Partners are currently considering how their own governance arrangements relate to the new governance structures and the various bodies that are being established (eg, Community Planning Joint Delivery Team and Programme Delivery Teams). Once those decisions have been made, confirming and agreeing how these arrangements will work in practice (including agreeing the respective roles, responsibilities and the authority of different partners) will be important so that there is a shared understanding of the new governance model at the outset.

56. The statutory partners are all represented on the new governance structures. Partnership membership has been widened to include Borders College, the voluntary sector and Borders Housing Network.

The partnership does not, however, include representatives from the private sector, although they are represented in the Economy and Infrastructure theme and with the Community Safety Pathfinder. Given the focus on developing the economy and infrastructure appropriate private sector involvement must be considered.

The partnership needs to consider how it will support members and officers in strengthening their ability to exercise their leadership and holding to account roles

57. There are good relationships between partners who work well together but there is an informality across the partnership and discussions tend to be based more on information and awareness-raising rather than focusing on decision-making. The relationships also lack robust challenge on key issues and partners can at times adopt a passive approach to the process, requiring the council to take on more of a leadership role. The new arrangements aim to provide a clearer distinction between setting the vision and scrutinising its delivery through the Strategic Board.

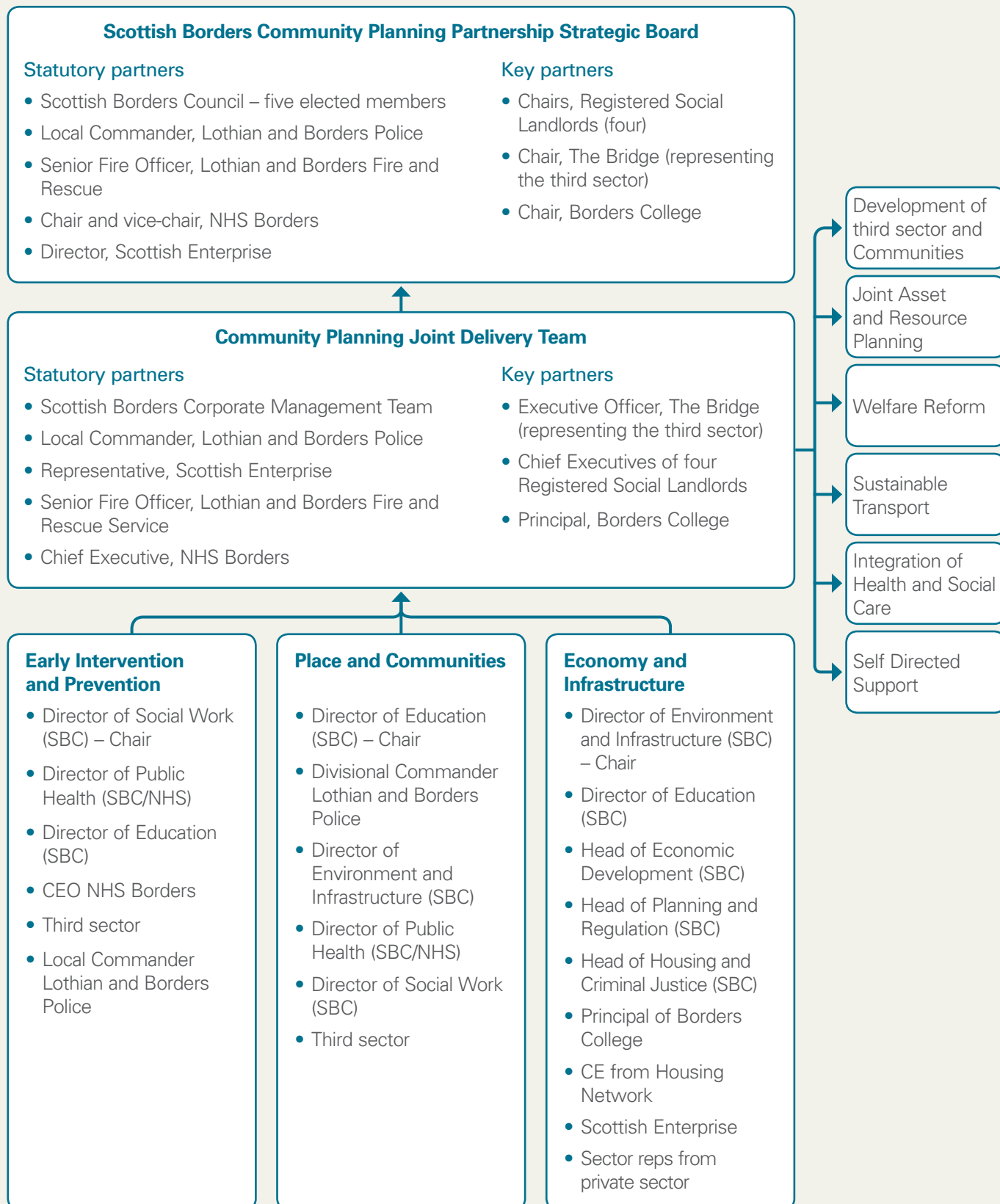
58. The partnership should consider the membership of each group to ensure clear delineation between the Strategic Board's role of setting direction and holding to account of the joint delivery and the thematic delivery teams. It needs to ensure it has the skills and the ability needed to make the changes that it is committed to delivering. The new structures rely heavily on a few individuals from partner agencies, particularly the voluntary/third sector.

59. Non-executive board members and councillors have had limited involvement in early discussions about the new arrangements and there was a lack of understanding as to what they would be expected to do and how the arrangements would

¹⁰ *The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 – Community Planning: Statutory Guidance*, Scottish Executive, 2004.

Exhibit 6

Scottish Borders CPP new governance structures (2012)



work in practice. The community planning statutory guidance noted the importance of regular training and development for staff, non-executive board members and councillors in order to develop their skills. The partnership is unclear how the new arrangements will work in practice. The partnership needs to ensure Strategic Board members are adequately supported in their new roles and that they have access to comprehensive training and development opportunities.

The CPP needs to clarify and agree how it will provide strategic oversight of the broader public service reform agenda in the Scottish Borders

60. The Statement of Ambition clearly states that CPPs [and SOAs] will provide the foundation for effective partnership working within which wider reform initiatives, such as the integration of health and adult social care and the establishment of single police and fire services, will happen. They do not have to take direct responsibility for delivery of outcomes where fit-for-purpose arrangements are already in place. However, they must have a strategic overview of the arrangements.

61. At present it is unclear how the new CPP arrangements will support the implementation of the health and social care integration agenda as the CHCP is currently considering its approach to Integrated Health and Social Care. The current Scottish Borders CHCP is a Strategic Committee, accountable to NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council. It is responsible for providing more effective integrated planning for older people, but does not have a formal reporting line to the CPP.

62. Scottish Borders Council is a police and fire reform pathfinder authority and has established a Scottish Borders Police, Fire and Rescue and Safer Communities Board. This replaces the Safer Communities Strategic Board. The new board has 50 per cent councillor

representation and is shadowing the existing Lothian and Borders Police Joint Board governance arrangements. The board is an advisory forum and its main role is to scrutinise and review the Police, Fire and Rescue and Safer Communities Plans.

63. The pathfinder board is a formal council committee and reports both to the council and the CPP through the new Place and Communities Programme Delivery Team. The pathfinder board does not have the authority to make any decisions and instead this falls to the council to approve all decisions in relation to community safety. The main responsibility of the board is to assess the adequacy of plans. Although it is early days for these new arrangements it is important that the partnership reflects on its experience and ensures that the new arrangements integrate effectively into the CPP structure.

The partnership should consider streamlining the many pre-existing partnerships and integrate their roles and functions into the new governance structures

64. The new governance arrangements provide an opportunity to consider the many partnerships and streamline and integrate them into the new structures where appropriate. Some working groups remain from previous community planning arrangements such as Working Countryside Partnership and it is important that they are integrated into the new structure to ensure the most effective use of resources. Without a strategic oversight of these activities the board will not be able to demonstrate that it is actively driving improvement and ensuring a good use of resources.

65. There has been a period where there was a lack of clarity about the arrangements for economic activity in the Scottish Borders, but a new Economic Strategy for the Scottish Borders is currently being prepared, which it is hoped will address this

weakness. The strategy is being led by the Community Planning 'Economy and Infrastructure' Joint Delivery Team, with input from the Council's Economic Development Group and aims to provide the overall framework for the partnership's economic development related activity.

66. The council's Economic Development Group (a formal committee of SBC) oversees council activity in this area and members hold officers to account through that process. The 'Economy and Infrastructure' Joint Delivery Team manages the wider stakeholder and statutory partner activity (including the council) with the Community Planning Strategic Board holding all that to account. There are a number of other 'partnerships' and joint working initiatives which focus on the economy such as South of Scotland Alliance and Learning and Skills Partnership which have not been well connected with formal council and partnership processes in the past. The new Economic Strategy will include clear links, demonstrating the valuable role of each of these partnerships, to ensure that there is an overview of all activities and that the partnership can demonstrate that it is delivering service improvement and having a positive impact on economic outcomes for the area.

Part 4. Managing performance



The Community Planning Partnership has not been good at scrutinising performance and driving improvement

67. Robust performance management is an essential component of an effective community planning process. The 2003 Act sets out the need for CPPs to monitor progress with regard to agreed outcomes, and to use that monitoring to improve local arrangements for the planning and delivery of services to deliver better outcomes. The Statement of Ambition places great emphasis on the CPP monitoring performance over time to drive and demonstrate continuous improvement.

68. There are clear difficulties in monitoring outcomes for long-term objectives in areas such as health, life expectancy, and deprivation. It can take many years before there are any significant changes in these community outcomes. Partnerships need to monitor the progress being made towards their long-term objectives but, in practice, this needs to be blended with monitoring inputs and medium-term proxy measures.

69. The partnership has identified performance management as a weakness and aims to address this through its new arrangements. It should develop these arrangements as a matter of urgency. The quality of reporting on the outcomes has not been detailed or thorough enough since 2009. At the time of our audit the SOA was last discussed by the Borders Strategic Board in February 2011. The latest annual report for 2010/11 had not been reported to the Borders Strategic Board. There has been no performance reporting by any thematic group to the board since November 2009. There are limited linkages between partners' strategies and the SOA.

70. There is limited scrutiny of activities as a direct result of the lack of reporting to the partnership. While the NHS board considers minutes from the partnership there is no other tangible scrutiny of partnership

activities carried out in partner agencies. The partnership should consider and learn from the scrutiny processes undertaken by the more established local partnerships such as the CHCP.

71. The new governance arrangements provide an opportunity to clearly focus on managing performance across the partnership. However, it is not yet clear how the performance management arrangements will operate in practice. The Strategic Board should be clear about what it requires in order to effectively monitor progress against the strategic priorities.

The annual SOA monitoring reports do not provide a clear picture of performance

72. In 2008, as part of a national Concordat between the Scottish Government and local authorities, SOAs were established for each CPP. These were intended to help ensure that national priorities were properly reflected in each local community plan. They also aimed to improve the setting of targets and the monitoring of performance.

73. In accordance with these national arrangements, the CPP published an SOA progress report in 2010/11. This summarises its main activities over the previous year and seeks to provide a comprehensive account of its performance. Although there is a lot of information in the 2010/11 report, there are major gaps in performance data and the content and format is not presented in a way that is user friendly. As such, the report does not provide a clear picture of the progress being made towards CPP's strategic objectives

74. Performance targets in the SOA are not always ambitious. There are examples where current performance outstrips the future targets and there has been no attempt to make targets more challenging. A number of targets have been set at the same rate for over four years. The Strategic Board needs to ensure that targets

are sufficiently challenging and monitor their progress on a regular basis to ensure improvement is being achieved.

75. There are inconsistencies in the data that is being used to monitor progress in delivering outcomes in the SOA. Some of the nationally published information is a few years old and is only collected biennially. Also there are differences between national and local data collection, creating difficulties in effectively benchmarking performance against other partnerships or council areas. The SOA does not provide sufficient focus on reducing the inequalities across the different communities. The partnership needs to use consistent information at data zone level to measure progress towards reducing outcome gaps. It should ensure that it uses a variety of measures which cover short, medium and long-term performance.

76. The SOA annual report 2010/11 was reported to the Scottish Government. The locality director assessed the SOA in relation to how evidence was used, what is being done regarding the preventative agenda and the council's approach to continuous improvement. The report identified discrepancies between national and local data, time lag of data and areas where there were no specific activities to support outcomes such as the business sector. The report highlights the need to reduce the number of indicators and a move away from input/output indicators.

77. The council, on the partnership's behalf, is currently renewing its SOA based on the four strategic themes. The SOA needs to focus on priorities that the partnership can impact on directly and performance targets need to be sufficiently ambitious and seek continuous improvement.

Part 5. Use of resources



The partnership has not identified the overall resources available to it, or how individual partner resources can be aligned to deliver the agreed SOA outcomes

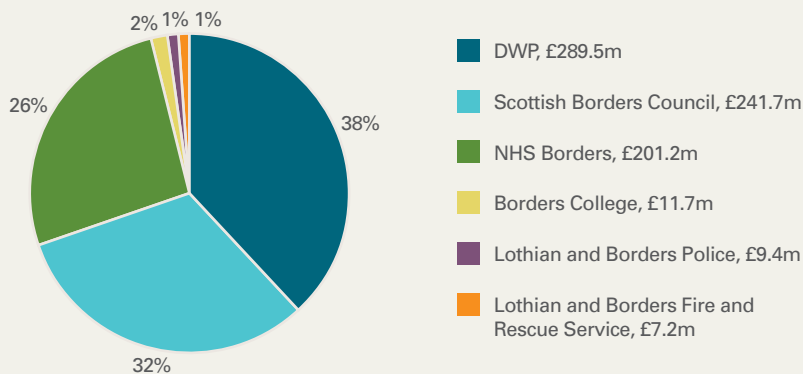
78. The 2003 Act was clear that effective participation in community planning obliged partners to identify and allocate the resources necessary to achieve agreed outcomes. More recently, the Statement of Ambition expects CPPs to clearly understand partner contributions, and how they will target total resources to deliver agreed priorities. The Scottish Government's response to the Christie Commission report also highlighted the need for public bodies to invest in those responsible for delivering services.

79. Together local public sector partners spend about £470 million a year. This figure rises to £760 million when the Department for Work and Pensions expenditure is included (Exhibit 7). The 2011 Scottish Spending review and Draft Budget 2012–13 estimate that, between 2011–12 and 2014–15, Scottish Government spending will fall by 5.5 per cent in real terms.

80. A three-year revenue budget was approved by Scottish Borders Council in February 2012, which used the 2011/12 budget as a base and reflected changes for known changes in income and expenditure in future years. In setting future years' revenue budgets, management concluded that net savings year-on-year of about two per cent will require to be identified from departments to balance the budget and resource council priorities. The council considered its updated five-year financial outlook at its meeting in December 2012. The plan noted that over the five-year period the council needs to identify £27 million of savings to continue to provide current services.

Exhibit 7

2011/12 public spending in the Scottish Borders



Source: Audit Scotland

81. NHS Borders has identified the need to achieve efficiency savings of £5.904 million in 2012/13 if it is to break even. The board's relatively low workforce turnover rates increase the challenge faced in 2012/13, as workforce and service redesign is the main area targeted in the board's savings plans. The board's policy of protecting the employment of its current permanent staff adds to this challenge.

82. There are broader pressures on the Scottish Borders' public sector. An ageing population is likely to lead to an increase in demand for NHS and social care services. In addition, there will be financial implications arising from the national reform of welfare benefits. The CPP plans to assess the impact of welfare reform across each project area.

83. These pressures create a strong impetus for community planning partners to identify opportunities for joint working and resource-sharing. In common with other CPPs, the Community Planning Partnership in the Scottish Borders does not yet have an overview of the resources available to it or those required to deliver its SOA priorities.

The partnership has not yet aligned and allocated resources to its strategic themes but it plans to do so through the new arrangements

84. Public service reform and the Statement of Ambition highlight the financial imperative to make more effective use of resources. The original CPP guidance highlighted the need for resources to be identified and allocated to agreed outcomes, with arrangements streamlined to remove wasteful overlaps. The lack of alignment and direct allocation is a significant weakness for the partnership and should be addressed with some urgency through the thematic delivery teams.

85. The CPP does not have an integrated approach to financial planning. However, the CHCP receives joint finance and monitoring reports from SBC and NHS Borders. The partnership's new arrangements provide an opportunity to improve the integration of resources. It plans to align resources against the strategic themes; however, the thematic teams are at an early stage of development and this has not taken place to date. It is unclear whether partner agencies have aligned their mainstream funding, or what plans they have in place to do this in order to match the strategic themes.

86. The Statement of Ambition recognises the need to focus on preventative spend and early intervention. This is a key strategic theme of the partnership and the Strategic Board should ensure that it receives sufficient information to enable it to monitor how resources are being deployed. Moving resources to preventative spend is challenging; however, the new arrangements provide a good basis for the partnership going forward.

There is no clear understanding of the costs of SOA objectives or if they provide value for money

87. While each partner organisation has its own budgets for its own activities, there is a lack of clarity about how they link to the delivery of SOA objectives. Activities have not been costed and budgets have not been established. As a result, the partnership cannot demonstrate how much it has spent on delivering the improvements reported in the SOA.

88. The programme delivery teams plan to include the expected costs of each project and an investment appraisal in the project mandate documents. However, this work is significantly underdeveloped. The partnership needs to ensure that realistic costs are calculated for each project and budgets established which highlight clearly the contributions by partner agencies. The Strategic Board should monitor the budgets to ensure money is being spent effectively.

There are examples of joint appointments across agencies and some joint training, but the CPP has not yet developed staff development strategy across sectors linked to its key improvement objectives

89. There are several examples of joint appointments across partnership agencies and some joint training, but the CPP has not yet developed a staff development strategy linked to its key improvement objectives. The Statement of Ambition highlights

the importance of investing in the people who deliver services through enhanced workforce development and effective leadership. Similarly, the Scottish Government expects CPPs to disregard boundaries between public services and focus on the achievement of shared outcomes and cross-sector workforce development strategies.

90. The size of the public sector workforce in Scottish Borders is significant. In March 2012, the two biggest public sector employers in the area employed about 7,000 full-time equivalent staff (council 4,400 and NHS 2,523). The significance is even greater when other partner agencies such as police, fire, the third sector, and Further and Higher education are also considered.

91. Delivering improved outcomes in public services will be dependent not just on strong and effective strategic leadership, but will also require staff in managerial and front-line positions understanding the contribution they can make in improving local public services, having the skills needed, and feeling empowered to make change happen at the local level.

92. There are a number of joint posts between public sector bodies including the director of public health, joint managers for mental health services and learning disabilities (NHS and council) and the community safety manager (police and council). Joint training takes place between partner agencies, in particular with the NHS and social work, reflecting areas of shared interest, such as health and social care integration. There are a number of examples of the integration of services and of partners sharing resources, particularly accommodation and staff including the Health Improvement Team and Public Protection Unit. However, where this does happen any efficiencies generated have not been quantified. The joint delivery team is at the early stages of developing a joint resourcing plan for the partnership.

93. The partnership needs to consider a deliberate and coordinated approach to leadership and workforce development, linked to its strategic priorities. This will ensure that staff across agencies are aware of its strategic themes and what their contribution to meeting them will be. It will also ensure that staff are provided with the training and development needed to allow them to contribute effectively to local public service improvement.

Part 6. Working together



There is a significant amount of joint working, particularly regarding the preventative agenda, taking place across the Scottish Borders which is leading to improvements for local communities. More emphasis should be placed on aligning the initiatives with the partnership's strategic themes

94. One of the key principles of the Statement of Ambition is for the partnerships to focus on joint outcomes, interventions and resource use with the aim of driving improvement that delivers demonstrable improvements for their local communities. There is a strong culture of joint working in the Scottish Borders between partner agencies. To achieve the Statement of Ambition the partnership needs to have a strategic overview of these initiatives to ensure that they are appropriately joined up, partners are undertaking their roles effectively and that the initiatives are genuinely leading to performance improvement.

95. We found many examples of good partnership working in the Scottish Borders, including aspects of preventative practice, and services sharing staffing and facilities.

Health

96. The Scottish Borders Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) coordinates alcohol- and drug-related work in local areas. The ADP generally reports a positive impact on communities; as a result of its work there has been:

- an increase in the number of individuals accessing specialist alcohol services
- reductions in the number of alcohol-related deaths and the number of alcohol-related hospital admissions; however
- there has been an increase in the prevalence rate of problem drug users and an increase in the number of drug-related general hospital admissions.

97. The Reshaping Care for Older People Change Fund aims to improve services for older people by shifting care towards anticipatory care and preventative spending. The work on Reshaping Care for Older People is having a positive impact on helping older people retain their independence and keep them living within their local communities.

- The number of day patients who stay in hospital is decreasing and the number of people over 65 receiving personal care, care at night and at the weekend has increased over the last three years.
- The rate of emergency hospital admissions for over-65s has fallen slightly over the last ten years.

98. Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders are developing a new place-based model of service redesign which exemplifies the integrated resource framework. The first phase is the Cheviot Project which aims to ensure people can live safely in the community for longer, reducing the need for hospital or residential home care. The Cheviot Project, which was cited as a good example of place-based approaches to integrated working by the Christie Commission, has worked with 35 people, helping 28 of them to return home successfully.

99. The Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP) aims to improve outcomes for all children, young people and their families within the Scottish Borders. It is responsible for implementing Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) which involves giving all children and young people the best start in life. The CYPPP has had a positive impact on children and young people in the Scottish Borders.

- The SOA reports an increase in the number of young carers accessing the Young Carer Service.

- The LGBT Youth Borders Service has worked with 61 young people and 46 youth groups.
- It has also established seven locality youth panels to consult and engage with young people.

Economy

100. The Strategic Partnership Against Poverty was awarded monies from the Fairer Scotland Fund in 2011/12 which enabled it to fund a Welfare Benefits Officer to provide advice to people experiencing mental health problems, and a community enabler to provide advice to homelessness clients. There has been an increase in the percentage of people living in financial exclusion and experiencing multiple deprivation. However, the SOA reports an increase in the monetary gains by people accessing Welfare Benefits.

101. The Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership developed a Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2009–12) focusing on encouraging more tourism, longer-stay tourism and expanding tourism into specialist activities. The actions are monitored by the partnership and its respective organisations. However, there is no evidence of reporting on the strategic targets.

Community safety

102. In 2010, an integrated safer communities team was set up, comprising staff from Lothian and Borders Police (LBP) safer communities team and the council's community safety team and Antisocial Behaviour Unit. LBP also have a co-located Public Protection Unit at Langlee Community Centre, where social work, education, health and police (ten staff) are all based. There is a commitment to joint working and better use of resources between the police and partners and this includes the provision of shared premises in Newcastleton and Earlston.

Learning

103. Borders College has a small campus in Hawick, but it makes use of Hawick High School to provide evening classes meaning that college buildings do not have to be kept open at night. The school uses the college's buildings during the day. The college is considering extending this arrangement to high schools in Peebles and Eyemouth.

104. The **Borders Learning and Skills Partnership** is chaired by the college principal and includes representatives from the council, third sector, Borders College, Skills Development Scotland and Job Centre Plus. The partnership merged with the Borders Employability group during 2011. The primary focus of the partnership is improving people's employability in the Scottish Borders.

There is a culture of joint working in the Scottish Borders, but the partnership needs to ensure that joint initiatives lead to improvements in services

105. There are many examples of joint working in the Scottish Borders, particularly relating to the preventative agenda. This activity is often driven by funding initiatives or enthusiasm of staff working at an operational level in the various partner agencies. Where initiative or ring-fenced funding is made available key public organisations within the Scottish Borders have shown the ability and commitment to work together to deliver key outcomes/objectives. These joint initiatives, such as the Scottish Borders Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and the Strategic Partnership Against Poverty, have their own governance and accountability arrangements and report progress via a complex arrangement of partnerships that have no direct connection to the CPP.

106. While there is a clear culture of joint working more needs to be done to demonstrate its effectiveness. The partnership also requires partners to focus on the preventative agenda, prioritising actions based on reducing future demand by preventing problems arising or dealing with them early. This is a significant agenda and the partnership needs to ensure that it builds on the joint working initiatives under way and that it has the skills and ability to deliver improved local services quickly. The board supported by the joint delivery team should ensure that the joint resources are being deployed effectively and focus on the partnership's priorities.

Part 7. Impact and outcomes



Gaps in data prevent a full assessment of the impact of community planning in the Scottish Borders

107. The Statement of Ambition places CPPs at the centre of local public service reform, driving improved outcomes for local communities. CPPs need to demonstrate that they have had an impact in improving outcomes for their local communities. As mentioned earlier in this report there are weaknesses in the performance management systems supporting community planning and the SOA in the Scottish Borders with gaps in the availability of reliable and consistent performance data, both locally and nationally.

108. In this section of our report, we have sought to comment on performance, based on the information provided in the partnership's SOA progress report 2010/11. We have also drawn from other sources, such as Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), to find performance information which matches the targets and objectives set out in the SOA. Despite this, however, there remain gaps in the data which is currently available. As a result, this section of the report can only seek to provide a high-level picture of trends over the past decade, rather than a comprehensive assessment of community planning's impact on communities living in the Scottish Borders.

Our assessment suggests a mixed performance in relation to the national performance framework, particularly in relation to narrowing the gap between the most and least deprived areas

109. As there has been limited performance reporting to the partnership we have used other sources in addition to the 2011 SOA report to determine whether outcomes for the Scottish Borders are improving. It is difficult to assess the impact the partnership has had

on the outcomes in the national performance framework as often activity has been the responsibility of a single organisation or as a result of joint working which has not been directed through the partnership.

110. The SIMD measures income, employment, health, education, housing, access and crime and focuses on the 15 per cent most deprived areas across Scotland. This work allows effective targeting of policies and funding to tackle issues. There are five data zones in the Scottish Borders which are in the top 15 per cent deprived in Scotland. The areas are in Hawick and Galashiels. The partnership has been unable to demonstrate how it has made use of this data. It should consider using this information to effectively direct improvement activity in the future.

111. We have analysed the gap between the most and least deprived areas over a ten-year period ([Exhibit 8, overleaf](#)). The analysis used indicators which are available at the data zone level to compare the average outcome results for the 20 per cent most and least deprived data zones. Our own assessment shows that in some domains there is a disparity between the least and most deprived areas in Scottish Borders, and that this gap has not changed in the last ten years, particularly for health and economy indicators. Scottish Borders broadly reflects the national picture but the gap between the least and most deprived areas is widening in aspects of education and hospital admissions for coronary heart disease.

While overall the Scottish Borders is a relatively affluent area there are pockets of deprivation with a mixed picture in relation to its economy. Although there are positive employment trends, sustaining and growing business activity is deteriorating

112. Since the inception of the partnership in 1999, it has focused on developing greater economic resilience for its communities.

113. The Scottish Borders is a relatively affluent area; however there are significant variations in the levels of peoples' income. Ten per cent of households living within the 15 per cent most deprived zones in the Borders area are classed as income deprived. Earnings are lower for those who live and work in the area but are about the Scottish average for residents who work outwith the area. The partnership has established the Scottish Borders Strategic Partnership against Poverty and partners report they are improving the assistance they give to households. It has helped more people to obtain more income through accessing welfare benefits services, and has helped clients with a greater number of benefit issues through Citizens Advice Bureau.

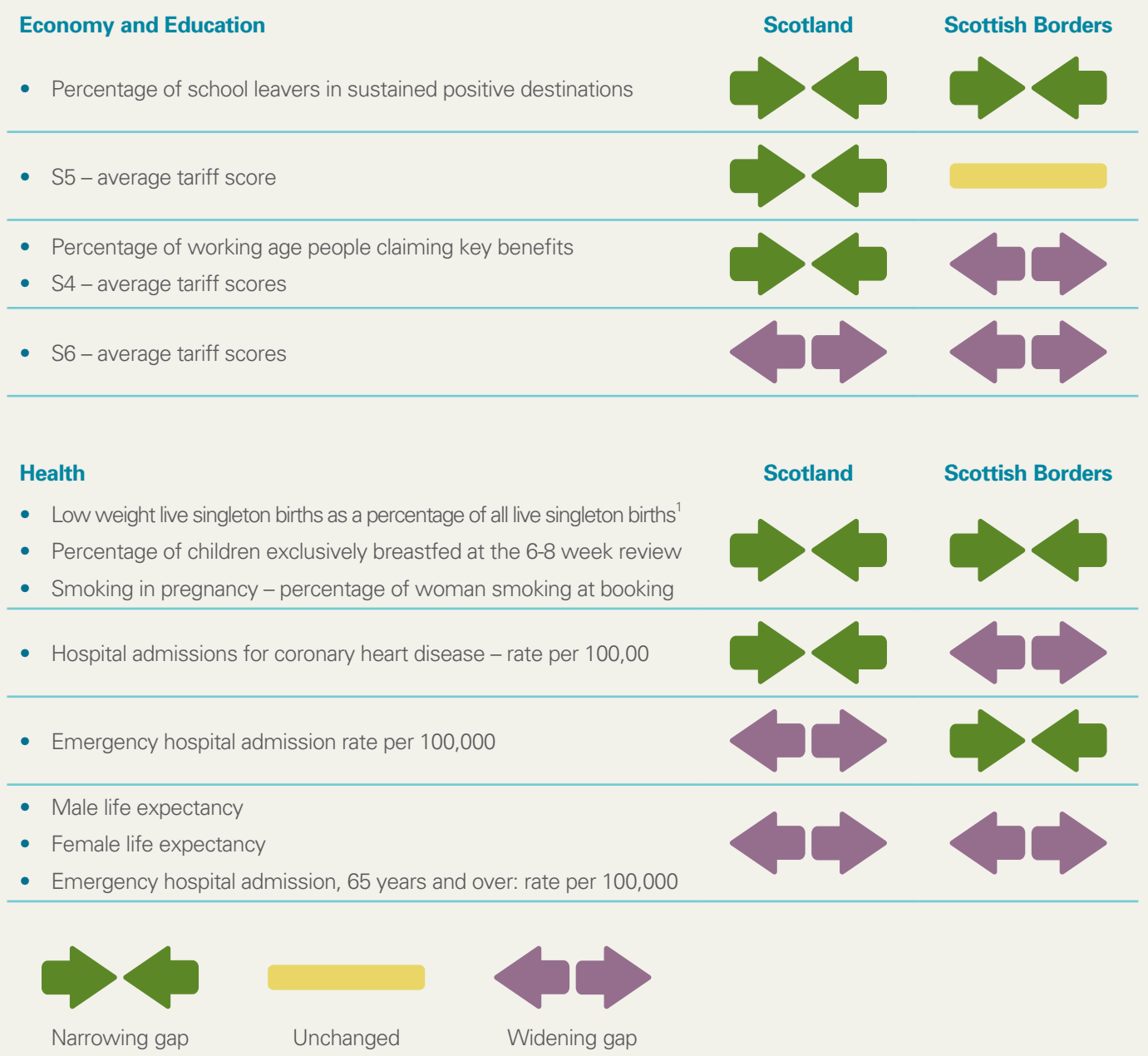
114. Despite the current economic climate the area is faring well with unemployment below the Scottish average. However, the gap between the percentage of people claiming key benefits in the most and least deprived areas within the Scottish Borders is increasing. The percentage of claimants in the most deprived areas is almost three times as high as those in the least deprived areas. This trend differs from that of Scotland as a whole where there has been a slight reduction of the gap.

115. While business optimism has fallen for all areas other than manufacturing, business planning applications are increasing and more businesses are surviving over three years. The local economy is more reliant than the Scottish average on small businesses (nine people or less).

116. However, the town centre vacancy rate has increased from nine per cent in 2007/08 to 11 per cent 2010/11, reflecting the current economic climate. The partnership is developing a 'whole town approach' which will consider all services, activities and initiatives that are taking place in towns across the Scottish Borders. Work is at an

Exhibit 8

The gap between the most and least deprived areas – outcome trends over the ten-year period 2002/03 to 2010/11



Note: 1. Very slight reduction for Scotland.
Source: Audit Scotland

early stage of development but has the potential to address many of the significant challenges facing local communities.

117. The partnership’s economic objectives reflect the economic challenges for the area. Its priority focuses on business activity and growth, training and employment,

reducing poverty and town centre improvements. While these are articulated in the SOA, the partnership is developing an economic strategy outlining how it will deliver these priorities.

118. The partnership reported a decline in the performance of the majority of SOA indicators

in 2010/11. This was particularly noticeable regarding sustaining and growing business activity where the figures for sustaining employment in the sectors of food and drink, textiles, construction, agriculture and tourism all showed a decline. This performance, however, was based on data from 2008/09 and does not provide a current picture for the area.

Public transport is limited but the reopening of the Borders Railway Link has the potential to bring significant opportunities to the area

119. The partnership aims to improve the transport and communication infrastructure of the area in order to meet the needs of businesses and residents in addition to providing a good-quality public transport network.

120. In the Scottish Borders, 56 per cent of the population live in rural locations and the proportion of households with access to a car is 79 per cent which is above the national average. The partnership recognises the challenge for households given rising fuel costs. The SOA highlights improvements, for example the percentage of roads needing maintenance is decreasing.

121. Public transport is limited, particularly east to west, across the region owing to the dispersed rural settlements. This is a challenge for the partnership as the percentage of the population within a short drive time to education and health services in Scottish Borders is lower than the Scottish average and many people rely on the local bus service. The partnership reports good progress through the SOA in relation to public transport – customer satisfaction is increasing as is the number of buses with disabled access. Performance remained static for the percentage of residents with access to a regular daytime bus service. However, only 4.7 per cent of people use the bus to get to work, while 11.5 per cent nationally do.

122. The Borders Railway Link which is now seen as a partnership priority, is being re-established creating a passenger rail link from Edinburgh to Galashiels. The £294 million project is due for delivery by 2015. This has the potential to bring significant opportunities to the Borders area through improved travel to work times and increased tourism.

123. Improving digital and telecommunications infrastructure is a priority highlighted in the partners' strategic assessment to address economic and social issues. Almost three-quarters of those responding to the Scottish Borders Council household survey (2010) had access to the Internet. There were mixed views in relation to the quality of the service with 25 per cent considering they received a poor service. BT has started installing superfast broadband and Innerleithen was the first town in Scotland to benefit from the service.

People living in the Borders are generally healthy and most healthy indicators continue to improve

124. The partnership aims to provide high-quality early years provision, improve the health of Borders residents through behavioural change and to support carers in their role.

125. People living in the Scottish Borders are generally healthy with life expectancy better than the Scottish average and increasing. However, this is not the case in the most deprived areas where the gap for both females and males between the least deprived areas has widened.

126. Our report *Health inequalities in Scotland* highlighted the lead role that CPPs have in bringing together all relevant local organisations to address health inequalities. The report concludes that current performance measures do not provide a clear picture of progress and that CPPs' reports on delivering their SOAs are weak in the quality and range of evidence used to track progress in reducing health inequalities. It highlights that the differences among SOAs mean that a Scotland-wide picture is hard to identify. The report recommends that CPPs ensure partners have a shared understanding of health inequalities, their respective roles and the shared resources available, and that they involve local communities in initiatives to tackle health inequalities.

127. The number of people under 75 dying from coronary heart disease, cancer and cerebrovascular disease in Scottish Borders is well below the national average. However, the gap between the most and least deprived areas has increased for hospital admissions for coronary heart disease, with a slower rate of improvement in the most deprived areas. Across Scotland there has been a higher rate of improvement in the most deprived areas which has narrowed the gap with the least deprived areas.

128. The rate of emergency hospital admissions for over-65s has fallen slightly over a ten-year period and is now lower than the Scottish average. However, the number of patients being hospitalised after a fall is around the highest in Scotland.

129. The 2009/10 SOA does not address drug-related issues, despite it being highlighted as a perceived priority area for the Borders' community in surveys. For Scottish Borders the number of people hospitalised or dying from alcohol conditions is lower than the Scottish average. So is the number of patients being hospitalised with drug-related conditions.

130. From an analysis of the SOA progress report for 2010/11, 65 per cent of indicators relating to early intervention have improved performance: Early Years Provision with NHS dental registrations for three- to five-year-olds, completion rates for child healthy weight intervention programme has significantly improved (by almost five times) and the uptake of vaccinations has increased. There has been a slight decline in the percentage of children having nutritious school meals and proportion of new-born children exclusively breastfed. Roughly twice as many people in more affluent areas are breastfeeding compared to those in the most deprived areas. However, this gap is

closing, with rates of breastfeeding declining in both the most and least deprived areas but at a sharper rate in least deprived areas.

131. The percentage of residents taking part in 30 minutes of physical activity a day has been maintained since 2008 and there has been an increase in attendance at sporting facilities across the area.

132. Support for carers is considered a priority in the SOA, reflecting the demographic challenges the area faces in terms of both a growing ageing population and an increasing number of children. Performance in this area is positive, with all indicators improving including respite care services for adults, placing looked-after children with kinship carers, providing carer assessments and supporting young carers.

133. Seven indicators relating to supporting people to live independently are improving. The CHCP demonstrate good partnership working by demonstrating a year-on-year increase in the number of Shared Risk Assessments undertaken. Thirty-five people have used the Cheviot multi-agency service since it opened in May 2011 with 28 people returning home successfully.

134. There has been a significant improvement on the levels of delayed discharges over the past few years. However, this remains a challenge for the partnership as there has been a recent increase in the number of people waiting to be discharged from hospital into a more appropriate care setting. While there has been an increase in the number of people receiving personal care at home since 2007, this is still below the national average ([Exhibit 9](#)) and the numbers are falling.

Young people are achieving more qualifications than the national average and the gap is narrowing between school leavers moving into positive destinations from the most and least deprived areas

135. The partnership recognises the positive signs for educational attainment in the Scottish Borders and does not include its performance against this in its SOA. The gap between those leaving education and finding employment is decreasing between the least and most deprived areas of the Scottish Borders.

136. Young people are generally achieving more qualifications than the national average, consistently across years S4, S5 and S6. There has been an increasing trend in young people staying on at school with 55 per cent of S4 pupils likely to stay on until S6, compared with 46.5 per cent in 2007. Also those leaving school are more likely to be heading into higher or further education, training opportunities or direct to employment. This is higher than the national average (88.8 per cent) at 92.5 per cent. Young people leaving school into unemployment has fallen from 10.5 per cent in 2007/08 to 5.9 per cent in 2010/11.

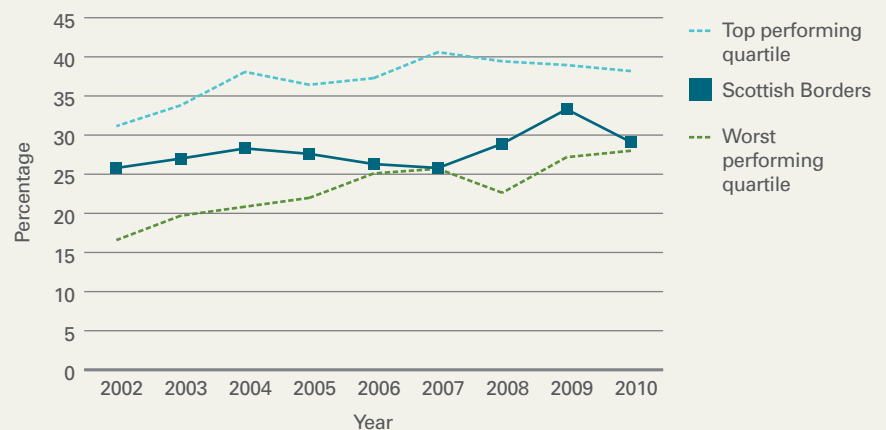
137. The performance gap between tariff scores for S4, S5 and S6 demonstrate minimal signs of closing between 2002/03 and 2010/11. School leaver destination indicators demonstrate signs of closing the performance gap between the most and least deprived areas within the Scottish Borders ([Exhibit 10](#)).

138. The SOA annual progress report for 2010/11 highlights mixed performance against the local outcome of 'improving the life circumstances of people through education, employment and training, particularly targeted at the economically inactive'. There has been an increase in the number of care leavers going into employment, education or training, adults undertaking English as Second Language training, 16- to 19-year-olds supported to progress into work or other training opportunities and those leaving school participating in community-based learning opportunities.

139. There is focused partnership working for improving education in the Scottish Borders through the Borders Learning and Skills Partnership which is chaired by the principal of Borders College. It includes representatives

Exhibit 9

Homecare – intensive care (aged 65+)



Source: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

from the council and the voluntary/ third sector. The group is responsible for monitoring the actions in the service delivery agreement between SBC and Skills Development Scotland. Although the work of this group makes reference to escalating issues to the Borders Strategic Board, there is no evidence that the board has considered the work of this group. The partnership has recently merged with the Employability Group and clearly links to the CPP governance structure through the Economy and Infrastructure Delivery Team.

Communities generally feel safe and the rate of recorded crime has significantly decreased

140. The partnership aims to ensure children grow up in a safe environment, provide looked-after children with the same life chances as other children, protect adults from harm in addition to supporting confident communities where volunteering is promoted.

141. Communities within the Scottish Borders generally feel safe. The rate of recorded crime has significantly improved between 2002 and 2011, and having been among the poorest performing areas it is now in line with the top performing comparator authority areas (Exhibit 11).

142. The top community safety priorities, identified through surveys carried out by the police and the council, are dangerous driving or speeding, drug dealing and drug misuse, crimes against children, parking problems, rubbish and litter, and drunkenness.

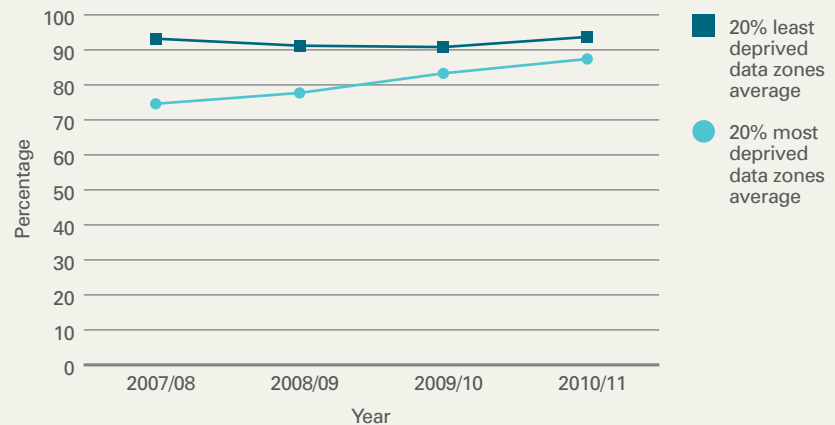
143. The reporting of domestic abuse incidents was low between 2002 and 2009 when compared to other local authorities in Scotland. In 2009, there were signs of increased levels of reporting, from 591 to 717 incidents per 100,000 population.

144. The 2009/10 Scottish Borders SOA does not fully reflect the community safety priorities of Scottish Borders communities or the priorities featured in the new community safety plan. For example, it does not reference the monitoring of road casualties, even though road safety is seen as a big priority for the community, similarly drugs do not feature even though they are also a priority within the community.

145. Community Safety Partners have worked effectively together to address drug problems in the Scottish Borders. Operation Goal was a large local drug operation, which targeted drug dealers, but linked with partners such as the NHS, SBC social work department and local housing associations to ensure that support, prevention and harm reduction were factored in as part of the operation. Local police funding

Exhibit 10

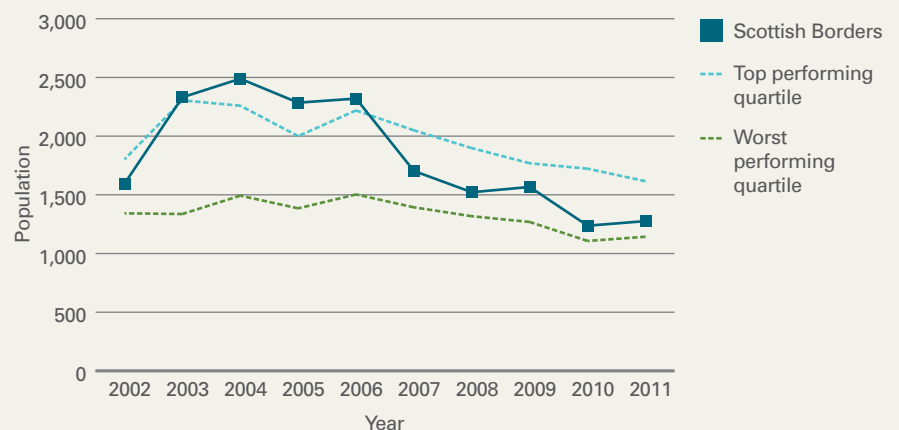
Percentage of school leavers in sustained positive destinations



Source: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

Exhibit 11

Recorded crimes and offences per 10,000 population



Source: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

was used to contribute to fixing the damage caused to doors of housing association properties during forced entry. This operation also made use of early social work involvement so that children's needs in the families that would be affected could be considered and managed prior to the actual warrants being executed. LBP also involved the Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, who they paid for looking after any animals found during the raids.

Performance is improving in aspects of the greener agenda, though targets are not always being met

146. There has been limited progress in reducing the area's carbon footprint. The council has made no progress in reducing its energy consumption, while the NHS has made some progress in reducing its carbon emissions. However, the public recognise this as an issue and the number of households seeking energy efficiency advice is rising year on year.

147. Tourism is a major attraction for the Scottish Borders and maintaining, preserving and enhancing its environment is an important issue for the partnership. The cleanliness index has been maintained at 76, which is above the national average of 74. Wildlife crime has fallen by almost 50 per cent between 2007 and 2011. An encouraging 19.7 per cent of people walk or cycle to work, compared with 12.9 per cent nationally.

148. The council has made some improvement to the cost of collecting waste which has fallen; however, the cost of disposing waste has been maintained. Both are below the target figures set by the council. Recycling rates are improving at 39.9 per cent for 2010/11 but again are below the 47 per cent target set by the council.

149. The partnership has identified an outcome to develop greater environmental resilience within Scottish Borders, aiming to protect the environment, improved recycling rates and reduce energy consumption. While performance is improving, targets are not being met.

Part 8. Improvement agenda



150. Continuous improvement in public services and strong local leadership and governance are central elements of the joint Scottish Government and COSLA Statement of Ambition for community planning. That document and the Scottish Government's priorities for public service reform in response to the Christie Commission report share common themes:

- A decisive shift towards prevention.
- Greater integration of public services at local level, driven by better partnership, greater collaboration and effective local delivery.
- Greater investment in the people who deliver services through enhanced workforce development and effective leadership.
- A sharp focus on improving performance.

151. This is a stretching and demanding agenda. It will require strong and sustained leadership from public sector leaders to deliver the ambitious step change in performance from community planning that is required to respond to:

- the financial pressures facing public services
- rising demand due to demographic change and public expectations
- the deep-rooted social problems that affect many parts of Scotland.

152. The partnership has shown a good level of self-awareness and has made many significant changes in recent months and now has many of the fundamental structures and processes in place. However, it has set itself a demanding improvement agenda and much still needs to be fully established before it can demonstrate clearly how it is improving outcomes for its communities.

153. The audit has identified a number of areas where improvement is required by the CPP. These are set out below.

Strategic direction

- Set an ambitious vision for the area, building on the good outcomes already in place.
- Identify priorities where community planning can make an impact.
- Align priorities with the vision and translate into a jointly agreed SOA.

Governance and accountability

- Ensure partners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Clarify and agree the mechanics through which partnership decisions will be reflected in the formal governance arrangements of partner organisations.
- Enable and support partners to make a full contribution to community planning.

Performance management and use of resources

- Set ambitious, but achievable targets.
- Regularly scrutinise performance reports.
- Report performance and progress publicly.
- Understand the total resources available for delivering partnership resources as well as the contribution by each partner.
- Scrutinise contributions by all partners.

- Ensure the partnership has the skills and abilities to deliver the strategic change agenda.
- Prepare a cross-sector workforce development strategy to support the partnership's strategic priorities.

Impact and outcomes

- Maintain oversight of all joint working initiatives and ensure all partnership arrangements are reflected in the SOA.
- Rationalise activity to ensure resources are being used effectively.
- Effectively coordinate community consultation.
- Clarify the arrangement between the proposed area forums and local planning and service delivery by partners.

154. We will be liaising with the board to discuss this improvement agenda and will be monitoring the progress that the CPP makes in taking forward these improvement actions.

Community planning in Scottish Borders

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