



Streamlining Orkney Groups

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1 Introduction

1.1 Scope of the report

This review has been commissioned by Orkney Islands Council on behalf of the Orkney Partnership, the Orkney Islands Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

The Scope of this review was set out in the commissioning document 'Streamlining Orkney's Multi Agency Groups (August 2020) and included:

- map the current landscape and record names, remits chairs and memberships of all the multi-agency Groups currently meeting in Orkney (including those brought into existence during Covid 19)
- Consultation of members of the groups for suggestions where there are challenges and overlap with a view to reducing potential duplication

1.2 Methodology and Approach

As part of this work a survey of The Orkney Partnership Members was carried out in April 2021 and additional conversations and discussions with some respondents occurred in follow-up interviews where clarification was required.

The survey was undertaken between 9th and 19th April 2021, with provision to extend it. The survey was intended to gauge the number of multi-agency groups operating in Orkney, and gain partners perceptions of any duplication or challenge if they existed.

Where supplied, membership lists of the multi-agency groups (outwith the Orkney Partnership Board) noted members' employing organisations. Where not supplied, email distribution lists for invitations to meetings were used as a substitute for specific membership lists.

A combination of Terms of Reference / partnership remits were also sourced where available, requests were sent to meeting members and Chairs for these items, and sample meeting minutes were obtained to assess attendance over a period of time.

2 The Orkney Multi-Agency Partnership Landscape

Agencies that comprise the Orkney Partnership are well documented elsewhere and are listed in Appendix 1.

In the survey issued to Orkney Partnership members in May 2021 a total of 28 respondents cited membership of a total of 55 different groups – these are listed in Appendix 2. All respondents were assured of confidentiality before participating.

The range of multi-agency partnerships operating across Orkney is extensive. Some of the groups include the three Orkney Partnership delivery groups, and statutory groups such as the Community Justice Partnership, the Integration Joint Board and the Orkney Public Protection Committee. Groups also comprised subgroups of CPP Delivery groups, or those based on themes and some statutory obligation to have such groups.

There are those that are very short-life, in response to specific requirements, such as those established as part of the Orkney Children and Young People's Improvement Plan, which includes the OCYPPC Website Sub Group, or the emergency groups set up in response to

the Covid-19 pandemic, (the Economic Recovery Steering Group, the Community Liaison Group and Caring for People group). Orkney is (at the time of writing) seeing those groups align to the existing Orkney Partnership Delivery Groups. Since June 2021 The Orkney Partnership has moved towards revised remits and comprise the Sustainable Recovery Delivery Group, The Connectivity (transport and communications) Delivery Group and the Community Wellbeing Group.

Culture and heritage groups are represented, through the Heart of the Neolithic World Heritage Steering Group, the HIE/OIC Arts Forum, economic activity and employment-related groups are present through tourism- related groups such as Creative Orkney and the wider Orkney Marketing Board, the Local Employability Partnership, the and the PACE group meetings. Some such as LEADER are fund management programmes and well-established fora such as the Youth Forum and the Youth Workers Forum, continue to operate throughout the year.

3 Areas of Duplication

Responses on Survey Question 1 about overlap gave clear indication that members feel there are areas of duplication within multi-agency partnerships.

The most commonly cited by respondents, which are presented here in their own words, were:

3.1 The Emergency Covid groups:

“yes, there is overlap with OLEG (Orkney Local Emergency Co-ordination Group) and C4P (Caring for People)... seems unclear what responsibilities sit with each level of multi-agency work.”

“Yes...Groups set up to deal with covid recovery duplicate groups already in existence (appreciate that there is a statutory obligation for the covid recover groups). We could have built on what was already in existence rather than creating another structure.”

“Yes, Some of the newer groups that arose in response to COVID overlap work of original groups.”

“Yes, this is not simple as groups are not set up to duplicate, but there are areas of overlap. The main area of overlap seems to be in the some of the Covid response group activity. Because Covid is the context everyone is currently working in, the previous group structure really covered the need as almost all groups are naturally prioritising response and recovery. There was a good intention that Covid recovery specific groups needed put in place to focus efforts, but in taking up more time in meetings there can be a negative impact and confusion over responsibilities.”

3.2 Community Justice / Community Safety

“Yes, Example, Community Justice/ Community Safety”

“I think we could look at the Community Safety Partnership and the Police and Fire Sub Committee and see if we could find some

synergy, respecting the views of the Chair of the latter who has significant experience of both groups."

"Community Safety and Community Justice have a relationship that I believe could be relevant to being one group, the membership is similar and the outcomes have a clear link."

"Yes, most of the groups overlap each other in terms of issues raised."

"Yes, some issues are addressed by the Community Safety Partnership, Community Justice Partnership, Domestic Abuse Forum and also (in some instances) the OADP."

3.3 Employability/economy

"There is a lot of overlap in many of the groups. I don't know them all intimately, but for example, DYW (Developing the Young Workforce), SDS (Skills Development Scotland), ERSG (Economic Recovery Sub Group), CLDG (Community Learning, Development and Guidance) and possibly more, attend the Skills Think Tank which is part of the ERSG. I suspect that this is the case for many other groups."

"Yes, Vibrant Economy Delivery Group/Local Employability Partnership/ ERSG /Developing the young workforce"

3.4 Respondents' Solutions/ Recommendations

Often the reason for duplication was understood and explanations were provided. Consideration as to the level and cause of duplication varied and depended on the Partners' own area of concern/theme, and their reason for joining the groups, and this arguably calls into question whether duplication can (or should) be avoided in its entirety.

"It should be fairly straightforward for each group's strategy to identify the areas it is going to prioritise and to make reference to other groups which would lead on some issues. Similarly action plans can make clear that the lead is elsewhere e.g. domestic abuse is clearly a community safety issue, but is led by the Domestic Abuse Forum which has all the relevant specialists working in this area. Similarly alcohol & drugs are a community safety issue and there may be aspects the OADP lead on, and other more safety-focused initiatives which the CSP leads on."

"[Domestic Abuse]....has a relevance in all groups"

Respondents also had strong feelings on potential solutions, again given in their own words:

"By putting groups into families and alleviate cross over"

"I welcome this activity. As we enter an age of review and reset it is really useful to look at the decision-making structures and consultation

*architecture that exists in Orkney with the aim of establishing a more streamlined and more effective process for each. It will be helpful for each group to review its remit and understand what it *delivers* that is distinct from other groups. By delivery I mean what activity it wants to achieve and by when.”*

“A thorough analysis of the aims and objectives of the current groups”

“Skills think tank role needs clarified as think tanks are supposed to be short term. Review its existence if purpose is already covered by other groups. Chairs of all groups need to be strict around mission creep and be aware of straying into actions that could duplicate that of another group.”

“Map the remit and membership of existing groups and look for opportunities to merge. Make better use of short life working groups.”

“Review remits, objectives and membership. Consider integration or cessation.”

“Where action is required, look to see if there is an existing group that can progress it rather than creating another group. Clearly differentiate between "action" groups and "liaison" groups.”

“Consolidate the multiple similar groups under umbrella groups with smaller number of leaders. Identify overlaps and reduce the number of individual groups meeting. Restructure the groups so that each similar themed group has a lead strategic group with subgroups focused on delivery. Ask every individual who is on multiple groups to identify which group is most likely suitable to lead a consolidated group and which groups simply must stand alone.”

4 Governance

4.1 Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference (ToR) were sourced from 17 out of the 54 groups and for the majority of groups there were governance or operation structures in place. It was however less clear whether members of groups knew what the reporting structures were:

“I am not sure where the DAF (Domestic Abuse Forum) feeds into, whether it is PPC or CSP, both would be valid but not sure it goes to either”

“...seems unclear what responsibilities sit with each level of multi-agency work.”

Where additional individual members were asked, 3 either did not have access to the ToRs for the group, or were not familiar with them.

Four groups recognised that their terms of reference were out of date and/or not fit for purpose, or being revised.

There was occasional confusion over which groups were a statutory obligation (See Appendix 2) and how certain groups could be stood down. In some areas strong concern as to whether the governance structures in place were being followed. The

strongest feeling on this revolved around the work of the Economic Steering Group and the subsequent Aspire initiative, which arose from their work.

5 Membership

Membership of the groups varied, some focussed on the organisations represented at the partnerships, others had wider membership including multiple members of the same partner organisation as one might expect in larger organisations area such as NHSO which operates through numerous different departments.

Some partnerships cast a wide net in terms of where the agenda and meeting invitations went to, in some cases these were issued to over 80 people, overall actual attendance levels were seen to range between 5 to 20 people in attendance at any one meeting.

The survey showed that in some organisations 1 person attended 10 or 12 groups:

“For some their job role will require them to participate in a large number of groups making it difficult for them to make a meaningful contribution other than attendance.”

Others however repeatedly missed meetings but were kept on as members.

Different organisations take a different approach to how their staff were deployed but it was thought that meetings were more effective where the people nominated to attend had authority to make decisions on behalf of their organisations.

There were few Role Descriptors for members available from groups outwith the Community Planning Partnerships and Statutory Groups.

6 Resources

The Community Empowerment Act (CEPA) 2015 requires Community Planning Partners to contribute such funds, staff and other resources as the CPP considers appropriate (CEPA 2015 Part 2 A.10) and for example within the Orkney CPP, OIC provides the secretariat for many of the groups. However other partnership groups often do not have the resource to provide this. In those partnerships, there is the risk that group Action Plans are devised and carried out by a small number of individuals. The impact of this is that diversity of community voices is reduced and significantly the balance of agenda control is in the hands of those who have resources to attend and contribute.

Some plans were being written by a smaller group or sub-group of the whole, often a practical means of working. However, the meaningfulness of the plans reduce where the active group members comprise people in the same team in the same offices, when there is little or no discussion outside of this or involvement of other group members.

Conversely some Action Plans contained tasks that were already being undertaken by organisations, as part of their own remits, or had aims and objectives that were very broad, and/or being undertaken by organisations already in place.

The process through which multi agency groups' self-assessment/evaluation are implemented differs from group to group, making effectiveness difficult to measure, and unless Chairs are trained appropriately there is a risk that the flexibility given at local level is used to speed the process through, rather than reflect on the partnership and/or the local situation, and the group

lead must be skilled at how the evaluations are carried out. The partnerships perceived as the most successful were those where outcomes and actions were clearly not achievable by the individual partners alone, such as Creative Orkney which works to enable local businesses to reach broader markets than would have been possible independently.

7 Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be seen from the survey that there is a will to avoid duplication across Orkney's multi-agency partnerships, but respondents were less clear on whether streamlining in terms of groups amalgamating or ceasing to function, was the answer and where the responsibility for managing that lay.

Reducing duplication once multi agency groups are initiated is complicated, particularly where groups form part of national or regional initiatives, and how this is done lies with the multi-agency partnerships' members themselves.

It is recommended that further investigation into a 'whole system' approach is undertaken to counter issues of lack of clarity of group remit, member responsibility, duplication of themes across partnerships, and use of staff resource (these challenges themselves have led to reduced engagement of partnership members and increase the potential for inefficiency within the groups). This would mean looking at the prevention of duplication before groups are initiated, in addition to how duplication is managed throughout the lifetime of a group.

The survey indicates that there are training needs, and raises concerns as to how quality assurance and evaluation processes can function for groups at local level, as groups outwith The Orkney Partnership Board are not subject to CPP control procedures.

In addition many of the issues raised through the survey are rooted in resource levels. While CPPs are expected to allocate the necessary resources to achieve agreed outcomes, this is not straightforward - CPPs do not have any formal powers to control other individual partners' budgets. Instead, they must rely on the willingness of partners to support and fund the delivery of the partnership's priorities (Audit Scotland 2014, Section 39). Where this happens, there is an opportunity for the CPP to share their resources/toolkits and the skills and knowledge of members with other partnerships to ensure standardisation of approach, delivery and quality.

It is recommended that this could be underpinned by training in the following areas:

- Understanding the responsibility of being part of a partnership, including training on partnership working
- Role descriptions/responsibilities given to all individuals who are members of partnership groups
- Role of the Chair and Vice Chair and to give clear lines of sight to assistance when/if required.
- How Action Plans are devised, function, and change
- Continuous assessment and how to implement Improvement Plans
- An increase in cross-communication between groups, to ensure reduction in and management of duplication
- Further research into the governance of plans and initiatives developed by partnerships, focusing on the mechanisms and processes for implementation, reporting and evaluation.

The Orkney Partnership members' survey responses were specific in that the Emergency Covid Response Groups, and the Community Justice and Community Safety Partnerships should be streamlined.

The Emergency Covid groups have now been stepped down and / or absorbed into The Orkney Partnership.

An effective method for combining Community Justice and Community Safety partnerships can be seen in Midlothian, where Community Safety and Justice Partnership have merged at board level, whilst retaining a Community Safety Delivery Group and a Community Justice Working Group (Midlothian Community Safety and Justice Partnership 2017, 2020). It is recommended that this method is assessed for suitability at a local, Orkney, level.

Through the implementation of the above measures it is suggested that multi-agency partnership working would be improved, efficiency raised, unnecessary duplication reduced, and awareness raised of the impact of such duplication. It would also make clear where responsibility lies in managing that duplication.

8 Bibliography

Audit Scotland, November 2014, *Orkney Community Planning Partnership*

Aspire Orkney November 2020, *Economic Recovery Steering Group: Vision and Initial Action Plan*

Scottish Government, 2015, Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 part 2: *Community Planning: Guidance*,

The Orkney Partnership, November 2019, *Terms of Reference for the Orkney Partnership*,

The Orkney Partnership August 2020, *Streamlining Orkney's multi-agency groups*

The Orkney Partnership 2021, *Working together for a Better Orkney*, Orkney Communities website accessed 08/12/21

<<https://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/COMMUNITYPLANNING/>>

Midlothian Community Safety and Justice Partnership 2017, *Community Safety and Justice Strategy 2017-18*

Midlothian Community Safety and Justice Partnership 2020, *Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan and Framework 2020-2023*

Appendix 1: Community Planning Partnership Members

The Orkney Partnership Board

Orkney Islands Council
Police Scotland
NHS Orkney
Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Integration Joint Board for Health and Care
Orkney College
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Scottish Natural Heritage
Sportscotland
Skills Development Scotland
HiTRANS
VisitScotland
Historic Environment Scotland
Scottish Ambulance Service
Voluntary Action Orkney
Orkney Housing Association Ltd
Orkney Community Justice Partnership

Appendix 2: Current Multi-Agency Partnerships

Local Community Planning Partnership Groups

Current Community Planning Partnership Groups	
1.	Orkney Partnership Board (CPP)
2.	TOP Executive Group
3.	Connectivity Delivery Group (CDG)
4.	Community Wellbeing Delivery Group (CWDG)
5.	Sustainable Recovery Delivery Group (SRDG)
6.	Economic Recovery Steering Group (short life working group reporting via SRDG)
7.	Child Poverty Task Force (short life working group reporting via the CWDG)

Statutory Partnership Groups	
8.	Caring for People Group (Covid response)
9.	Business and Economy Response and Recovery Group (stood down 2021)
10.	Community Recovery Liaison Group (Covid response)
11.	Community Safety Partnership
12.	Community Justice Partnership
13.	Integration Joint Board (IJB)
14.	Local Employability Partnership
15.	Orkney Local Emergency Co-ordinating Group
16.	Public Protection Committee
17.	Chief Officer Group - Public Protection
18.	(Strategic) Community Learning and Development Group

Local Multi-Agency Partnerships (linked to national/regional initiatives)	
19.	Distress Brief Intervention
20.	Developing the Young Workforce
21.	Islands Deal Programme Board
22.	Islands Strategic Group Meeting
23.	LEADER
24.	Orkney PACE Group

Multi Agency Groups Operating in Orkney	
25.	Third Sector Health and Social Care Group
26.	Third Sector Working Group
27.	Data Think Tank
28.	Skills Think Tank
29.	Destination Orkney Officers Group
30.	Destination Management/ Marketing Orkney
31.	Domestic Abuse Forum
32.	ERSG circular Economy and Finance Think (and Do) Tank
33.	Heart of Neolithic Orkney Steering Group
34.	HIE/OIC Group Arts Forum
35.	Housing Forum
36.	Marine Planning Advisory Group
37.	Mental Health Strategy Group
38.	NHS Orkney Forensic Medical Services - Self Referral Short Life Working Group.
39.	NHS Orkney Sexual Health &BBV Group
40.	NHS Orkney Choose Life Suicide Prevention Group
41.	North Isles Landscape Partnership
42.	North Ronaldsay Sheep Dyke Advisory Group
43.	OIC External Transport Forum
44.	Orkney Alcohol & Drugs Partnership Strategy Group Orkney
45.	Orkney Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Wider Services Group
46.	Orkney Marketing Advisory Group
47.	Orkney Youth Forum
48.	Youth Workers' Forum
49.	Outdoor Orkney
50.	Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy
51.	Skills Think Tank
52.	Student Housing Group
53.	Tourism Strategic Partnership meetings
54.	Water Rescue Group within Orkney co-ordinated through Scottish Fire & Rescue.

Appendix 3 The Orkney Partnership

At the time of issuing the survey Orkney's Community Planning Partnership comprised the Orkney Partnership Board group, the Executive group and three delivery groups:

- Vibrant Economy
- Strong Communities
- Living Well

In addition The Orkney Partnerships mechanism provided for short life working groups such as:

- Child Poverty Task Force
- Climate Emergency Short Life Working Group

The Covid –19 pandemic resulted in three emergency Covid groups, that broadly echo the above Delivery Groups:

- Care for People Group
- Community recovery liaison group (aligned with strong Communities, meet together); and
- Economic Recovery Steering Group (a short life working group)

In June 2021 the landscape changed with Covid response groups standing down, and revised Community Planning Groups in place by 2021.

There are three Delivery Groups focussed around three priority action areas comprising:

- Sustainable Recovery
- Connectivity: Digital and Transport
- Community Wellbeing

In addition there are 2 short-life working groups- the Child Poverty Task Force, and the Economic Recovery Steering Group.

Appendix 4 Survey Data Questions

Q1 Name:

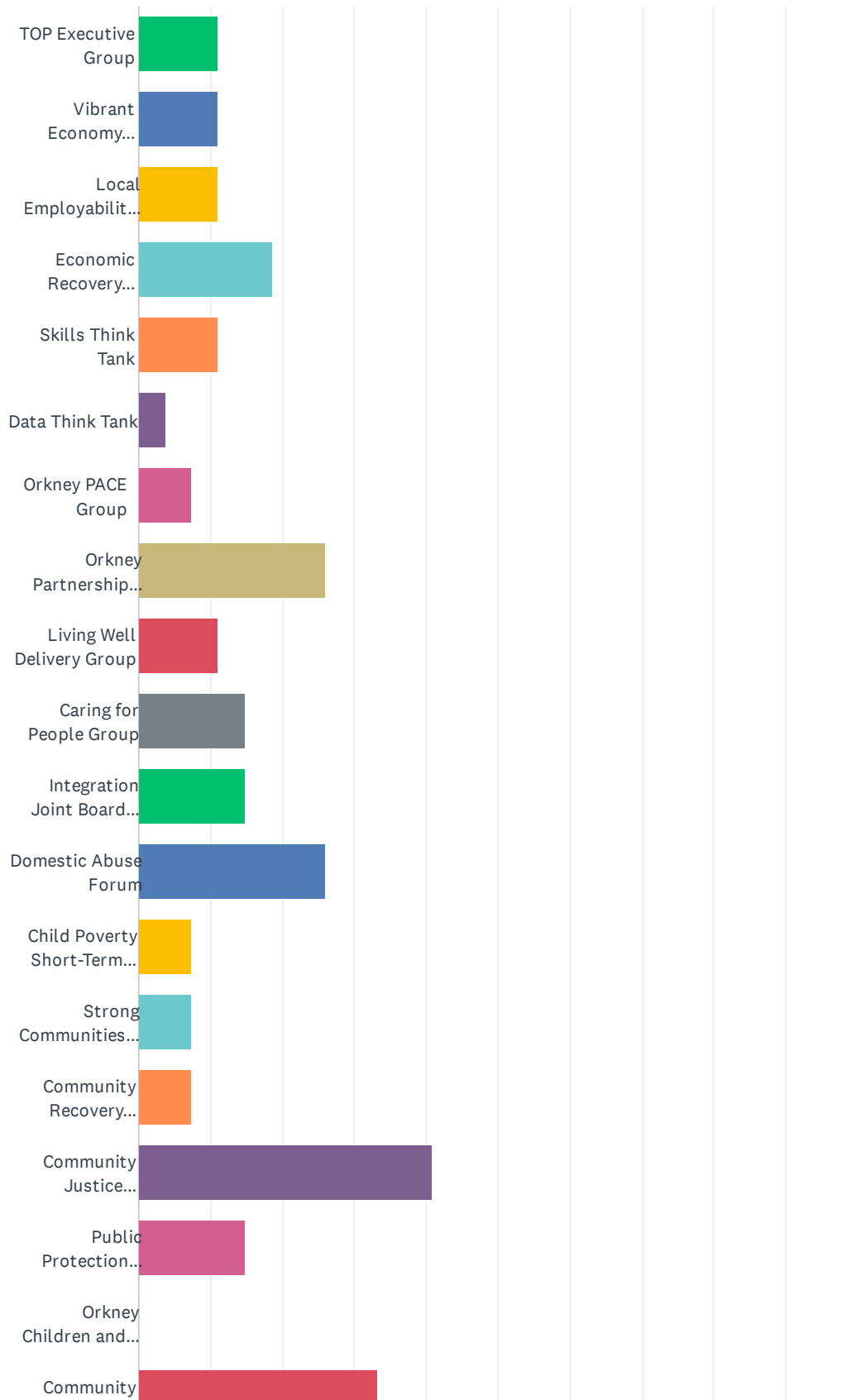
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0

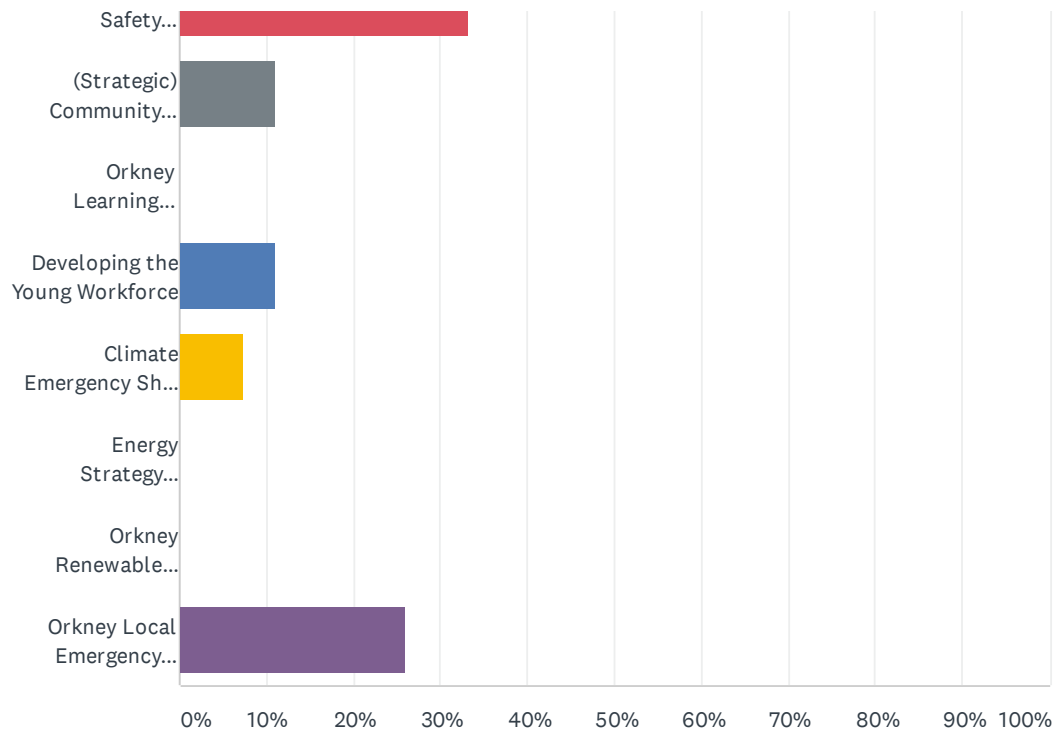
Q2 Role:

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0

Q3 Which of these group meetings do you attend? (tick all that apply)

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0

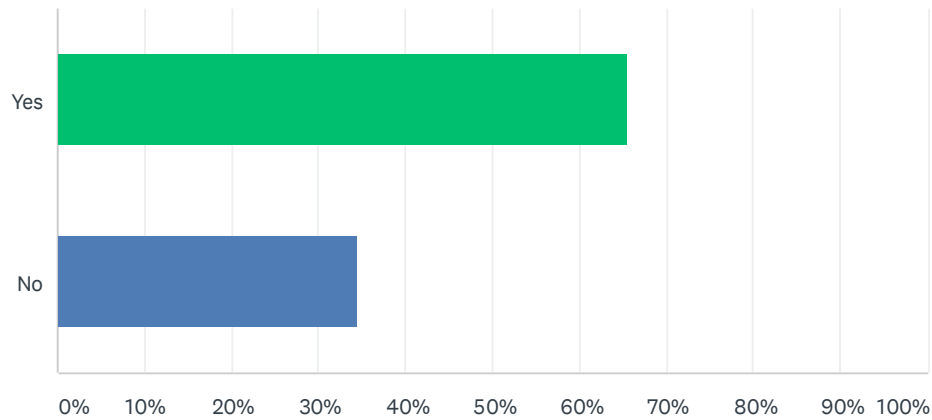




ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
TOP Executive Group	11.11%	3
Vibrant Economy Delivery Group	11.11%	3
Local Employability Partnership	11.11%	3
Economic Recovery Steering Group (ASPIRE)	18.52%	5
Skills Think Tank	11.11%	3
Data Think Tank	3.70%	1
Orkney PACE Group	7.41%	2
Orkney Partnership Board (CPP)	25.93%	7
Living Well Delivery Group	11.11%	3
Caring for People Group	14.81%	4
Integration Joint Board (IJB)	14.81%	4
Domestic Abuse Forum	25.93%	7
Child Poverty Short-Term Working Group (Sub Group of Living Well Delivery Group)	7.41%	2
Strong Communities Delivery Group	7.41%	2
Community Recovery Liaison Group	7.41%	2
Community Justice Partnership	40.74%	11
Public Protection Committee	14.81%	4
Orkney Children and Young People's Partnership	0.00%	0
Community Safety Partnership	33.33%	9
(Strategic) Community Learning and Development Group	11.11%	3
Orkney Learning Guidance Forum (Sub Group of SCLP)	0.00%	0
Developing the Young Workforce	11.11%	3
Climate Emergency Short Life Working Group	7.41%	2
Energy Strategy Stakeholder Group	0.00%	0
Orkney Renewable Energy Forum	0.00%	0
Orkney Local Emergency Co-ordinating Group	25.93%	7
Total Respondents: 27		

Q4 Do you attend other multi-agency group meetings either currently, or have you attended any in the last 3 years?

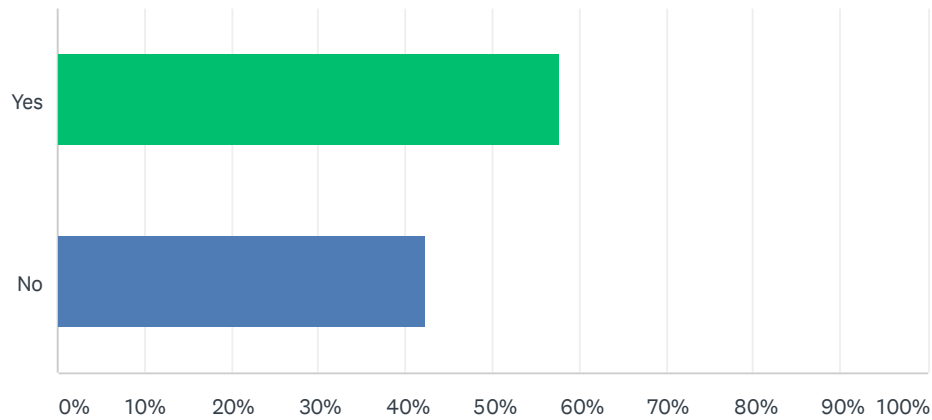
Answered: 26 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	65.38%	17
No	34.62%	9
TOTAL		26

Q5 Do you feel there is any overlap in the remit or duplication in the role, of any of the above groups?

Answered: 26 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	57.69%	15
No	42.31%	11
TOTAL		26

Q6 If you answered 'yes' to question 5, how could this be resolved and the duplication reduced?

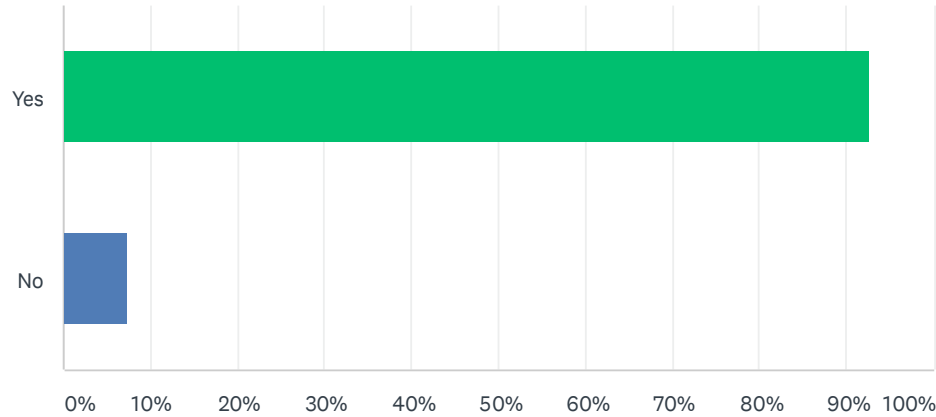
Answered: 16 Skipped: 11

Q7 Do you have any other comments you would like to share?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 15

Q8 We may wish to follow up on some of your answers, are you happy for us to contact you to discuss your response to this survey?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	92.59%	25
No	7.41%	2
TOTAL		27