

**Minutes of Meeting** of the Adult and Children's Services Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday 13 November 2013 at 10.05 am.

**Present:**

**Highland Council:**

Mrs I Campbell, Mr A Christie (Chair), Ms J Douglas, Mr B Fernie, Mr K Gowans, Mr J Gray (Substitute), Mr M Green, Mr D Hendry, Mr E Hunter, Mr N MacDonald, Mr W Mackay (Substitute) (Video Conferencing), Mr G MacKenzie (Vice Chair), Mrs B McAllister, Ms L Munro, Mrs M Paterson, Mr M Rattray, Mrs F Robertson, Ms G Ross, Mr G Ross, Ms J Slater, Ms M Smith, Ms K Stephen

**NHS Highland:**

Mrs M Duncan, Mrs G McCreath, Dr M Somerville

**Religious Representatives:**

Rev C Mayo, Mr G Smith

**Non-Members also present:**

Mr B Clark, Mr C MacAulay, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr T MacLennan, Mr B Murphy, Mr T Prag, Mr A Rhind, Mr G Rimell, Mr J Stone

**In attendance:**

Mr H Fraser, Director of Education, Culture and Sport  
Mr B Alexander, Director of Health and Social Care  
Mr R MacKenzie, Head of Support Services, Education, Culture and Sport Service  
Mr J Steven, Head of Education, Education, Culture and Sport Service  
Ms S MacLeod, Head of Health, Health and Social Care Service  
Ms F Palin, Head of Social Care, Health and Social Care Service  
Ms M MacDonald, Programme Manager – Alternatives to Out of Authority Placements, Health and Social Care Service  
Ms R Binks, Quality Improvement Manager, Education, Culture and Sport Service  
Mr R Campbell, Estate Strategy Manager, Education, Culture and Sport Service  
Ms H Parkey, Programme Manager – Early Years Collaborative, Health and Social Care Service  
Ms S Brogan, Resource Manager - Early Years, Health and Social Care Service  
Mr E Foster, Finance Manager, Finance Service  
Mr C Munro, Highland Children's Forum (Third Sector)  
Ms A Darlington, Action for Children (Third Sector)  
Ms V Gale, Care and Learning Alliance (Third Sector)  
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Chief Executive's Office  
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Office  
Mrs R Daly, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

**An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.**

**Mr A Christie in the Chair**

**Business**

**Preliminaries**

The Director of Health and Social Care provided an update on the joint inspection of children's services currently taking place and commended all those involved for their efforts. It was explained that the inspection took 22 weeks and was an intensive but rewarding process, the Council's relationship with the Care Inspectorate and other regulatory bodies being very positive. In week one of the fieldwork period, over 30 focus groups had taken place and inspectors had visited services and met with families, staff and representatives from the third sector. Last week, over 20 Inspectors had read 103 case files. On week beginning 25 November 2013 it was anticipated that there would be meetings with 21 core groups and further meetings with staff teams. There would be an informal feedback session on 6 December 2013 and it was hoped to receive the Inspection Report early in the new year. This would be presented to the Committee on 15 January 2014 if it was available.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

Ms J Douglas referred to the Council's Quality Awards ceremony which had taken place the previous week. It had been an inspirational event and emphasised how much staff were appreciated and valued. Four award winners were particularly relevant to the Adult and Children's Services Committee, namely:-

- the pilot project relating to mental health screening in secondary schools
- the Inclusion Room at Wick High School
- the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference for Domestic Abuse
- the Ormlie Junior Community Wardens Project

In particular, there was a lot of interesting work being undertaken in relation to the pilot mental health screening project and it was suggested it would be helpful to receive a presentation.

The Committee **AGREED** that a presentation on the pilot project relating to mental health screening in secondary schools be undertaken at a future meeting of the Committee.

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

**Leisgeulan**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr D Alston, Mrs M Davidson, Mr B Gormley, Mrs D Mackay, Mrs M McCulloch and Miss A Taylor.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

### **Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

The Committee **NOTED** the following Declarations of Interest:-

Item 5i – Ms J Douglas (non-financial), Mr K Gowans (non-financial and financial) and Mrs B McAllister (financial)

Item 5ii – Mrs G McCreath (financial)

Item 6 – Ms J Douglas (non-financial) and Mr K Gowans (non-financial and financial)

Item 9 – Ms J Douglas (non-financial) and Mr K Gowans (non-financial and financial)

Ms G Ross declared a financial interest in those items which might raise discussion on Thurso High School, as her husband was a teacher at the School, and advised that if there was any specific discussion in relation to Thurso High School she would leave the room.

## **3. Presentation: Early Years Collaborative**

### **Taisbeanadh: Co-obrachadh nan Tràth-bhliadhnaichean**

The Head of Health introduced a short video on the first learning session of the Early Years Collaborative (EYC) and, thereafter, undertook a presentation during which it was explained that a number of factors, such as the development of For Highland's Children 4 (FHC4) and the integration of services, put the Council in a unique and privileged position to deliver on the EYC.

The early years had a profound impact on a child's physical, mental and emotional development and, in turn, their life chances. By the age of 4, a child's brain was 90% of its adult size and early experiences shaped how the brain developed. A weak foundation increased the chances of difficulties later in life.

A diagram was presented which showed a simplified outline of inequalities and it was explained that there were issues to be addressed in terms of breaking the cycles which led to poor health, educational failure, criminal behaviour, unemployment and poverty.

The EYC vision was to make Highland the best place to grow up in by improving outcomes and reducing inequalities to ensure children had the best start in life and were ready to succeed. This would be achieved by embedding proven practices and improving effectiveness; using a quality improvement approach to make successful and sustained improvement happen; and sharing learning and practice.

The EYC had three high level "stretch aims", namely:-

1. an increase in positive pregnancies resulting in the birth of more healthy babies through a 15% reduction in stillbirths and infant mortality;
2. 85% of children reaching all their expected developmental milestones at their 27-30 month child health review; and
3. 90% of children reaching all their expected developmental milestones when starting primary school.

In relation to improving services, the 13 FHC4 Improvement Groups were key and the EYC provided the model for improvement to be used consistently across all practices. The

emerging priority themes for EYC in Highland were ensuring that the right help was provided at the right time through universal services and building positive relationships between the child and their parent or carer.

The EYC was led by an Executive Group which included the Chief Executives of the Highland Council and NHS Highland, the Directors of Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care, Workstream Leads and the Health Commissioner. Flow charts were presented which showed the EYC structure and the Model for Improvement.

Examples were provided of small tests of change which had led to improvements in relation to increasing the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers and assessing children's development. It was now important to share that learning throughout Highland whilst recognising that the solutions might be slightly different in individual areas.

Moving forward, it was important to develop ideas about ways to build on existing assets in communities and to continue to engage with staff and stakeholders through, for example, District Partnerships and special interest groups.

Further information on the EYC was available in the Highland EYC newsletter on the Council's website and on the Scottish Government's website.

During discussion, the following comments were made:-

- the work and ethos of the EYC was welcomed and its importance in Highland and Scotland as a whole was emphasised;
- reference was made to schemes such as the Family Nurse Partnership which was about engaging with young mothers at the very earliest opportunity;
- the EYC was a good example of how a community planning partnership worked;
- there was still a lot of work to be done in terms of communication and understanding the model for improvement;
- building positive relationships was essential;
- it was important to give Highland's children and young people a sense of direction and, in terms of future employment needs, prepare them for work in sectors such as health and social care, tourism and hospitality as well as the traditional skills;
- there were many career opportunities in science and engineering and reference was made to a new partnership initiative, provisionally entitled "Science Academy", which was a collaboration of public bodies and major employers, the aim of which was to ensure that children had opportunities for positive exposure to science and engineering subjects from a very early stage;
- a number of partnerships were being established to address complex issues and it was essential that they overlapped;
- nationally, the rate of youth unemployment was going down but it remained a significant issue which required to be addressed;
- the importance of cross-service working within the Council was emphasised;
- early intervention was vital and was one of the ways in which health and socio-economic inequalities would be addressed;
- reference was made to the preventative spend from the Council and the establishment of Community Health Co-ordinators in the most deprived areas. The importance of implementing the EYC improvement methodology in those areas and taking a "place-based" approach to tackling inequalities was emphasised;

- inequalities was a cross-cutting theme across all Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) areas and the Director of Public Health was having discussions with the Chairs of the various SOA groups on the importance of the early years in addressing the issue;
- it was important to consider how to measure and evaluate the work being undertaken in order to evidence the benefits;
- whilst the EYC provided the strategic direction, it was important to acknowledge the staff implementing the small changes which were having a significant impact; and
- the EYC was about replacing weak foundations with appropriate intervention, advice, information and support which would lead to change. It would not happen overnight but it was important to stop what had gone wrong in the past and make fundamental changes to break the cycles of inequality and isolation from services.

In response to a question regarding increasing the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers, it was explained that the learning from the small test of change carried out in Merkinch, Inverness would be rolled out throughout Highland. It was important to ensure that midwives and health visitors were reinforcing the message to young mothers, ensuring that information was available to them and they were not stigmatised.

Thereafter, having thanked the Head of Health for the presentation, the Committee **NOTED** the presentation.

#### **4. Membership of Sub-Committees** **Ballrachd Fho-chomataidhean**

The Committee **AGREED** the following:-

- Adult Services Development and Scrutiny Sub-Committee – Mr G Ross to replace Mr T MacLennan
- Criminal Justice Sub-Committee – Ms M Smith to replace Mrs L MacDonald and Mr G Ross to replace Mr T MacLennan

#### **5. Revenue Budget 2013/14 – Monitoring** **Buidseat Teachd-a-steach 2013/14 – Sgrùdadh**

##### **i. Education, Culture and Sport** **Foghlam, Cultar agus Spòrs**

##### **Declarations of Interest:**

**Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item on the grounds of being Directors of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

**In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis of his wife being an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

**Mrs B McAllister declared a financial interest in this item on the grounds that a family member worked in school catering but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No [ACS-95-13 \(89kb pdf\)](#) dated 4 November 2013 by the Director of Education, Culture and Sport which set out the Revenue Budget monitoring position for the six months to 30 September 2013 and the year-end outlook position.

The current estimated year-end position was an overspend of £0.737m. However, management actions were being progressed which could reduce this figure during the second half of the financial year. This would involve reviewing all service budgets, including schools, to identify what opportunities might be available. The main budget pressures, details of which were provided in the report, related to Additional Support Needs (ASN), school transport and catering. Combined, this amounted to a total budget pressure of approximately £2.0m and options to rectify this would be considered as part of the 2014/15 Revenue Budget setting exercise. During the course of November 2013 discussions would take place with all budget holders to identify where further short-term measures to delay expenditure could be implemented in recognition of the magnitude of the budget pressures the Service had to address for the foreseeable future.

The Chairman informed Members that a report specifically on supply cover would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

In response to questions, it was explained that:-

- in relation to ASN, a baseline budget, based on all known current pressures, was being formulated for consideration as part of the 2014/15 Revenue Budget setting process;
- the anticipated Scottish Government funding of £0.990m to support probationer teachers had been included within the Schools General budget line, thereby creating the underspend of £0.582m. The outturn figure comprised a number of overspends and underspends, details of which could be provided to Members; and
- with regard to the amount of meat in school meals and the increasing cost of butcher meat, menus were designed to meet the national standards. There were issues, nationally, in relation to sourcing chicken and the cost of quality meat;
- the Director of Public Health explained that the current recommendation for adults was that red meat should be consumed no more than two or three times per week. Eating fish should be encouraged, however, there were likely to be similar issues in terms of sustainable sources and cost.

Thereafter, having welcomed the forthcoming report on supply cover and commended the ongoing work to find solutions in relation to school transport, the Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the current year-end position and the management actions identified so far to partially offset the known budget pressures and the commitment to continue with the identification of further savings;
- ii. the concerns regarding the underlying budget pressures attributable to Additional Support Needs, School Transport and School Catering and the need to address those as part of the 2014/15 Revenue Budget setting

- exercise; and
- iii. the progress being made with achievement of budget savings in the current financial year.

**ii. Health and Social Care**  
**Slàinte agus Cùram Sòisealta**

**Declaration of Interest:**

**Mrs G McCreath declared a financial interest in this item as a foster carer and advised that if there was any specific discussion in relation to fostering she would leave the room.**

There had been circulated Report No [ACS-96-13 \(105kb pdf\)](#) dated 1 November 2013 by the Director of Health and Social Care which set out the revenue monitoring statement for the six months to 30 September 2013.

The current estimated year-end position was an overspend of £0.039m, an improvement on the July monitoring position. The changed position was largely due to a small reduction in out of authority residential placement costs, a reduction in the number of children in out of authority foster placements and a revised forecast about the rate of staff vacancies over the year. However, these financial benefits were, in part, diminished by an increase in property overspend and Self Directed Support (SDS) commitments. A report on SDS commitments and future planning would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

In response to questions, it was explained that:-

- in relation to vacancy management, there were more posts filled than at the same time last year and when child health services were inherited from NHS Highland. However, this presented more pressure on the budget, albeit the overspend had been managed down since the previous monitoring report and, at this point, the projected outturn was a broadly balanced budget. There were risks, particularly in relation to the pressure on out of authority placements, but officers were committed to continuing to provide safe services, including early intervention, to children who needed them and to managing what continued to be a challenging budget;
- on 1 April 2012, there had been a clear Commissioned Child Health budget. However, the Council was now investing £2m in services which would enhance child health services and it was becoming an integrated budget. Whilst this had been the aim of the partner agencies, accounting for it was a challenging issue and the future presentation of the budget would be the subject of discussions with NHS Highland; and
- information on the number of vacancies being held and their location could be provided in the next monitoring report.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the budget monitoring position; and
- ii. **AGREED** that information on the number of vacancies being held and their location be provided in the next revenue monitoring report.

## **6. Capital Expenditure 2013/14 – Monitoring Caiteachas Calpa 2013/14 - Sgrùdadh**

### **Declarations of Interest:**

**Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item on the grounds of being Directors of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

**In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis of his wife being an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated joint Report No [ACS-97-13 \(231kb pdf\)](#) dated 4 November 2013 by the Directors of Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care which updated Members on progress to date with the Education, Culture and Sport (ECS) and Health and Social Care (HSC) Capital Programmes and provided monitoring reports on expenditure as at 30 September 2013 along with an update on work being undertaken on fire safety and other health and safety Capital works within the HSC Programme and the major projects underway within the ECS Programme.

The report identified some issues that would affect the management of expenditure on several major ECS projects within the approved five-year Capital Programme and sought approval to bring forward the fourth and final phase of the redevelopment of Lochaber High School. It also sought approval for new projects and amendments to the budgets for several current projects and informed on progress on the various phases of the Sustainable School Estate Review (SSER). Finally, it advised on ongoing measures to address communication and performance issues in relation to the management of the ECS estate and capital programme and sought approval for specific matters.

In relation to Health and Social Care, the budget for 2013/14 was £3.914m and expenditure to date was £1.109m which represented 25% of the budget. At this stage in the financial year, it was anticipated that the budget would show an underspend of £0.350m, largely relating to delays in progressing projects from the £1m allocation for adult service.

With regard to Education, Culture and Sport, details of the expenditure to the end of September 2013 were provided in Appendix 2 to the report. The estimated final year end position was an underspend of £0.500m and potential measures to address this situation were being examined.

During discussion, Members welcomed the investment in a number of specific projects and made the following comments:-



- reference was made to community groups having difficulty accessing facilities and a progress report was sought in relation to the Council's commitment to investigate new and innovative ways to deliver community access to existing buildings as part of the review of the school estate;
- the demand in relation to Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis was a credit to the teachers and reflected the school's excellent reputation. Whilst its expansion was welcomed, information was sought on how long the disruption was likely to last and whether any mitigating measures were being put in place;
- in relation to Milton of Leys Primary School, the three additional classrooms agreed at the previous Committee were welcomed. However, an assurance was sought that a fourth classroom was still being considered, as well as other potential measures to mitigate pressure on the school roll which was already over capacity. The Inner Moray Firth Development Plan allowed for more housing in the area and it was very likely that additional capacity would be required in the future;
- with regard to the SSER in Tain, there was full community support for a 3 to 18 campus and it was requested that discussions with the owner of the land adjacent to the Craighill site take place as soon as possible;
- Duthac House was a prime building which would become vacant upon completion of the new care home in Tain and it was suggested that discussions take place with the Planning and Development Service regarding its potential future use; and
- in relation to St Duthus School, Tain Royal Academy's canteen and woodwork/technical drawing department had historically been located on the proposed site of the temporary unit and it was hoped there would be no issues in terms of planning permission etc.

In relation to Ben Wyvis Primary School, the local communities of Conon Bridge and Maryburgh were grateful for the new facilities and Members commended the Head Teacher and staff for their efforts in delivering education at the school, despite the snagging issues which had arisen. The Lessons Report was welcomed, however, disappointment was expressed that it was not more in-depth. The standard of workmanship was poor and Local Members had been inundated with complaints from concerned parents. A meeting had taken place with the Chief Executive and senior officials and an assurance had been given that all snagging works would be completed by 6 January 2014. Council staff had put in a lot of time and effort to resolve the issues and a report was sought on the additional cost to the Council since the school opened. Whilst recognising that there had been difficulties with the contractor in this instance, concern was expressed regarding project management in general.

In response, the Chairman explained that a final account was undertaken on all capital projects and this would include the detail requested. Retention monies were being held which should be the first step in relation to any additional costs. It was important to learn from the issues which had arisen and ensure they didn't occur in the future. The Health and Social Care projects set out in the report did not fall in to the same category, there being valid reasons for the overspend in each case as a result of unforeseen issues. However, this did not mean that overspends were acceptable and it was important to understand the reasons behind them.

With regard to Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, a Briefing Note would be circulated to Members and discussed with staff and the Parent Council.

In relation to Milton of Leys Primary School, discussions would take place at the relevant Ward Business Meetings and a report containing information on roll projections would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

In response to further questions, it was explained that:-

- in relation to St Duthus School, August 2014 was the indicative completion date. As it was a listed building on a constrained site this could not be guaranteed but every effort would be made to adhere to the timescale; and
- with regard to Wick High School, larger scale copies of the plans would be provided to stakeholders as soon as possible.

Thereafter, having commended officers for their efforts, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the status of the 2013/14 HSC capital programme at the end of September 2013 as detailed in Section 2 and Appendix 1 of the report;
- ii. **NOTED** the status of the 2013/14 ECS capital programme at the end of September 2013 as detailed in Section 3 and Appendix 2 of the report;
- iii. **NOTED** the status of the ECS major capital projects as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report;
- iv. **NOTED** the issues affecting the expenditure profiles for several major ECS projects over the five-year period as detailed in Section 4 of the report and **APPROVED** the recommendation that the Lochaber High School Phase 4 project be brought forward to run concurrently with Phase 3 subject to an appropriate cost being negotiated with the Phase 3 contractor and ensuring that the anticipated benefits would be achieved;
- v. **AGREED** the new projects and amendments to existing budget allocations as detailed in Section 5 and Appendix 5 of the report;
- vi. **NOTED** the status of the Sustainable School Estate Review as detailed in Section 6 of the report;
- vii. **AGREED** that the decision to allow the North of the River Primary School in Wick to progress to Stage 2 be delegated to the Directors of Education Culture and Sport and Finance and the Interim Director of Housing and Property Services on the basis that the Affordability Caps (adjusted for indexation) approved in the New Project Request document (approved by this Committee in January 2013) were not exceeded;
- viii. **AGREED** that the replacement Inverness Royal Academy project progress to Stage 2 on the basis that the Council's project team had confirmed that the maximum predicted price figure (adjusted for indexation) contained within the Stage 1 submission was within the corresponding figure approved in the New Project Request document (approved by this Committee in January 2013);
- ix. **AGREED** that formal discussions take place with the owners of land adjacent to Craighill Primary School regarding its availability in order that all necessary factors could be taken into account to establish a preferred site for the proposed 3 to 18 campus in Tain;
- x. **NOTED** the progress on measures to improve communication with Ward Members as detailed in Appendix 6 of the report;
- xi. **AGREED** that the lessons learnt regarding the Ben Wyvis Primary School project as detailed in Appendix 7 of the report be adopted for all major ECS

- and HSC projects with immediate effect;
- xii. **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the Finance, Housing and Resources Committee that the former school house at Kinlochewe be declared surplus to requirements and disposed of on the open market;
- xiii. **AGREED** that a progress report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee in relation to the Council's commitment to investigate new and innovative ways to deliver more community access to existing buildings as part of the review of the schools estate;
- xiv. **AGREED**, in relation to the Ben Wyvis Primary School project, that information on the additional costs to the Council since the school opened be provided to Members of the Committee;
- xv. **AGREED** that a Briefing Note on the Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis project be circulated to Members of the Committee and discussed with school staff and the Parent Council;
- xvi. **AGREED** that discussions take place with the Planning and Development Service regarding the potential future use of Duthac House, Tain and the possibility of officers attending a future Ward Business Meeting to hear the views of Local Members and the community; and
- xvii. **AGREED** that larger scale copies of the plans for Wick High School be provided to stakeholders as soon as possible.

## **7. Integrated Family Teams in Children's Services Sgiobaidhean Amalaichte ann an Seirbheisean Chloinne**

There had been circulated Report No [ACS-98-13 \(146kb pdf\)](#) dated 4 November 2013 by the Director of Health and Social Care which set out the detail of the proposals for enhanced early years services as part of the Council's commitment to preventative spend and the implementation of Integrated Family Teams. It was intended that there be a short final period of consultation, enabling recommendations to be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

The proposals involved the creation of ten Family Teams across Highland, largely based on the Districts and the corresponding Associated School Groups. Each Team would have a Service Manager and Practice Leads in three particular functions. The proposed staffing levels for the new Teams, including the enhancements for early years, were based on need, population and geography and would achieve the agreed savings of £0.025m in the current financial year and £0.075m the following year.

Consultation with practitioners, managers and professional leads had led to a range of proposals for the enhanced early years services and these were detailed in the report. In addition, information was provided on senior posts potentially impacted by the service re-design. The report also explained that an exercise was being completed to confirm the current spend on support work across Highland, including third sector provision.

During discussion, the following comments were made:-

- the report and the significant number of posts being created as a result of preventative spend were welcomed. The new posts would benefit the most vulnerable children and young people in Highland and demonstrated that the partner agencies were taking preventative spend and the good it could do very seriously. It was recognised that it

was a work in progress but it was a significant step forward and all those involved were commended;

- in relation to Appendix 1 to the report, it would be helpful, in future, to include the total child population covered by each integrated team so it could be seen whether there were more staff in the areas where greater need was predicted; and
- in relation to the performance framework, it was necessary to give consideration to outcomes which demonstrated the effectiveness of the integrated teams.

In response to questions, it was explained that:-

- staff had been fully engaged in the change process. A more conservative model, retaining some of the existing demarcation, had been discussed but staff had supported moving to a single integrated team model. The challenge, moving forward, was what it would look like in each individual area. There was a Project Board, which included the staff side, and learning had been applied from the staff partnership developed through integration. Moving to a single integrated team was a significant step forward and it was essential to get it right and take account of all of the detail. It was therefore proposed that there be a further round of consultation with staff and managers before presenting final recommendations to the Committee on 15 January 2014;
- in relation to the staffing baseline, the information was very complex as it reflected the staffing position in all disciplines throughout the Highland area. However, consideration would be given to how it could be made accessible for inclusion in the next report. There had been an explicit attempt to achieve a level of equity throughout Highland. Appendix 1 to the report set out the proposed additional posts for enhanced early years services;
- family centre developments would run in parallel with the integrated team proposals and a number of developments were being examined, not only in Inverness but throughout Highland. The traditional family centre model might not be suitable in all areas and opportunities to build on existing community facilities were being explored with a view to allowing people to come together and access services in rural as well as urban areas. In Inverness, the Area Children's Manager had a number of proposals which could be discussed with Members if they so wished;
- enhanced Third Sector services formed part of the proposals. For example, there was currently a community capacity building service in the early years in Ross-shire, Caithness and Sutherland and it was anticipated that this would be extended to all new integrated teams. However, there might be some displacement of staff and discussions were taking place with partners to ensure that the skills and capacities of existing workers were retained whether they worked for the Council or the Third Sector;
- with regard to services for children and young people with a disability, the existing models would be retained within the new structure i.e. where there was currently a discrete team that would continue. Professional leadership in relation to disability had proved to be effective and this would be built into the new model. Similarly, youth action services had had a significant impact in terms of reducing youth crime and the existing structure would be retained within the new system; and
- the post of Integrated Services Officer had been very successful and was incorporated in the new model under the title of Practice Lead (School Age Children). There were 13.8 Full Time Equivalent posts which was an increase on current provision.

In response to a further question, the Chairman confirmed that the Administration was committed to continuing the work on early intervention, integrated teams and out of authority placements and to enhancing services further. The outturn figures for the current year were currently being examined together with budget proposals for future years. It could not all be done with preventative money and some elements might be incorporated in core services in the future. Proposals on all these elements would be brought forward in due course.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the proposals and that there would be a final period of consultation, enabling recommendations to be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

## **8. Performance Report – Children’s Services Aithisg Dèanadais – Seirbheisean Chloinne**

There had been circulated Report No [ACS-99-13 \(113kb pdf\)](#) dated 5 November 2013 by the Director of Health and Social Care which provided an update on the performance framework for Children’s Services.

The Performance Framework had been agreed by the Council and NHS Highland as part of the lead agency arrangements. On this basis the performance report had also been presented to NHS Highland. The report provided commentary on a number of measures where performance was not broadly on target or was otherwise of note. Specific attention was drawn to one instance of a child waiting longer than 26 weeks for access to a Primary Mental Health Worker, however, as item 7 referred, additional capacity for Primary Mental Health Workers was planned across Highland. Further, the child healthy weight intervention programme had exceeded its final target with 9 months of the year still to go.

During discussion, the following comments were made:-

- in terms of the 26 week deadline for children to receive psychiatric services assistance, it was unclear what provisions existed for children between the time from referral to gaining access to services;
- based on regular liaison meetings between the Third Sector and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) officers, it was now clear that the upper level services were generally meeting the 18 week target although there was some concern that this might not be sustained. It had to be recognised that these timescales represented a significant period of time for a young person. While it was acknowledged that professionals were working hard to meet these targets, if the Council’s Administration could exert any political influence on Government to improve the target and fund it appropriately, this would have significant benefits for these children. When a young person suffered mental stress during waiting times, this also impacted on the family as a whole;
- there had been huge improvements seen in CAMHS over the last year, however there were many other pressures on the service. More redesign work was anticipated to maintain the waiting times target and it was confirmed that regular discussions and close monitoring were on-going on this;
- the success of the High 5 Initiative was particularly encouraging not least because it represented a whole school approach. It was hoped that a presentation could be delivered on this to a future meeting of the Committee to explain the work that was underway. While it was expected that this project would have overall long-term benefits, measuring success in terms of obesity and over-weight was not the most

- helpful approach. It was more important to stress healthy lifestyles and separate out long-term outcomes from the short term good work that was being undertaken; and
- regarding health assessments for Looked After Children, it was important to ensure health outcomes were focussed rather than just recording the fact that a health assessment had taken place.

In response to questions, it was explained that access to a Primary Mental Health Worker would be accelerated in cases of children who were at significant risk. However, it was usual for children who were being supported in the community to be in receipt of a range of other services and the Primary Mental Health Worker would focus on enabling those other services to better intervene with the child. The 26 week target was currently only a transitional target and was set to reduce to 18 by December 2014.

The Committee **NOTED** the performance information.

## **9. Education Standards and Quality Report** **Aithisg Inbhean agus Càileachd Foghlaim**

### **Declarations of Interest:**

**Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item on the grounds of being Directors of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

**Ms Douglas also declared a non-financial interest in this item as a leader on the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award Project but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.**

**Mr K Gowans also declared a financial interest in this item as an employee of Inverness College and advised that if there was any specific discussion in relation to Inverness College he would leave the room. In addition, he declared a financial interest on the basis of his wife being an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No [ACS-100-13 \(529kb pdf\)](#) dated 3 November 2013 by the Director of Education, Culture and Sport which provided an overview of Standards and Quality in Highland primary and secondary schools.

During a summary of the report, it was confirmed that during the school session 2010–2011, the Quality Improvement Team had developed and introduced a new School Improvement through Self-Evaluation (SISE) approach together with a standardised format for school Standards and Quality Reports which linked directly to the School Improvement Plan format. The report provided a focussed summary of educational progress across the Service as a whole and recommended future work associated with the following three key headings:-

- How well did the Service improve the quality of its work?
- How well did young people within Highland learn and achieve?

- How well did the Service support young people to develop and learn?

During discussion, Members welcomed the report and raised a range of issues, including:-

- many achievements were particularly pleasing which reflected the quality of learning experience in Highland schools - the significant increase in school based skills for work entries since 2009/10; the Duke of Edinburgh awards were 30% above the national average and attainment for senior grades and intermediates was well above the national averages;
- the report did not make any specific reference to extra-curricular activities and it was suggested that this could be considered for future inclusion;
- the report did not detail specifically how the Service was improving the outcomes and final destinations for children who had additional needs or who were looked after; and
- in relation to the increase in numbers of schools delivering two periods of Physical Education (PE), it was queried why this had not been achieved across the board and it was also queried whether Active Schools Coordinators could be involved in PE delivery.

In response to these comments, it was confirmed that:-

- Area Committees currently received Associated School Group reports which included information on extra-curricular activities and the potential to include access to this information into future overviews of Standards and Quality could be considered;
- it was recognised that information on the outcomes and final destinations for children with additional needs or who were looked after was reported elsewhere and future overviews of Standards and Quality could make this available; and
- it was confirmed that progress towards the Scottish Government target for PE would be the subject of a separate report to Committee when the queries raised would be addressed, including the work underway with the Active Schools Coordinators.

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the Education and Quality Summary Report 2012-2013.

## **10. Family Nurse Partnership Programme Update Com-pàirteachas Bhanaltraman Teaghlaich**

There had been circulated Report No [ACS-101-13 \(17kb pdf\)](#) dated 5 November 2013 by the Director of Health and Social Care which provided an update on progress with the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) pilot programme which had been running in the Mid and South areas of Highland.

The report outlined the establishment and initial work of the Highland FNP team which delivered an intensive home visiting service to women who were pregnant with their first child at 19 years old or younger until their child was 2 years old. The programme was based on highly researched work which demonstrated that inputs provided to this client group achieved significant short and long term benefits to both mother and child. Despite high recruitment percentage levels to the programme, there was currently a lower number of clients than expected due to fewer teenage pregnancies than predicted. Overall, however, the FNP Project Board was confident that the outcomes for the clients and their children would be greatly improved by the input from the programme.

During discussion, Members welcomed the report and raised a range of issues, including:-

- the role of the Clinical Psychologist was queried, particularly with whom they worked;
- not as many mothers had been recruited as had been expected and it was queried whether there was potential, therefore, to extend age ranges or criteria in some way to include other vulnerable young mothers;
- the impact this project might have on family teams in terms of integrated working was unclear;
- the membership of the FNP Board were keen that the project be as user-friendly as possible across Highland and it was acknowledged that the particular circumstances of Highland had been asked to be taken into account;
- it was particularly encouraging to learn that 57% of the participants had initiated breast feeding;
- it was queried why 12% of potential participants declined to partake; and
- the evidence from the outcomes relating to increasing confidence in the mother's ability to access other services was welcomed – these levels of empowerment represented transferable and long-term confidence skills.

In response, it was confirmed that:-

- the Clinical Psychologist worked specifically with the family nurses themselves to support them and assess where individual strengths were within the team and consider how this could be supported and sustained within the team setting – this was a funded part-time post;
- in anticipation of moving on and embedding the experience gained from the pilot, there had been consideration given to rolling it out to mothers in other geographical areas or who moved from Inverness during the period of the project to ascertain if the level of support could be sustained. This had so far proved successful. An examination had also been carried out of other mothers who would have been eligible but were located outwith the Inner Moray Firth area. For the second cohort, officers were planning to widen the geographic area of the project for mothers in other areas of the Highlands. A positive response had been received from the license holder to pilot some additional functions in Highland such as using modern technologies to cater for mothers who moved within the area – this was an area for potential research and evaluation;
- other more fundamental changes to eligibility criteria had been requested of the license holder for the second cohort, although it was uncertain at present whether they might be acceptable. Such proposals included the prospect of a dual role for family nurses in outlying areas embracing mothers who met current eligibility criteria and including young mothers on their second pregnancy and/or expanding the age criteria;
- a FNP was imminent in the Grampian area and opportunities might exist for the project's services to be made more sustainable by extending it geographically through joint arrangements for the next cohort;
- the eligibility criteria for the project did not make reference to marital status. The only criteria was to be 19 years or younger and pregnant with a first child; and
- it was confirmed that everyone who declined to participate was followed up and given further opportunities to engage. There were wide-ranging reasons for declining



involvement, some young women had a strong family support network and others chose to prioritise returning to full time education.

The Committee **NOTED** the current progress of the Family Nurse Partnership in Highland.

**11. Implementation of 600 Hours Early Learning and Childcare –  
Progress Update  
Buileachadh Ionnsachadh Thràth-bhliadhnaichean agus Cùram-  
chloinne 600 uair**

There had been circulated joint Report No [ACS-102-13 \(21kb pdf\)](#) dated 5 November 2013 by the Directors of Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care which formed part of the regular reporting process to Members and sought support to progress to the next stage of planning in order to meet the requirement to deliver 600 hours of funded early learning and childcare across Highland from August 2014.

During a summary of the report, it was explained that the Children and Young People Bill published in April 2013 required an increase in provision from 475 hours to 600 hours of free early learning and childcare. Details were outlined of the scoping exercises that had been undertaken to consider the various models of delivery, together with the range of consultation that had been carried out. Two options were proposed for consideration with both models being predicated on changing to a one tier staffing structure at Early Years Practitioner grade. Option 1 involved extending both sessions to 3 hours per day but with sessions running for two weeks longer than the school session. Option 2 proposed extending both sessions to 3 hours 10 minutes per day so as to deliver the requirements within school term time.

One of the key features of Option 2 was the introduction of two distinct teams of staff to support morning and afternoon provision in the nurseries that operated double sessions. This would require around 70 staff, who presently worked more than the 23 hours to be offered, additional duties if they wished to maintain their current hours. This might include wraparound care, relief cover, additional support needs, or assisting with the transition into Primary 1. To take fuller account of staff views, an amendment to the recommendation had been tabled inviting the Committee to note the progress being made with regard to the implementation of 600 hours of Early Learning and Childcare by August 2014 and to continue the consultation with staff to reach the most appropriate model, with a further report in January 2014.

During discussion, Members raised a range of issues, including:-

- the increase to 600 hours provision would make a huge difference to children, parents and families and would build on the Council's commitment to early years;
- it would be important to retain flexibility during consideration of the options throughout the period of consultation. If there was to be a reduction in time spent with nursery assistants there was a need to deploy these resources appropriately and effectively. It was hoped that additional consultation would remove uncertainty that surrounded this issue;
- it was hoped that fully costed options could be available when the report was submitted to Committee in January and that this could also address budget requirements for additional training needs and management time for Head Teachers;

- the amendment to the recommendation was welcomed as it was important that staff felt valued and appreciated – it would also be important to remember to involve parents and partner centres;
- regarding the process, concerns had been expressed in Wick by the Third Sector and it was anticipated that a joint letter of complaint was to be submitted to the Council. In addition, some of the school staff were concerned at the short notice given for meetings held in Wick. In this particular case, it had been hoped that a personal visit could be made to the area rather than simply a written response;
- discussions with District Partnerships were welcomed but, taking into account the timetable for the decision on this issue, it was unclear whether District Partnerships would be able to input to the consultation process as they only met on a quarterly basis;
- the increase in hours provision would be useful for working and single parents, particularly if there was wraparound care in schools where it currently did not exist. It was queried whether the sports co-ordinators and Third Sector might have a role in providing care; and
- while accepting the comments on the need for better communication and consultation with staff, it was crucial to focus on the increase in investment for Highland children that this would produce and that the proposal was predicated on a fairer pay scale for staff.

In response to the issues raised specifically regarding the situation in Wick, it was confirmed that the option of a meeting would be made to the organisation in question. It was confirmed that, regardless of sector, each workforce had to be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. Within the review it was hoped that the Third Sector would see a change in the disparity between the hourly rates paid to local authority personnel and those in the Third Sector. All employees were under the auspices of the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland and therefore working to the same standards. Feedback from Third Sector groups in Caithness regarding how this issue should move forward would be very welcome.

The key issue for District Partnerships was around the nature of the provision on a local basis. It was likely that there might be some 20-30 areas where challenges might be encountered and would need to be resolved locally. A quarterly meeting of the District Partnership would not be a suitable forum to address these issues and so each Partnership would be asked to hold frequent satellite meetings of the Child Care Partnership.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the progress being made with regard to the implementation of 600 hours of early learning and childcare by August 2014; and
- ii. **AGREED** to continue the consultation with staff to reach the most appropriate model, with a further report in January 2014.

## **12. Alternatives to Out of Authority Placements – Scoping Report** **Roghainnean Eile airson Suidheachaidhean Taobh A-muigh an** **Ùghdarrais – Fios às Ùr**

There had been circulated joint Report No [ACS-103-13 \(93kb pdf\)](#) dated 25 October 2013 by the Directors of Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care which highlighted key issues associated with out of authority placements and detailed the exploratory activity that had taken place to date to define the scope of the programme to find alternatives to out of authority placements for Highland children. Consultations had taken place with key staff and visits to provisions both in education and health and social care settings had been undertaken to determine short, middle and long term potential projects.

The report explained that the overall number of looked after children in Highland had begun to fall very significantly over the past 18 months. However, the number of children in spot purchased specialist placements, such as residential schools and independent children's units, had not reduced in a similar way.

A range of new developments was detailed which included the possibility of a small residential unit for young people with autism on the site of the new Inverness Royal Academy. Discussions were taking place between Children's Services, Adult Services and Housing Services to determine optimum through-care and aftercare housing options for looked after young people, including those returning from out of authority placements. The possibility of utilising Council properties was also being assessed for capacity to either return young people from placement out of area, or avoid them going, whilst maximising the opportunity to save the Council money.

During discussion, Members welcomed the report, acknowledged the work undertaken by officials and raised a range of issues, including:-

- regarding the proposed residential unit for young people with autism, it was very important that the needs of these children were properly taken into account. It was suggested that further scoping work be carried out to make a case for change and to address future sustainability concerns. It was important to consider where such a unit might fit in the existing spectrum of care and support for young people and in transitions to adulthood. It was hoped that there would be a further report to Committee on this;
- it was accepted that the proposed residential unit for young people with autism would have implications for workloads with family teams and it was assumed that this would be taken into account and that such a unit would not be developed in isolation from how services for young people with autism were managed in general;
- it was important to keep up momentum and look at working in partnership with others especially in taking forward projects for which the Council did not have capital funding;
- in relation to through-care and aftercare service proposals, much work had been done in association with Housing officials and it was requested that a report be submitted back to Committee and that a presentation be arranged on this for the future; and
- it was queried whether the respite needs for young adults could be part of the discussions.

In response, it was confirmed that:-

- regarding new developments at Inverness Royal Academy, a business case would be put together as capital funding for this was not currently available. The business case

would be required to illustrate the elements referred to during debate and to meet the needs and expectations of the children involved;

- officials had been assured by the Council's Administration that if there were capital implications from any of the proposals they would be fully supported on the grounds that this was good for children and families and it also made good financial sense. Currently the Council was investing a lot of its resources outwith the Highlands and it would therefore be sustainable to have provision within Highland. The key to the whole issue would be to find the right balance and to ensure a good business case was put together;
- with regard to Transition Planning with Adult Services, it was confirmed that the Complex Case Planning Forum between Adult Services and Children's Disability Teams met quarterly to plan for both the transitions of young people currently within and outwith Highland; and
- a group of families was working with NHS Highland regarding respite for young adults and, while it was acknowledged that there were concerns regarding the rate of progress, there had been commitments made recently to move forward with the work.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** the scoping work undertaken to date to identify alternatives to out of authority placements for the young people of Highland; and
- AGREED** to endorse the development of the unit at Inverness Royal Academy, subject to further consideration of the revenue and capital implication, and continued work on the other proposals in the report.

### **13. District Partnerships – Update Com-pàirteachasan Sgìreil – Fios às Ùr**

There had been circulated Report No [ACS-104-13 \(200kb pdf\)](#) dated 5 November 2013 by the Director of Health and Social Care which summarised the key issues that had been raised at District Partnerships in the reporting period April to September 2013 and the key findings of the seminar on 27 September 2013.

It was confirmed that the report would also be presented to NHS Highland's Health and Social Care Committee. The recurring themes across District Partnerships in the reporting period were detailed together with other more specific discussion which had been held at Partnership meetings. While the Partnerships had created a strong base of shared understanding and trust, during the reporting period there had been some frustration that the activity being discussed and proposed was not yet fully immersed as part of the 'day job'.

Engagement with the public and other stakeholder groups remained a concern and various aspects of the relationship with the Third Sector had been discussed. Examples of good practice were raised and shared at meetings and it was recognised that sharing of information between Partnerships could be improved as could links with other Community Planning topics, such as Community Safety.

During discussion, Members raised a range of issues, including:-

- there could be benefits in allowing all Ward Members to be members of District Partnerships but, if this might not be practical, it was suggested that substitutes be considered with papers being issued to all Ward Members;
- there had been a range of views expressed regarding District Partnerships as they all appeared to operate differently yet within the framework that was set out in the guidance. It would be important to consider where they fitted in the totality of other forums as this varied from one locality to another. It would also be important to consider how they integrated with community care partnerships and locality planning. There was a need for greater clarity regarding their role to avoid duplication and the opportunity for further discussion was welcomed;
- there had been difficulties with the public interacting with District Partnerships and there was a need for better public relations with communities. It was clear that District Partnerships would take time to become fully established and reach their full potential. While the first year of the pilot had been interesting, it was expected that the next year would be key to their engagement with communities;
- a change in name might facilitate greater public involvement; and
- there appeared to be some degree of duplication, particularly in relation to some areas such as rural transport.

In response, it was confirmed that:-

- the Chairman would reconsider the Council membership of District Partnerships in the light of concerns raised and undertook to make contact with Members on this; and
- a key issue that had emerged from the seminar on 27 September had been that the Chairs of the District Partnerships should meet more frequently to discuss a range of matters including structural issues. This would help in taking forward an appreciation of where District Partnerships sat within their local structure.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** progress with all nine District Partnerships in the reporting period April to September 2013; and
- ii. **AGREED** that a further report come back to Committee once partners had discussed and proposed any changes in light of the District Partnership seminar and any implications as a result of the wider community planning review taking place in Highland.

#### **14. Chief Social Work Officer – Annual Report Prìomh Oifigear Obair-Shòisealta – Aithisg Bhliadhnail**

There had been circulated Report No [ACS-105-13 \(99kb pdf\)](#) dated 1 November 2013 by the Director of Health and Social Care which introduced the annual report by the Chief Social Work Officer for 2012/13.

The overall objective of the Chief Social Work Officer role was to ensure the provision of effective, professional advice to local authorities in the provision of social work services. In the lead agency model, this included advice to officers of NHS Highland. In this regard, the report would also be presented to NHS Highland.

The Committee **NOTED** the issues raised in the annual report.

**15. Minutes**  
**Geàrr-chunntas**

The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes of the Child Protection Committee of [17 September 2013 \(24kb pdf\)](#).

The meeting concluded at 12.35 pm.