Highland Public Services Partnership Performance Board

Minutes of Meeting of the Highland Public Services Partnership Performance Board held in Committee Room 2, Highland Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, on Tuesday, 6 March 2014, at 10.00 a.m.

Present:

Highland Council:
Mr D Hendry (in the Chair)
Dr D Alston
Mr J Gray
Mrs C Wilson
Mr S Barron
Mr B Alexander
Mr S Black
Mr H Fraser
Mr D Haas
Ms C McDiarmid

Highlands and Islands Enterprise:
Ms C Wright
Mr M Johnson

Highland Third Sector Interface
Mr G Sutherland
Ms M Wylie

NHS Highland:
Mr G Coutts
Ms M Paton
Ms C Steer

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service:
Dr M Foxley
Mr S Hay

Scottish Government:
Mr J Pryce

Scottish Natural Heritage:
Mr G Hogg

University of the Highlands and Islands:
Mr C Lang
Mr M Wright

Also Present (item 7):
Ms J Halawi, Education Scotland
Ms A Kivlin, Education Scotland
Mr I Murray, High Life Highland

In Attendance:

Mrs R Moir, Principal Committee Administrator, the Highland Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr I Ross (Scottish Police Authority); Chief Supt J Innes (Police Scotland); Mr R Iffla (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); Ms F Larg (University of the Highlands and Islands); Mrs E Mead, Dr M Somerville and Mrs J Baird (NHS Highland); and Ms M Morris (The Highland Council).

2. Minutes of Meeting

i. Highland Public Services Partnership Performance Board

There had been circulated and were **APPROVED** Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 12 December 2013.

Arising from item 2 of the Minutes (approval of the Minutes of the Board's 13 September 2013 meeting), confirmation was given that, following that September meeting (item 4(c) of the September Minutes refers) an approach had been made to the members of the Council's Citizen's Panel to seek their agreement to becoming a resource for other Board partners. It was anticipated that all responses would be received by the end of March 2014 and partners would be advised of the outcome.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

ii. Community Planning Partnership Chief Officers Group

There had been circulated and were **NOTED** draft Notes of the previous Meeting held on 30 January 2014 and of the Workshop held on 18 February 2014.

3. Delivering Partnership Outcomes

The following circulated/tabled updates were provided by Responsible Officers against the delivery plans for the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and on developing partnership working.

i. Economic Growth and Regeneration

The circulated update by Highlands and Islands Enterprise as lead partner on this theme provided an update on jobs, international trade, fragile areas, and a range of key projects including port infrastructure, Caithness and Sutherland diversification in light of Dounreay decommissioning, developments at Kishorn, Next Generation Broadband rollout, and progress on developing a Regional Skills Strategy and Route Maps.

During the report summary, it was confirmed that the outcomes of a study by HIE into deprivation and fragility in rural areas would be shared with other Board partners; also that an update on broadband roll-out would be brought to the Board.

In discussion, there was regret as to the lack of information on BT mapping of the superfast broadband cabinet network. It was important that there be greater clarity, in order to facilitate planning for the less well-served areas, given the vital implications of good broadband access for addressing inequalities in a range of service delivery, including tertiary education. Such inequalities were major factors contributing to the higher living costs experienced in rural areas and should be recognised as such. There was an increasing trend towards concentration in the Inner Moray Firth area and strategies were needed to address this.

It was also commented that the developing Regional Skills Strategy needed to take into account future demand for employment not only in developing technical sectors such as energy/engineering, but also growth in sectors such as health care, hospitality and tourism, as well as recognising the ongoing demand for replacement of retiring older workers generally. Recognition also had to be given to the potential impact of any major increase in skilled job opportunities on demand for other ancillary/support services, and the need for workforce skills and availability to cover all roles. It was acknowledged that

the characteristics of the recruitment challenge in Highland different from those in the rest of Scotland and suggested that Skills Development Scotland be invited to attend a meeting of the Board to discuss these issues.

The Board **AGREED** that a representative of Skills Development Scotland be invited to attend a meeting of the Board to discuss the draft Regional Skills Strategy and its relevance/impact in Highland; and **NOTED** the importance of getting greater clarity on the rollout of broadband coverage throughout the area.

ii. Employability

The circulated update by the Highland Council as lead partner on this theme provided an update on the activity of the Highland Works Strategic Group, with reference to work on: a Youth 16+ Equality Impact Assessment and Action Plan; the Youth Employment Partnership Commitment and Action Plan; alignment of Programmes and Pathways for Sectors and Businesses; design of Occupational Skills and Work Preparation Programmes; and Digital Inclusion.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

iii. Early years/Children

The circulated update by the Highland Council as lead partner on this theme provided an update on the development of the plan For Highland's Children 4, to be reported to the relevant Council Committee in May 2014, and of the related delivery plan and performance management framework.

During the report summary, attention was drawn to the anticipated significant expansion in demand for childcare and the implications for the employment sector. The Board was also advised of a further Scottish Government work stream under the Early Years Collaborative: to ensure that 90% of all children reach all of their expected developmental milestones by the age of P4, i.e. 8 years old.

Having heard the Chair comment on how well regarded the work being carried out in Highland was at a national level, the Board **NOTED** the update.

iv. Safer and stronger communities

The circulated update by Police Scotland as lead partner on this theme provided an interim update on the work of the Safer Highland Leadership Group, with particular reference to the bedding in of the restructuring of groups under the Safer Highland banner.

During the report summary, attention was drawn to the three additional emerging themes of Road Safety, Serious and Organised Crime, and Anti-Social Behaviour.

Having heard confirmation that more detailed performance information would be made available at future meetings, the Board **NOTED** the update.

v. Health inequalities and physical activity

The circulated update by NHS Highland as lead partner on this theme provided an update on identifying and linking existing work aimed at reducing inequalities; appointing community health co-ordinators and community food workers through the preventative spend initiative; and developing a work plan for the theme group, prioritising areas for development/support for 2014/15, that would be brought to a future meeting of the Board.

The report highlighted discussions among the lead officers on how inequalities were reflected in all the theme group outcomes and work plans, together with issues raised at the Chief Officers Group (COG) workshop looking at the fit between the actions and outcomes across all the groups and the Health Scotland health inequalities framework.

During the report summary, the difficulties often encountered when seeking to assess impact on equalities were re-iterated, particularly given the large number of actions involved in the SOA. In some cases the impact was not clear; in others, it was recognised that a positive outcome in one area could have an unforeseen, more negative, impact on inequalities in another. Each theme group was being asked to review its action Plan to assess its impact on inequalities, and to seek to identify, against given criteria, a small number of actions that might particularly benefit from a Partnership approach.

In discussion, Board members acknowledged the difficulties faced in making such assessments and highlighted the need to address both rural and urban deprivation. It was commented that the need to continue to support particular geographical locations over a long period did not necessarily mean that such support had no impact, but that rather its effect was cyclical, with individuals helped often moving on and being replaced by those with a new set of often complex problems.

After discussion, the Board **NOTED** the update.

vi. Outcomes for older people

The circulated update by NHS Highland as lead partner on this theme provided an update on building on the integrated approach to caring for older people, with reference to Care at Home, Care Homes, the Older People's Improvement Group, Health and Social Care coordination and Strategic Commissioning.

During the report summary, it was confirmed that many developments were now moving from the planning stage to the implementation stage; and that a wide range of less visible partnership working was also in hand or planned.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

vii. Environmental outcomes

The circulated update by SNH as lead partner on this theme provided an update on progress on reviewing the Highland Climate Change Declaration and on developing the Highland Environment Forum in its key role of

engaging people and promoting partnership to contribute to achieving the aspirations of the SOA.

In discussion, additional information was provided on recent SNH activities, including:-

- its role in the development of the European Structural Funds future funding programme, including the development of a Green Infrastructure Project for delivering a number of significant urban projects throughout Scotland, of which it was hoped one might be secured for Inverness
- closer engagement with the Highland Council's Master-planning process and its contribution towards SOA outcomes
- engagement with the Forestry Commission's District Management Team.

Attention was again drawn to the limited awareness of the SOA among many other public agencies outside the Partnership, and the need to consider closer integration as appropriate.

The report having referenced cooperation on dealing with wildfires, the Board was reminded of the impact on the largely Retained Fire and Rescue service in Highland, and on the wider Highland economy, given the need for fire-fighters to leave their places of principal employment to attend fire incidents.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

viii. <u>SOA Development Plan</u>

The tabled update by the Highland Council provided an update on delivery on each of the improvement activities identified as a result of the Quality Assurance process for the Highland SOA 2013-2018, which had highlighted six areas for improvement.

In commenting on the report, the Chair highlighted his participation in the National Planning Group and his satisfaction that the work ongoing in Highland sat well with the aims and priorities being articulated at a national level. In this context, he made reference to the national focus on achieving the shift to Prevention and cited a number of factors considered as key:-

- "accelerate progress in building prevention into the design and delivery of all of our public services"
- "focus support on the first few years of life, where we know it can have the biggest impact on improving life chances for the most vulnerable in society"
- "unlock resources currently invested in dealing with acute problems"
- "tackle inter-generational cycles of inequality in pockets of disadvantage that blight the life chances of some of our people"
- "better utilise the talents, capacity and potential of our people and communities"

The Board **NOTED** the update.

4. Identifying Community Planning Partnership Strategic Priorities

There had been circulated Report dated 21 February 2014 by the Head of Policy and Performance, the Highland Council, which sought Board approval for five strategic priorities on which the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) would focus, identified following discussion in the Chief Officers Group (COG) at its meeting on 30 January and its workshop on 18 February (item 2(ii) above refers).

The report referred Board members to the presentation by Audit Scotland at the Board's previous meeting and the identification then of four key lines of enquiry for auditing community planning:-

- Clear Strategic Priorities – had the CPP identified the key issues facing the area and agreed clear priorities that reflected a shift in approach from responding to symptoms to tackling causes?
- Shared Leadership and Governance – were the priorities embedded across the partnership and reflected in actions, leadership behaviours and the alignment of resources of each partner organisation?
- Promoting Collaboration – did the CPP encourage, support and reward collaborative behaviour amongst staff?
- Performance Management – was the CPP effectively managing partnership performance against SOA outcomes, to allow it to demonstrate that its actions were making a difference for the area and improving outcomes for local people?

Attention was also drawn to the difficulty of providing meaningful performance reporting to the Board on all 44 SOA long term outcomes and its 169 intermediate outcomes, given the limited staff resources available and also the constraints on Board members' time, particularly given that many aspects of performance were already subject to other required reporting regimes, leading to potential duplication of effort.

Taking these issues into account, together with the overall target of reducing inequalities, and while recognising the need to reassure the Scottish Government that the Partnership was still focused on the six national priorities, the Highland strategic priorities as suggested by the COG were:-

a. Lead, inform and cross-reference workforce planning to meet Highland needs
b. Talk with and listen to communities to put them at the centre of planning and service delivery
c. Improve access and connectedness to mitigate rural deprivation and inequalities
d. Maximise the use of our resources to achieve best outcomes
e. Promote [or *"Talk up"*] the Highlands to attract people, jobs and investment.

In discussion, there was a general view that, while the recommended priorities offered a valuable basis for effective partnership action, they were concerned primarily with process and working method rather than actual outcomes, with only limited reference to the latter in some cases. They would also benefit from greater clarity of meaning. The Board needed to have confidence that the Partnership was still working towards the full range of SOA outcomes, of which

sight should not be lost, as it was the realisation of these outcomes that would produce the necessary transformative impacts for the Highland population.

Comments on specific recommended priorities included:-

- b. This should include reference to empowerment of communities.
- c. While it was recognised that rural communities faced specific infrastructure disadvantages in relation to issues such as transport, energy, connectivity and food costs, there must be recognition of an equal need to tackle the embedded issues underlying urban deprivation.
- d. This should be recognised as an overarching priority, and should include some reference to outcomes, such as tackling deprivation and fostering prevention through evidenced resource shifting.

After discussion, the Board **NOTED** the progress made through the two Chief Officer Group (COG) meetings since the previous Board meeting in December 2013; and **AGREED:-**

i. that, whilst it was acknowledged that the current SOA, with its 44 long term outcomes and 169 intermediate outcomes, was comprehensive but unwieldy for achieving added CPP effectiveness and scrutiny, it was nevertheless important that the Board have confidence that the Partnership was working towards fulfilling all SOA commitments;
ii. refinement of the SWOT analysis as discussed; and
iii. that the five strategic priorities developed by the COG be reviewed in the light of comments made, with a further report brought back to the Board.

The Board also **NOTED:-**

i. that the COG would deploy resources to develop and deliver the new strategic priorities, when finalised, and that further discussion with the Government was required for the SOA to be streamlined; and
ii. the need to clarify reported comments by the Auditor General suggesting that there could be greater flexibility for public bodies to transfer assets, provided this was accompanied by procedural transparency.

5. Community Planning Partnership Board Title and Membership

There had been circulated Report dated 21 February 2014 by the Head of Policy and Performance, the Highland Council, addressing the Board request at its previous meeting that the Chief Officer Group consider a revised title for the Board.

The Board **AGREED** to defer consideration of this item.

6. Self-Assessment for Community Planning Partnership Board Members

There had been circulated Report by the Corporate Performance Manager, the Highland Council, proposing that, facilitated by the Improvement Service, the Partnership Board and Chief Officers Group (COG) undertake a robust self-assessment using the Improvement Service Partnership Checklist, as appended to the report. This self-assessment tool would support the Board to critically review its fitness for purpose in achieving shared outcomes. The process would

also strengthen team working and support the development of the Partnership Board.

In discussion, it was suggested that there would be benefit were this exercise to be completed not only by Partnership bodies themselves, but were communities and other agencies also to be involved, in order to secure a more meaningful 360˚ appraisal of the Partnership and its performance. Clarification having been sought as to whether the Highland Third Sector Interface was being asked to complete the self-assessment based simply on its input into the CPP, or whether it was anticipated that it might do so on behalf of the wider third sector, it was suggested that the latter would be welcome in addition to the first, if it was feasible to do this.

The Board **APPROVED** the proposed approach to undertaking a Community Planning Partnership supported self-assessment with Board and COG members, together with the related dates, subject to this being expanded to include input from the wider community, with a view to producing a 360˚ appraisal; and **AGREED** that partners would nominate the appropriate officers to facilitate self-assessment and improvement planning, to build capacity in Highland to take forward in the future.

7. Presentation – Education Scotland – Community Learning and Development (CLD)

Representatives from Education Scotland gave a presentation to the Board on the implications of The Requirements for Community Learning and Development **(**Scotland**)** Regulations 2013, made by the Scottish Ministers in exercise of powers under section 2 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, which came into force on 1 September 2013.

It was explained that the context for bringing forward the Regulations at this time had been as part of the Scottish Government's response to the findings of the Christie Commission; attention was also drawn to the provisions of the 2012 Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development. The Board was advised that Guidance on the Regulations was due for issue around the end of March 2014.

The presentation set out the values of CLD (empowerment, participation, inclusion, equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination, self-determination and partnership) and outlined the rationale for legislation, in terms of: ensuring community access to CLD across Scotland, particularly for the disadvantaged; strengthening coordination between the full range of CLD providers, with particular reference to the 2012 Strategic Guidance; reinforcing the role of communities and learners in the assessment, planning and evaluation processes, enabling them to shape CLD provision; and making CLD's role and contribution more visible.

The relevant primary legislation being the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, the Regulations were couched in terms of – and therefore placed a range of obligations on – local Education Authorities, albeit envisaging that they would work with other providers. The Regulations therefore required the local authority to ensure that, with the involvement of people representative of the target

individuals and groups, and also people and organisations representative of CLD providers in the local authority area:

- individuals and groups most likely to benefit from the provision of CLD were identified and account taken of their CLD needs
- an assessment was made of the extent to which these needs were already being met
- the barriers to the efficient and adequate provision of CLD were identified.

A duty was placed on every local authority, in consultation with partners, learners and communities, to publish a 3-year plan no later than 1 September 2015, and further plans each third year thereafter (acknowledged as timescales currently out of kilter with the period(s) covered by the Single Outcome Agreement). The Regulations required that each plan should specify who had been consulted; how the local authority would coordinate its own provision of CLD with other providers of CLD in its area; what action the local authority would take to provide CLD over the period of the plan; what action other providers intended to take to provide CLD in the local authority's area over the period of the plan; and a statement of any needs for CLD that would not be met over the period of the plan.

The local authority's fulfilment of its obligations under the Regulations would be subject to inspection by HM Inspectorate of Education, and it was suggested that HM Inspectors would expect to see partnerships being both aware of and starting to plan to implement the CLD Regulations in advance of September 2015.

In discussion, concern was expressed that, because the Regulations were founded on a 1980 statute, the language and apparent process involved did not sit easily with the spirit of the current community planning partnership (CPP) approach to working with communities from a "bottom-up" perspective. Nor was the secondary school catchment area inherent in the Education Scotland inspection regime an appropriate model for measuring CPP activity.

Whilst it was argued that the Regulations should not be seen as inspection-driven, but should be interpreted widely as providing positive opportunities to align with and even enhance existing partnership activities, there was concern that their impact might instead be to inhibit effective working, particularly through introduction of another, less appropriate, and thus distracting, layer of inspection / reporting requirements.

The Education Scotland representatives suggested that the Partnership might find that its existing and planned work streams in any case largely met the new legislative requirements, provided it could be demonstrated in terms of existing strategic priorities and activities that partners recognised and had assessed the obligations set out in the Regulations, and could evidence the analysis and rationale behind their various related policies and actions. Nevertheless concern remained that, in practice, satisfying the inspection regime would inevitably demand time and resource that the Partnership might otherwise have chosen to expend elsewhere.

There was a general feeling among Board members that this issue required more in-depth information and discussion, together with the opportunity to ask more questions, than was possible at this meeting.

Following discussion, the Board **AGREED** that:-

i. The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 be discussed at an early meeting of the Chief Officers Group; and
ii. a report on their potential impact on effective Partnership working be brought to the Board at its next meeting.

The Board also **NOTED** that the representatives from Education Scotland would be invited to attend again for further discussion.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The Board **NOTED** that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday, 5 June 2014, at Highland Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness.

The meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.