

The Highland Community Planning Partnership

Chief Officers' Group
7 November 2014

Agenda Item	7
Report No	COG 12/14

CPP membership

Report by the Head of policy and Reform, Highland Council

Summary

This report advises the COG of the progress made in considering requests for wider CPP membership from five organisations using the framework agreed at the last meeting.

1. Background

1.1 At its last meeting the COG agreed a framework to use when considering requests for expanding the membership of CPP groups. This report provides an up-date on the progress made in requests from five bodies to date.

2. Requests to participate

2.1 Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

At the previous COG meeting it was noted that the DWP currently participates in two CPP theme groups; health inequalities and employability. In discussion with officers from the DWP they sought a presence at the CPP Board. In explaining the CPP's governance and accountability arrangements in place the DWP was advised that Board membership was difficult because as a UK Government Department they could not be held to account by our Board or change their approach on the Board's request and they could not field a UK Minister to participate.

2.2 In probing why they felt Board membership was needed, and in using the framework agreed, it became clear that their concern was about underachieving on targets to reduce long term unemployment. As an alternative to extending their membership to other CPP groups a discussion about DWP aims and how partners could collaborate further to help achieve mutual aims on improving outcomes for this group, a wider partnership discussion with DWP is arranged for this COG meeting. At the time of writing no further review of DWP's membership of the CPP is recommended.

2.3 Highlife Highland (HLH)

In discussion with the Chief Executive of HLH and using the framework, the case for extending Highlife Highland's membership of the CPP is that:

1. In providing a statutory function on behalf of the local authority, its role is implied to be within the listed bodies for community planning.
2. HLH already participates in five theme groups on: employability; early years; older people; health inequalities; and community learning and

development and it is key to the new work to be progressed on physical activity.

3. The development of a cultural centre in Inverness highlights the importance of arts and culture as route to regeneration and fits with the economic development theme for the CPP.
 4. Links between the services of HLH and diversionary activity to reduce offending and support the community safety agenda can be made.
 5. HLH's contribution cuts across all themes of the SOA, with participation in five out of eight theme groups at this time. A strategic overview of its participation would be useful to HLH and to the CPP in terms of holding them to account for their contribution.
 6. Arguably HLH can contribute to our process improvements given their contribution to the preventative agenda through their front-line services, to our joint workforce planning work given the size of their work force (1200 staff), their contribution to empowering communities through adult basic education, youth engagement and the use of venues for community action/meetings.
 7. The learning for the CPP by including them further would be through the experience of arms-length organisations as a vehicle for major service delivery.
- 2.4 As raised at the previous COG meeting, there exists a Highland Culture Strategic Board. It involves the Council, HLH (responsible officer role), HIE, Creative Scotland and Event Scotland. Currently it is not formally part of the CPP structure but it is not clear why this is the case or why it should continue to be the case. Wider partner interest in culture and arts could bring more challenge and contributions from partners and help meet partnership outcomes better.
- 2.5 Using the framework agreed by the COG it is recommended that the Board is advised that HLH should also be represented at the COG and at the CPP Board, and that the Highland Culture Board is recognised as a formal part of the CPP structure, with HLH fielding the responsible officer for any COG and Board reports. In keeping with other arrangements, invites would be made to the Chief Executive and the Chair (with substitutes allowed when not available).
- 2.6 Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Bòrd na Gàidhlig is not currently included in the defined list of CPP partners, although that may change as the Bill progresses through stages 1 and 2. Other legislation could support their CPP involvement; for example the Education Bill has proposals for a parental entitlement to Gaelic education.
- 2.7 Although not currently a formal part of the CPP theme groups, Gaelic is included in the SOA and all public bodies have a statutory duty to produce a

Gaelic Language Plan. A case could be made for taking a partnership approach to Gaelic language planning, making that planning more effective and more efficient. Bòrd na Gàidhlig identifies where improvements to Gaelic Language Plans are needed, and considering these in a partnership context could provide better support for individual partners.

- 2.8 Evidence is available on the alignment of Gaelic and the range of SOA outcomes. The importance of Gaelic for the economy including for particular sectors and particular locations and the employment opportunities it provides are highlighted in a recent report supported by some partners. There is recognition too of the demand for and growth in Gaelic medium education and the need for Gaelic language in care services (especially older people). Gaelic is culturally enriching and as an asset can support the SOA themes. There are links to the natural environment as well (names of places, mountains and rivers and the location of Gaelic stories, especially important given the oral tradition).
- 2.9 How Gaelic can be regarded as an asset for the CPP and the SOA, and how individual partners might benefit from a partnership approach to statutory Gaelic Language Planning needs further consideration. Bòrd na Gàidhlig's Chief Executive, John Angus MacKay, has offered to convene a short-life group of officers with responsibility for Gaelic across the partnership for this purpose and to help the COG consider how best to locate it within the CPP structure. It is recommended that this offer is accepted and CPP partners identify their officer to be involved. A decision on recommendations to the Board would therefore be deferred until this work was done. In the meantime it may be helpful to use some of the CPP Board time for a short session on Gaelic awareness raising.
- 2.10 Skills Development Scotland (SDS)
A contact to discuss the framework with SDS has been requested, but at the time of writing the discussion has still to take place. However it is worth noting that:
- SDS is included in the list of proposed statutory partners for CPPs;
 - SDS has been invited to present their contribution to the Highlands at the next Board meeting in December as requested by the Board;
 - SDS offers a Director to participate on the Board, but without knowing our governance model at this time no Board member is also identified;
 - A view by email prior to the Board meeting may be required to respond to SDS's request for Board membership.
- 2.11 Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA)
A discussion with the CNPA is still to take place, but this will be done prior to a formal meeting scheduled with the Council on 13th November. A view by email prior to the Board meeting may be required. It is worth noting that Park Authorities are currently included in the list of proposed statutory partners for CPPs.

3. Recommendation

3.1 The COG members are asked to note that contact has been made with three of the five organisations interested in wider CPP membership using the framework agreed by COG. Contact with the other two organisations, SDS and CNPA, will be made this month for recommendations to be made to the COG for reporting to the Board.

3.2 COG is asked to agree:

1. That the interest of DWP is satisfied through its attendance to discuss mutual aims for long term unemployed people at this meeting and through their on-going membership of two theme groups;
2. That it is recommended to the Board that HLH is invited to participate at the COG and Board and that the Highland Culture Strategic Board is formally adopted within the CPP;
3. That the CPP accepts the offer from the Chief Executive of Bòrd na Gàidhlig to convene a short-life group of officers with responsibility for Gaelic across the partnership to identify how to make the most of Gaelic as an asset for the CPP, how to improve effectiveness and efficiency of Gaelic language planning and how best to locate it within the CPP structure. Partners will need to identify their officer to take part. A decision on recommendations to the Board would therefore be deferred until this work was done.
4. Whether it would support some of the CPP Board time for a short session on Gaelic awareness raising.

Date: 3.11.14

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