

**The Highland Council**

**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 Thursday, 12 December 2013 at 10.00am.

**Present:**

**Highland Council:**

Mr D Hendry (in the Chair)  
Dr D Alston  
Mr J Gray  
Mr S Barron

Ms M Morris  
Mr S Black  
Ms S MacLeod  
Ms C McDiarmid

**Highlands and Islands Enterprise:**

Ms C Wright

**Scottish Natural Heritage:**

Mr G Hogg

**Scottish Police Authority**

Mr I Ross

**The Scottish Government:**

Mr J Pryce (by teleconferencing)

**Police Scotland:**

Mr G Macpherson

**NHS Highland:**

Ms E Mead  
Mr G Coutts  
Mrs J Baird  
Ms M Paton  
Ms C Steer

**Scottish Fire and Rescue Service:**

Dr M Foxley  
Mr S Hay

**UHI:**

Mr M Wright

**Other Representatives (item 6 only):**

Mr M MacPherson, Senior Manager, Audit Scotland  
Ms J McBride, Auditor, Audit Scotland

**In Attendance:**

Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Highland Council

**Preliminaries**

In welcoming attendees to the meeting, the Chairman referred to the diverse nature of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) and to the various aspects of the work involved. In considering how best to move issues forward and for the aims of the Partnership to become part of everyday business, it was suggested that different organisations and representatives be given the opportunity to Chair meetings of the Board at their own premises. Highland Council would continue to provide secretariat support.

The Board **AGREED** that member organisations give consideration to the chairing of future meetings.

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr J Innes (Police Scotland), Mr R Iffa (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service), Mr M Johnson (Highlands and Islands Enterprise), Dr M Somerville (NHS Highland), Mr J Fraser (UHI), Mr B Alexander (Highland Council), Mrs C Wilson (Highland Council), Ms M Wylie (Third Sector Interface) and Mr G Sutherland (Third Sector Interface).

### **2. Minutes of Meeting**

There had been circulated and were **APPROVED** Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 13 September 2013, subject to Mr J Fraser's (UHI) name being removed from those listed as being present.

### **3. Community Planning Structure and Accountability Review**

There had been circulated Report dated 5 December 2013 by the Head of Policy and Performance, Highland Council, which provided an update on the proposed working arrangements for the structure and accountability review.

It was confirmed that the majority of Partners had confirmed Board representation. Although UHI would confirm their position in January 2014 when their present Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Mr J Fraser, retired, further updates to membership could still be accommodated. The Highland Youth Convener had been invited to be a member of the Board but had been unable to attend this meeting. The Third Sector Interface had submitted apologies and a request for substitutes was to be requested given the importance of their involvement in the Board. An update was provided on a range of actions that were underway and this included the work being undertaken by the Council's Corporate Manager examining relationships, at a local level, for community pooling and how streamlining of activities could ensure best value was achieved from partnership working and could support and inform the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). Other areas of work still required to be considered and programmed.

Feedback had been received from the Chief Officers' Group (COG) which had met for the first time on 26 November and a draft minute of that meeting was appended to the report. Having considered its purpose and how it wanted to operate, the COG sought to amend its remit as detailed in the report to give prominence to the Partnership values agreed previously. Furthermore, the COG intended to meet every six weeks to ensure the Board's expectations were met. One particular issue which the COG thought merited further consideration by the Board was the clarification of the purposes and name of the Board. It was recognised that the Partnership's purpose was to provide political leadership and expertise to enable and drive public sector reform to achieve better and fairer outcomes for Highland and to allow connections to be made in partner organisations. Self-evaluation by the Partnership Board was the subject of a separate report on the agenda.

During discussion, it was recognised that having an appropriate name for the Board would help with marketing and branding. It was also important to encourage participation in the Board by partners to ensure representation across the spectrum was achieved and in considering how to make community planning relevant to everyone. There were a considerable number of public bodies and, while it might not be possible for them all to be represented at Board level, it was important that they were still engaged, perhaps through the thematic groups, particularly bearing in mind that the new Community Empowerment Bill would place a duty on all public bodies to engage in community planning partnership processes. In addition, there was merit in future agendas of the Board being more focused and having representatives from other public bodies attending meetings as appropriate. In response to a question in relation to the involvement of Skills Development Scotland (SDS), it was confirmed that they were involved in the COG through the employment, economic growth and recovery strands. While the Council's Planning and Development Service had, to date, represented the employability strand, there were elements which SDS might be able to contribute to as a member of the Board.

It was important that all partners were aware of what was taking place and that there was more progressive interaction. In recognising the time constraints of each organisation it was important to ensure good communication links between partners and a recent example, where 120 jobs had been created in the Longman, was cited and where the cooperation from the public sector had been recognised. It was vital that the Partnership Board committed to working closer together in a more effective way.

The Board:-

- i. **NOTED** the actions progressed from the last meeting, the actions underway and that further action was to be programmed for the structure review as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report;
- ii. **AGREED** the amendments to the remit for the Chief Officers' Group arising from its first meeting and as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report;
- iii. **AGREED** to consider the structure of future agendas and membership of the Performance Board and how to make partnership priorities clearer;
- iv. **AGREED** that the Chief Officers' Group consider a revised title for the Board to reflect its wider leadership role in public service reform; and
- v. **AGREED** to contact the Third Sector Interface regarding attendance and substitutes.

#### 4. Delivering Partnership Outcomes

The following circulated/tabled up-dates were provided by Responsible Officers against the delivery plans for the SOA and on developing partnership working. When all delivery plans were finalised, performance reporting would be standardised, including reporting against performance indicators.

##### i. Economic Growth and Regeneration

Referring to the circulated report, which focused mainly on Route Maps, it was acknowledged that further information could be provided in relation to Highlands and Islands Enterprise's (HIE) strategic planning, the three

operational area plans covering Highland and its overall Business Plan for the next three years and an undertaking was given to provide this additional detail to the COG and a future Board meeting.

During discussion, the benefit of HIE's operational area plans being considered at the Council's Area Committees was highlighted. Reference was made to the proposal to delete the Skills and Employability long term outcome and how this might then be picked up. A priority being looked at by NHS Highland, in partnership with others, was opportunities for employability and volunteering for younger adults and those with learning disabilities and HIE's input would be welcomed. In response, it was reported that SDS was currently consulting on the development of the Regional Skill Strategy for the Highlands and Islands and this would be an important element of the Economic Forum as well as the employment strand. Skills were vital to economic growth and the Regional Skills Strategy would therefore be of particular interest to the Board. However, concern was expressed that neither UHI nor colleges had had any input into the draft Strategy bearing in mind that the Skills Strategy would link to curriculum planning and, in turn, influence future funding for Further and Higher Education. The original deadline for comments had been Christmas but, as a result of representations, this had now pushed back to the end of January 2014. The importance of partners inputting to the draft was emphasised and the report from HIE that there was to be a sub-regional basis for Highland was welcomed. It was important Highland took ownership of this Strategy and was fully engaged with its development. For example, it was felt that the Strategy focussed on growth areas rather than replacement demand for skills and yet there were many areas in Highland where there were aging profiles and a need to bring new people into the workforce. Accordingly, rather than delete the Skills and Employability group from the Economy theme, as proposed in the report, it was suggested that HIE and Highland Council discuss how best to navigate the various strands of activity taking place, especially given the separate employability theme for the Partnership.

The lack of reference to care and hospitality skills in the Strategy had been discussed at the Convention of the Highlands and Islands (COHI) and the importance of closing this gap was recognised. An approach in this vein had been made to SDS and care and hospitality skills now featured more prominently. NHS Highland too had made representations, following the COHI, on issues around social care highlighting how fragile the market was at present and, without access to high quality training and development opportunities, the Highland economy would miss out.

Concern was expressed that there was an increasing trend of centralisation of research on a limited number of Universities in Scotland. Whilst the benefit to the local economy would be same regardless of which university in Glasgow, for example, might carry out research, the disproportionate effect on the Highlands and Islands economy of research carried out elsewhere, that could have been carried out by UHI, was significant. In other words, an approach that might work for Central Scotland might not work for the Highlands and Islands and research and development was critical to economic growth in terms of money and the high value jobs it created.

Whilst welcoming the emphasis on key industry sector strategies and Business Support, information was sought about wider industries and what support was available to them. HIE gave assurances that support was available, regardless of what sector businesses were operating, where businesses demonstrated that they were in a growth sector, were operating in a growth market or were looking at international trade. Some areas of activity were crosscutting, such as engineering, and there was also the issue of how growth was described, especially the micro economies that existed across Highland. Strategic priorities might also differ from the approach being adopted by the Board where, for example, it might be a strategic priority to create 500 jobs but the Board might see more benefit for 50 separate places to create 10 jobs to ensure sustainability across the piste. It was pointed out that, in the economic recovery plan, a target of creating 5000 new jobs had been set and, to date, more than half of this had already been achieved as a result of developments at Nigg, around the Cromarty Firth and at Cap Gemini, Inverness. Communication was vital in making these models work and that all partners were aware of progress.

The Board **AGREED**:-

- (a) that the additional areas of activity highlighted by HIE that would benefit from Board discussion be submitted to a future Board meeting; and
- (b) not to delete the Skills and Employability group as part of the Economy theme but for HIE and Highland Council to explore how best to navigate the various strands of activity taking place, integrate various plans focusing on skills and report back to the COG and the Board in more detail.

## ii. Employability

The Highland Works Strategic Group was the local employability partnership. The Group had met in November and had agreed a number of matters including the Group's remit, baseline statistics and to undertake a "Youth 16+" focus Impact Assessment. Generally, the focus was on youth unemployment and it was highlighted that Highland had seen the third fastest fall in youth unemployment across Scotland, reflecting the on-going good work.

In discussion, the importance of communicating good news about employment to young people was emphasised, the Far North being cited as a particular example. In response it was pointed out the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership had met recently and employment forecast and projections had been encouraging. Reports were provided specifically on Caithness and North Sutherland and, over the last 3 years, 400 new jobs had either been created or retained. It was as important though to ensure jobs were sustainable and that targets did not concentrate solely on the number of jobs created.

In terms of lower wages and under-employment, SDS had recently produced a report on school leaver destinations which had shown positive figures for Highland. However, although there were a high number of young people directly entering the work, it was important to understand specifically the types of employment, what the outcomes were 6-12 months later and to have a

joined up approach to prepare people for work, especially those with learning disabilities and Looked After Children (LAC).

With further information being sought around limited hours contracts and wages etc, assurances were given that the Economic Recovery Plan focused on improving quality jobs and wages. The Equality Impact Assessment to be carried out by Highland Works was to ensure that there were no groups of young people left out, looking across all the activities of the partners as well as support for the private sector. Grant assistance was, for example, being provided to businesses to take on young people, some of which might be LAC etc. Determining the quality of jobs, however, might necessitate the commissioning of a survey, as this was not something which national statistics necessarily picked up.

The Fire and Rescue Service recognised the good work taking place and pointed out that it often benefitted as a result from job creation in remote and rural parts of Highland in that this provided a recruitment pool for Retained Fire Stations. Whilst few retained fire fighters undertook the role for the money, it did nonetheless supplement incomes and could be sufficient to tip the balance between a sustainable and struggling community. In addition, for those entering lower paid jobs, there were benefits to becoming a retained fire fighter not only to supplement an income but to learn new skills. Furthermore, partnership employments could also be of use to attract high earning professionals to the area where jobs were also needed for their partner and there was merit in investigating how such families could be supported.

Following on from discussions regarding wages, there was merit in considering what the implications would be if all Partnership organisations incorporated the Living Wage. There might be ramifications as a result but there would be opportunities to ensure that people at the lower end of the wage scale were valued. Others suggested that this should not be confined to organisations within the partnership but should also take into account organisations that the Board engaged with and that they too were supported in delivering the Living Wage. Assurances were given that the wider group involvement on Highland Works including organisation such as the SCDI and the Federation of Small Businesses and representation could be made to them regarding the Living Wage.

The impact of employment in rural areas had to be captured and the example of the loss of jobs in Lairg as a result of the loss of the Shin Falls visitor centre had had a considerable impact. The Council worked closely with HIE in such situations and regular reports were submitted to the Caithness and Sutherland Area Committee. HIE also captured data regarding jobs created in designated fragile areas.

While recognising the good work underway, the Board **AGREED:-**

- (a) to consider other innovative ways as to how the employment strand was planned and monitored, including the scope opportunity for a retained fire fighter role when giving employability advice;
- (b) to investigate how partnership employment might be accommodated to assist partners of those being recruited to specialist posts; and

- (c) that employability also be viewed from an earnings perspective, with the adoption of the living wage to be encouraged and in providing information on under-employment and low wages in future reports.

iii. Early years/Children

A number of different strands were currently being worked on and it was hoped that these could be blended together. Various pieces of work had been taken from the 13 Early Years Improvement Groups covering a range of areas from Curriculum for Excellence to Play and these were managed through a self-evaluation process. National work was also underway on the Early Years Collaborative looking at children from conception to 8 years old to determine performance outcomes e.g. reducing stillbirth and neo natal death and ensuring children reached developmental milestones at various points during their life. High level national data was taken into account to focus on where attention was needed and to determine how Highland compared to Scotland as a whole and then, in turn, how specific areas in Highland fared. Amongst the examples provided was breastfeeding where Highland was not meeting its own targets despite being one of the best performing areas in Scotland. In addition, breastfeeding rates in Caithness were compared to other areas, such as Lochaber, to see where activity needed to be improved. It was hoped to empower staff so that they felt able to creatively test out measures which would eventually improve outcomes.

It was commented on that some of the baseline measures had not yet been identified. While it acknowledged that it might take some time for outcome measures to become transparent, it was important that information was captured so that changes, over time, could be gauged. LAC were used as an example where improving health outcomes had been set as a target and, as a result, detailed attention was being made to ensure their health assessments were being carried out to an agreed and appropriate standard and that the outcomes were acted upon. In addition, the importance of testing measures out and allowing for failures was recognised as this often helped, in the long term, to redesign services.

Reference was made to the target of ensuring 85% of children reached all of their expected developmental milestone by the time of their 27-30 month health review and, while this was welcomed, this should be 100%. In other continental countries a more proactive approach was taken and a similar system could be adopted here by using a variety of agencies.

The Board also **NOTED** that informal feedback on the recent inspection on children's services had been received and early indications were that it had gone very well.

iv. Safer and stronger communities

An update report and flow chart illustrating the new structure was tabled. Chairs for the groups had been provisionally agreed and meetings were taking place to move business from the current structure into the new structure without being overly prescriptive. Three new groups had been introduced covering Road Safety, Serious Organised Crime and Antisocial

Behaviour and these would ensure improved and increased governance and involvement across all agencies in relation to these specific areas. In addition, an examination of some of the groups in existence across the Highland area was being undertaken with a move towards a pilot project of a local community based safer group for Lochaber. This would look tactically at problem people, issues, addresses and areas and the multi-agency approach to it. There was acknowledgement of the good work being undertaken by themed groups addressing community safety and antisocial behaviour issues and it was important to avoid duplication of effort and resources. Police Scotland had been encouraged by engagement with agencies to date and discussions had already taken place at Ward level to explore the existing structures and forums in place. In support, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service also referred to the well-established partnership arrangements which existed in Lochaber.

v. Health inequalities and physical activity

Since the Board's last meeting, the Health Inequalities Theme Group had met twice and had reviewed and agreed its role and remit taking into consideration the guidance the CPP Board had provided. It had also expanded its membership with representation from UHI. Links into the other theme groups had been forged to pick up on the crosscutting nature of health inequalities and to understand the totality of what all theme groups would contribute to reducing health inequalities. A mapping of activities was underway around the SOA with the hope that this would feed into the development of a work plan for the Group and a monitoring framework over the next few months. Particular links had been made with the Welfare Reform Group, which had been up and running for several months, and the Health and Homelessness and Fuel Poverty Groups. A recommendation was proposed that the Welfare Reform Group report to the CPP through the Health Inequalities Theme Group.

The Group had also been overseeing the targeted activity in the four geographical areas of deprivation previously agreed by the CPP Board. Particular focus was around community development with funding coming from the Preventative Spend and Change and the Deprived Area funds, and looking at developing community capacity through a variety of initiatives and posts including Community Health Co-ordinators and Community Networkers. Although the posts and initiatives had a different focus, there had been discussion across the partnership about the need for them to work together in local areas and for structures and processes to be put in place to support this. An event in May 2014 was being organised which would bring together those working to build community capacity to share experiences on the ground and support a co-ordinated approach.

In discussion, the importance of joining up the investment all partners were making in developing community resilience was emphasised. There was a danger of duplication but assurances were given that all partners involved in providing the Health Inequalities posts were involved in Theme Group discussions. In addition, the commitment by the Board and the COG to scrutinise was crucial and assurances were given that in each of the areas there would be a careful analysis of what community

development/empowerment support was needed, where it was best placed and what was already available. Reference was made to a presentation made to the Early Years Collaborative by an American charity regarding the eradication of homelessness and it was suggested that this might be a project, albeit an ambitious one, that Highland might want to consider.

Fuel poverty also contributed to health inequalities and the mapping exercise, due to take place in March 2014, would be useful in identifying what partners were doing in specific areas. Rural deprivation was highlighted as an issue of concern, often overlooked nationally, and it was hoped that there was representation on the Group of someone living in a remote location as they would have personal experience of the issues involved, such as transport costs and the importance of delivering Further Education and Vocational courses given the direct link between health inequalities and people's ability to earn.

Thereafter, the Board **AGREED**:-

- (a) that the Welfare Reform Group report to the CPP Board through the Health Inequalities Theme Group; and
- (b) the COG be tasked with scrutinising the provision of resources targeted at reducing Health Inequalities to ensure duplication was avoided.

vi. Outcomes for older people

Examples were provided of a number of instances that were part of the integrated approach for moving towards new models of care for adults, specifically older people. One of the underlying themes was keeping older people well – and therefore independent - for as long as possible and this necessitated wider sector involvement. An Older People Improvement Group had been developed including representatives from the Third and Independent sectors, users and NHS Highland and expansion of this to reflect the membership of the Partnership Board was being explored. An example of partnership working was the Telecare Service with NHS Highland already working closely with the Fire and Rescue Service. An update was also provided on the development of the Strategic Commissioning Plan and five priorities had been agreed by the Improvement Groups. These priorities reflected the drive around quality and models of care and partners' involvement around these was welcomed. Reference was made to District Partnerships which were an important part of connecting with local communities.

It was recognised that HIE were trying to support and develop life sciences, of which Telecare was a part, and HIE's involvement in new models of how this might be managed and developed, and exploring the new technologies available, was welcomed.

vii. Environmental outcomes

At the Board's last meeting the proposal to develop the role of the Highland Environment Forum (HEF) was discussed. Since then, the HEF had met and had agreed the remit and would meet again in March 2014. A number of

actions had been identified by the Forum in relation to the SOA Environment Theme Delivery, the key highlights of which were contained in the report. Mention was made of the Council's launch of the Carbon Clever Initiative, an example of an issue around which partnership working could be focused on.

The HEF relied heavily on input from the Voluntary, Third and Private Sectors as well as the Public Sector and a slightly different model was needed to take work forward. With the majority of the Forum there on a voluntary basis, there was a need to persuade them that the SOA and the pooling of resources was the key way forward. Links between the Environment and other themes were being worked on but there was still considerable work to be done.

It was recognised that there was not only a need to protect and enhance the environment but also to use it to deliver a wide range of other benefits. For example, in relation to fuel poverty, consideration could be given to fuel choice and the Cairngorm National Park had done work around wood fuel, linking this to improved habitat management. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service had also agreed to lead on the action highlighted by the Environment Forum in relation to Wildfires and reference was made to the re-launch of the Scottish Wildfire Forum. The Fire and Rescue Service were able to meet the spike in activity the early part of year but they were aware of the impact wildfires had on some of the fragile communities and environments. Wildfires impacted on retained fire fighters too so the Wildfire Forum had launched operational guidance and partnership working on how these events could be prevented and their impact minimised.

Links to other areas were suggested, including the positive benefit the environment could have on mental health and wellbeing and Officers were asked to investigate how more could be made of these links. Reference was made to the work already being led by SNH in relation to the ERDF/ESF Programme where a green infrastructure project was being developed.

#### viii. SOA Development Plan

The Board were reminded that, when the SOA was submitted to the Scottish Government, it had been accompanied by a Development Plan. It was explained that the actions for 2013/14 were either completed, on target or planned and, by March 2013, the key tasks were to finalise the delivery plans in the SOA to provide a good set of indicators against which performance could be measured in a more standard format and to make links between Highland wide and community planning. The five areas for partnership development over the period of the SOA were detailed. In addition, it had been agreed to develop a self-evaluation but it was recognised that there were mixed historic practices and experiences between Board partners regarding this and discussions had taken place about self-evaluation being done in a context of identifying failures so that improvements could be made. Details of the various methods currently in use for the CPP were provided. In addition to the recommendations set out in the report, however, it was suggested that there was merit in building in an element of peer review/challenge to each of the policy areas to consider where themes could cut across a number of topics.

During discussion, the on-going excellent work was recognised but frustration arose that partners were not as connected as they could be. A desire for connecting the islands of good practice and to get in-depth partnership working was expressed. Partnership working should be a normal day-to-day activity and views were sought as to how this could best be achieved and how the Board could be used as a platform to exploit opportunities. In recognising partnership working as a shared aspiration, there also needed to be depth of engagement between the staff of each organisation at all levels and for individuals to be empowered to work with others in different organisations. Each organisation had a duty to promote the principles of shared outcomes and resources so that staff at a range of levels could recognise opportunities which might not be apparent to those at Board level. The renaming of the Board was again raised and it was felt that this might go some way towards marketing, both externally and internally, the aims and purposes of the partnership. Although there was a growing comprehension as to what was involved, CPP was not a term generally understood by many and, in considering any revision to the name of the Board, it was important to recognise that the role of the Board was primarily performance management and to ensure that community planning was taken across the piste.

In terms of evaluation, it was requested that this also be forward looking and concentrate on progress and action and not looking backwards.

Having scrutinised the progress made with the development plan, the Board:-

- (a) **NOTED** the current use of self-evaluation in the partnership;
- (b) **NOTED** the new requirements and opportunities for self-evaluation in the partnership and **AGREED** that:-
  - (i) the proposals for self-evaluation were developed over the next 12 months for the thematic groups on economic growth and recovery, health inequalities and physical activity and the environment, with proposals reported to the Board;
  - (ii) Board members take part in supported self-assessment as part of the National CPP Capacity Building Programme, with further information to be provided; and
  - (iii) in principle, to take forward a cross peer review/challenge approach to each of the policy areas.

## 5. Joint Resourcing Information Requested for the National Community Planning Group

There had been circulated Report dated 3 December 2013 by the Head of Policy and Performance, Highland Council regarding the submission made to the Scottish Government on 28 November on joint resourcing in the Highland CPP.

During a summary of the report, it was pointed out that the Scottish Government requested the update on the actions taken to implement the Agreement on Joint Working on Community Planning and Resources in early November so that the National Community Planning Group could consider this at their meeting on 11

December. Further clarity was requested in late November seeking additional evidence around joint resourcing and it was expected, based on Highland's submission, that feedback looking for more progress would be received. However, on the positive side, as part of putting the new CPP structure in place, the need for each of the thematic groups to have an understanding of the total public resources available for delivering the theme had been agreed as was the acknowledgement of the role of the COG to remove any barriers to reform and, as a Board, partners had a responsibility in making change happen where there were blockages.

The submission was made based on discussion with the Quality Assurance Panel and the COG and specific examples of achievements to date, work currently underway, future work planned and support from the Scottish Government/National Community Planning Groups, and which were recorded in the submission, were highlighted to the Board. It was also reported that, at the recent COHI meeting, it was agreed that the Spring 2014 meeting would include a series of short case study presentations, area by area, covering the response to joint resourcing and innovative examples in the preventative arena and partners were invited to consider if they would wish to make such a presentation. At the same COHI meeting, NHS Highland had been asked to make a presentation on the Integration of Health and Social Care so a topic other than Health and Social Care might be more appropriate.

During discussion, whilst accepting there was much still to do, the progress made by the Highland CPP in recent years was welcomed. In relation to the submission, it was suggested that a further letter be submitted detailing the proposals for the colocation of emergency services in Inverness. It was also pointed out that there was merit in highlighting the various project links that had been highlighted during discussion as exemplars of partnership working. The case study of the Forest School at Abriachan was suggested for the COHI meeting.

Having considered the submission, the Board:-

- i. **NOTED** that further work on joint resourcing would be taken forward through the thematic groups and that this would be supported through the new CPP structure;
- ii. **AGREED** that a supplementary response be made, regarding the colocation of emergency services in Inverness, to the submission already made to the Scottish Government on joint resourcing in the Highland CPP; and
- iii. **AGREED** that specific partners should present case studies at the Spring 2014 COHI meeting, the scope of which was yet to be determined.

**The Board adjourned at this point, at 12.05 p.m., and resumed at 12.20 p.m.**

## **6. Presentation from Audit Scotland on Auditing Community Planning: the Next Steps**

A presentation was undertaken by Mr Mark MacPherson, Senior Manager, Audit Scotland. Mr MacPherson was accompanied by Ms Joni McBride, Auditor.

A copy of the presentation had been circulated which detailed the context for the current year's audit programme and future years. In introducing the background to the auditing of community planning, the presentation also addressed how Audit Scotland had amended their audit approach for the next phase of audits and the key audit questions. The context for the next audits was outlined, taking into account the big and challenging improvement agenda which would require:-

- creating and sustaining strong shared leadership
- making difficult choices about local priorities that would improve outcomes and address inequalities
- implementing effective governance structures that really managed performance and drove change
- turning the rhetoric of prevention into real changes in service delivery
- managing an increasingly complex public service reform agenda whilst reducing budgets significantly

The Board were informed of the five authorities chosen for this second phase of audits who had been selected to ensure a spread of geography, size and performance challenges. Similar to the approach adopted with the first phase of audits, it was hoped to produce an overview report towards the end of 2014. Feedback from the initial round of audits had suggested that there was merit in carrying out this second round and feedback from the second round would, in turn, inform what would happen next. Rocket Science, independent consultants, had been employed to look at areas of the pilot work carried out by Audit Scotland and, in speaking to CPPs and individual partners to gauge their experiences of the process, there were a number of key messages, including the need to improve engagement with CPP Boards and to focus more on the present and future and less on the past.

Key Lines of Inquiry had been developed to provide a set of areas that would be investigated and which would inform all aspects of the audit. These had been revised based on feedback from the pilot audits and now strengthened the focus on local issues and prevention, embedded priorities, actions and behaviours across the partnership and, within partner organisations, encouraged collaborative behaviours across all staff and actively managed performance against the SOA outcomes. In relation to how performance was managed and looking for evidence of challenge, it was confirmed that, in addition to the monitoring of Board minutes, Audit Scotland would also sit in on a number of CPP Board meetings.

The four key questions for Audit Scotland to ask of CPPs were:-

- 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 the SOA outcomes to allow it to demonstrate that its actions were making a difference for the area and improving outcomes for local people?

Audit Scotland also looked at both thematic and locality work and this provided various opportunities including the ability to test if key partnership priorities were understood by front-line staff and to explore local service integration. Some authorities already audited had concentrated on specific themes, rather than on areas, but it was still possible to analyse data at a neighbourhood level to identify where resources should be focused.

Auditing use of resources had focussed on what CPPs were doing and early audits had indicated limited progress in this area. However, some good practice was emerging and, while recognising the importance of shared Budgets, it was also important to take people, buildings, technology and other resources into account. Audit Scotland emphasised focus would be made on engagement along with CPPs' understanding of the local and national context. It was recognised that community planning was on an improvement journey and there would be a focus on opportunities as well as challenges.

In discussion, clarification was sought in relation to locality based audit work. Some CPPs operated in a tight geographical location while others covered large geographic areas and some issues did not fit into a locality based approach. Assurances were given that both a locality and thematic approach was taken to address this specific point and to get a sharper focus on issues. Furthermore, reference was made to the institutional barriers which often prevented partnership working and it was felt that more could be done by Scottish and Westminster Governments to remove barriers in terms of joint resourcing. Collaborative behaviours were key and these would be investigated more in the second round of audits. Audit Scotland assured the Board that recommendations from audits would not only be for CPPs but could also be for the Scottish Government. Community Planning was a logical step for public bodies to do but greater progress could be made, across Scotland, if people were given the tools to look for collaborative opportunities – people had to be empowered to make improvements. Small scale change needed to be take cognisance of and there needed to be an understanding of what the barriers actually were, even at the frontline level, to determine how best these could be broken down to allow small changes to happen. There was an issue as to how this message was fed down to staff at all levels and for them to understand the concept of the community planning model and to enable them to take part but there were methodologies, recognised internationally, that could be used which would encourage people to look at ways of working in a collaborative way. Relationship management/creation would also help break down barriers and address this and there was merit therefore in considering the type of people recruited, the job descriptions drawn up and highlighting the ethos of the culture of encouraging collaborative working from the bottom up. The lack of a communication strategy had been recognised as a deficiency in the early audits but it was acknowledged that examples of good practise would assist with this particular issue.

Thereafter, the Board, having thanked Mr MacPherson:-

- i. **NOTED** the presentation; and
- ii. **AGREED** that there was merit for the Highland CPP to reflect on the Audit Scotland's four key questions in advance of any audit.

## 7. Date of Next Meeting

The Board **NOTED** that the next scheduled meeting would be held on Tuesday, 5 March 2014, at Highland Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness.

## 8. AOCB

It was reported that Highland Council had been working closely with partners, including NHS Highland, in developing an Integrated Transport Project in Lochaber. Scottish Government funding was now available for some pilot projects and the Chief Executives of both NHS Highland and Highland Council were working together with a view to submitting a bid and partners' engagement in supporting this project would be welcomed.

The Board **AGREED** to support the Integrated Transport Project in Lochaber.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm