

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Education, Children and Adult Services Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday 20 May 2015 at 10.05 am.

Present:

Highland Council:

Mrs I Campbell	Mr G MacKenzie
Miss J Campbell (Substitute)	Mrs B McAllister
Mr A Christie (Chair)	Mr D Millar
Mr I Cockburn (Substitute)	Mrs M Paterson
Mrs M Davidson	Mr M Rattray
Ms J Douglas	Mrs F Robertson
Mr B Fernie	Ms G Ross (Vice Chair)
Mr K Gowans	Mr G Ross
Mr A Graham (Substitute)	Ms J Slater
Mrs D Mackay	Ms M Smith

NHS Highland:

Mrs M Duncan

Religious Representatives:

Dr A Fraser
Ms M McCulloch

Youth Convener:

Mr S Finlayson

Non-Members also present:

Mrs J Barclay	Mr A Mackinnon
Mr B Clark	Mrs A MacLean
Mr R Greene	

In attendance:

Mr B Alexander, Director of Care and Learning
Mrs B Cairns, Head of Additional Support Services, Care and Learning Service
Ms F Palin, Head of Adult Services, Care and Learning Service
Mr B Porter, Head of Resources, Care and Learning Service
Mr J Steven, Head of Education, Care and Learning Service
Mr R Campbell, Estate Strategy Manager, Care and Learning Service
Ms R Binks, Quality Improvement Manager, Care and Learning Service
Mr C Mackintosh, Care and Learning Manager (South), Care and Learning Service
Ms E Fyfe, Teacher, Dingwall Academy
Mr E Foster, Finance Manager, Finance Service
Ms P Duncan, Birchwood Highland (Third Sector)

Ms V Gale, Care and Learning Alliance (Third Sector)
Ms G Newman, Highland Children's Forum (Third Sector)
Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager, Corporate Development Service
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator, Corporate Development Service
Mrs R Daly, Committee Administrator, Corporate Development Service
Mrs F MacBain, Committee Administrator, Corporate Development Service
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Corporate Development Service

Also in attendance:

Chief Superintendent J Innes, Local Commander, Police Scotland
Ms K Mackay, Infant Feeding Adviser, NHS Highland
Ms A Ross, Children's Consultation Worker, Highland Children's Forum
Mr I Murray, Chief Executive, High Life Highland

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

Prior to commencement of business, the Chairman drew Members' attention to the Highland Youth Voice conference which would take place on 10-12 June 2015. The Committee **APPROVED** the attendance of Members at this conference.

**1. Apologies for Absence
Leisgeulan**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr D Alston, Mr B Gormley, Mr M Green, Mr W Mackay, Ms L Munro, Ms K Stephen, Dr M Foxley, Dr H van Woerden and Mr G Smith.

**2. Declarations of Interest
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

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

Item 4 – Ms J Douglas, Mr G Mackenzie, Mrs M Paterson, Mrs F Robertson and Mr G Ross (all non-financial), Mr K Gowans (financial and non-financial), Mr A Christie and Mr S Fuller (financial)

Item 11 – Ms J Douglas, Mr D Millar and Mr G Ross (all non-financial), Mr K Gowans (financial and non-financial)

Item 14 – Mrs A MacLean (non-financial)

Item 16 – Ms J Douglas (non-financial) and Mr K Gowans (financial and non-financial)

Item 19 – Ms J Douglas (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: Stranger Smart Taisbeanadh: Glic mu Shrainnsearan

Stranger Smart had been launched as a joint strategy with Police Scotland to manage responses to concerns regarding suspicious individuals in the vicinity of Highland schools. Its aim was to ensure children, young people, carers, parents, education staff and the Police were working together to improve child safety. The Highlands were relatively safe in terms of the numbers of reported incidents of stranger approaches, although continued vigilance was urged. A protocol had been developed for the Council and the Police to ensure a fast, proportionate and joint response. Reference was also made to the Safe, Strong and Free leaflet which was being sent to the parents of all primary school children, having been tested at Crown Primary School, and contained advice on what to do if approached by a stranger.

Chief Superintendent Innes of Police Scotland advised there had been 25 reported incidents during the previous year, although none had been the result of criminal offenses, but 'false alarms with good intent.' Early alerts to suspected incidents were encouraged. The protocol would serve to remind people what type of behaviour was considered unacceptable around educational establishments.

During discussion, Members thanked Chief Superintendent J Innes for the presentation and raised a range of issues, including:-

- it was hoped the initiative would set a precedent for other Local Authorities in Scotland;
- the clear message in the protocol and leaflet was welcomed and would hopefully deter inappropriate people from speaking to children;
- discussion would be undertaken to consider extending the use of the protocol to High Life Highland establishments and community centres;
- it was important that people who reported incidents were provided with feedback;
- the wording 'stranger smart' was welcomed instead of the more negative 'stranger danger';
- the pupils, parents and staff of Crown Primary School were thanked for their help testing the protocol; and
- a conference on Corporate Parenting was to be held on 19 and 20 August in conjunction with Who Cares Scotland.

The Committee **AGREED**:-

- i. to endorse the approach and the protocol;
- ii. that discussions take place regarding extending the use of the protocol to High Life Highland premises and other educational establishments; and
- iii. to thank the staff, pupils and parents of Crown Primary School for their work in testing the protocol.

4. Revenue and Capital Budget Update Cunntas às Ùr mu Theachd-a-steach agus Buidseat Calpa

Declarations of Interest:

The following Members declared a non-financial interest in this item but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interest did not preclude their involvement in the discussion:-

Ms J Douglas – Director of High Life Highland

Mr K Gowans – Director of High Life Highland

Mrs M Paterson – Board Member of Highland Football Academy Trust

Mr G MacKenzie – Board Member of Highland Football Academy Trust

Mrs F Robertson – Vice Chair of Tain Royal Academy Parent Council

Mr G Ross – Board Member of Highland Football Academy Trust

In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife was 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.

Mr A Christie and Mr S Fuller declared a financial interest on the grounds of having children who received free school meals but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interest did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/34/15 dated 12 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update in relation to the revenue and capital budgets for the Care and Learning Service.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the P1-3 free school meals budgeting had been based on take-up of 90% and it was hoped that this would be increased in future. An unfunded consequence of the introduction of free meals for P1-3 was the increase in uptake for P4-7 from 45 to 63%. Much of the costs related to the additional staff required to serve the meals. Feedback was being provided to the Scottish Government with the expectation that benchmarking against other Local Authorities would be undertaken. A update on capital expenditure to facilitate the initiative would be provided in due course;
- an early resolution to the restructure of posts in Early Years Services was sought and was due to be reported at the next meeting;
- referring to the underspend of £0.497 from a dedicated Scottish Government revenue allocation to support Early Years Services, information was sought on whether any capital funds also remained to be allocated;
- an update on works being undertaken at Kingussie High School was sought, to include snagging issues and timescales;
- in response to query about carried forward pressures in the revenue budget the Chair confirmed that pressure remained broadly similar to the previous year and, although £1m of mitigating funds had been allocated by the Council in December 2014, considerable pressure remained in the areas of Facilities Management, Out of Authority placements, Additional Support Needs, School Transport and Supply Cover, especially during the winter;
- in relation to the review of residential properties on the Care and Learning account which were to be transferred to the Housing Section, some tenants had

received formal letters that were difficult to comprehend and it was hoped that, in future, more personal attention could be provided to reassure such residents;

- while it was commendable that fewer children were being placed in Out of Authority care, a report was sought for the next Committee on the reasons for so many children still being placed in residential units;
- reassurance was sought that action was to be taken to improve access to Broadford Hall, Skye, which impacted on the school;
- it was hoped that Planning permission for Portree Gaelic School would be progressed in good time and an update on this was sought for the next Ward Business Meeting;
- concern was expressed about the deteriorating condition of demountable units in various schools, with particular reference to the Toy Box Children's Centre in Gairloch, which had opened in 1993 with an expectation of transferring to the new High School, something which had not transpired. Over the years, various Members including the Children's Champions, had attempted to resolve the situation, but without success. A meeting was scheduled with senior Education and Estates officers in a fortnight and it was hoped that a solution would be found. Ullapool Nursery was also referred to for similar reasons;
- action was sought to address lack of capacity Merkinch Primary School which was not considered fit for purpose. The current feasibility study should include consideration of a new school building with community facilities; and
- also in relation to Merkinch Primary, at a previous meeting information on SSER, Roll Pressure and Life Cycle Maintenance had been requested and, although the first 2 had been provided, a Life Cycle Maintenance update was still awaited.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the update in relation to the revenue budget at section 2 of the report and **AGREED** to endorse the proposed enhancement of early years infrastructure;
- ii. **NOTED** the Care and Learning capital programme as set out in Annex 3 of the report, the major projects that would now be progressed and the intention to take a report back to Committee on future priorities and allocations from generic capital budgets;
- iii. **AGREED** the summer works programme as set out in Annex 4 of the report;
- iv. **AGREED** the increased allocation to Thurso Swimming Pool as described in paragraph 3.4.2 of the report;
- v. **AGREED** the allocation of funding to the Bught, Inverness and Jubilee Park, Dingwall sports pitches as set out in paragraph 3.4.7 of the report;
- vi. **NOTED** the update on statutory consultations, as provided at paragraph 3.5.2 of the report;
- vii. **NOTED** the updated status of major projects as set out in Annex 5 of the report;
- viii. **NOTED** the update in relation to the residential properties review; and
- ix. **AGREED** the revised staffing structure for the Estates Team as set out in Annex 6 of the report.
- x. **AGREED** to bring a report to the August Committee on the trends and data for children being placed in residential care, including the number of Out of Authority placements being made;
- xi. **AGREED** to hold, where possible, one to one meetings with residents with tenancies in old school buildings;
- xii. **AGREED** to brief local Councillors at their next Ward Business meeting on progress with Planning Permission for Portree Gaelic School;

- xiii. **AGREED** to improve access and parking at Broadford Hall and Primary School;
- xiv. **AGREED** to draw up a full business case on the future of Merkinch Primary School;
- xv. **AGREED** to provide written information to Ward Councillors on Life Cycle Maintenance of Merkinch Primary School; and
- xvi. **AGREED** to provide a briefing on Kingussie High School snagging issues, with completion timescales, to Local Members, the Rector and Facilities Management staff.

5. Inverness Primary Schools Update Cunntas às Ùr mu Bhun-sgoiltean Inbhir Nis

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/35/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which advised of progress in analysing the effect of roll pressures facing primary schools in Inverness. It also provided an update on the outcome of the recent review of the Council's capital programme and the most immediate priorities for future capital investment.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:

- it was welcomed that the revised capital programme agreed by the Council in March had included funding of £48m over the next 10 years for Inverness Schools SSER. This would address the pressures that existed in Inverness schools;
- referring to capping the rolls for 2015/16 at Cradlehall, Inshes and Lochardil Primary Schools, Ward Members had not been kept informed despite commitments given to do so at the Inverness City Committee in November 2014. It was hoped there would be direct communication with Members on these matters in the future;
- the improvements planned at Kinmylies Primary School were welcomed and it was requested that more details on the works involved and any associated impacts be provided to Ward meetings. For the purposes of clarity, it was requested that future reporting refer to Kinmylies and Muirtown Primary Schools separately;
- the report focussed predominantly on schools within the City of Inverness and yet the Inverness area covered a much wider geographic area – Primary Schools in Beauly and Balnain both required investment;
- it was now some years since initial work had been carried out by Caledonian Economics and it was queried whether updates had been provided on school roll pressures and future developments in Inverness;
- the proposals for Merkinch Primary did not provide assurance that the full range of issues previously discussed would be address. It was felt that an integrated family school, incorporating a family centre and accommodating integrated teams, should be explored to achieve a wider gain for the Merkinch area rather than simply refurbishing the school. If this option was not to be explored, a full explanation of the rationale should be provided. Merkinch School was an old building that could not be refurbished to provide a modern environment that would encourage educational standards.

The Chair confirmed that further detailed reporting would be provided to Ward Business meetings, teaching staff and parents in relation to improvements planned at Kinmylies Primary. Capping Lochardil school roll had been discussed at the Ward 16

Business Meeting and clarification would be sought on why capping other school rolls had not been discussed at appropriate Ward Business meetings.

A report on issues affecting primary school capacity in Inverness had been considered by the Committee in November 2014 and by the City Committee in December. Reports had been submitted to most Ward Business meetings and a synopsis would be provided to Mrs Davidson. The business case for Merkinch would not only include educational and learning needs but also health and social wellbeing needs and the provision of a family centre. This would be a holistic approach which would be measured against school refurbishment costs to ascertain what additional value could be gained for the areas as a whole.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the priorities for future capital investment and the other measures outlined in the report; and
- ii. **AGREED** that further detailed reporting would be provided to Ward Business meetings, teaching staff and parents in relation to improvements planned at Kinmylies Primary School.

6. Inverasdale Primary School – Proposal to Proceed to Statutory Consultation for Formal Closure
Bun-Sgoil Inbhir Àsdail – Moladh a Dhol air Adhart gu Co-chomhairle Reachdail airson Dùnadh Foirmeil

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/36/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which explained that Inverasdale Primary School was currently mothballed and had been since the end of session 2011/12. The report sought Member agreement to proceed to a statutory consultation, under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, for formal closure of the school.

The Committee **AGREED** to proceed to statutory consultation, per the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, regarding the proposal for formal closure of Inverasdale Primary School and the re-assignment of its catchment area to that of Poolewe Primary School.

7. Performance Report
Aithisg Choileanaidh
8. Assurance Report – Children’s Services
Aithisg Bharantais - Seirbheisean Chloinne

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/37/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the performance framework for Children’s Services and commentary on Statutory Performance Indicators.

There had also been circulated Report No ECAS/38/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning, the purpose of which was to provide assurance to NHS Highland in relation to services commissioned and delivered through Highland Council.

The Committee **AGREED** to consider these two items of business together.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:

- in relation to the potential budget outturn, it was queried what would happen to the £1.3m underspend;
- the indicator on health assessments for Looked After Children had been sitting at “red” for a little while now. Previous reports had considered options to try to improve performance and it was urged that decisions be taken on this;
- it was disappointing to note that there were concerns regarding the data pathway for gathering breastfeeding statistics and that the specific report on breastfeeding requested for this meeting could not be produced. The request for the report was reiterated and it was stated that it should include analysis of the impact of interventions, data on mixed feeding and the roll out and uptake of the breast feeding education programme. The Chair clarified that a detailed report to this meeting had not been possible without meaningful data and confirmed that it would be submitted to the August meeting;
- noting that there had been a 9% net increase in adults satisfied with schools in 2014, it was unclear what the actual out-turn % amounted to;
- further information was requested on the issues around adult home care costs;
- clarification was sought on indicator 26 in relation to the increased use of interventions for young people at risk of becoming serious/repeat offenders;
- child fluoride varnish applications were presently sitting at 14% with a target of 60%. This represented a significant gap and it was queried whether there was a programme in place and capacity to achieve this;
- there were still concerns for the child and adolescent mental health referral times shown in the Assurance Report. Reference was made to concerns also expressed by peer supporters and it was stressed that this area should be investigated;
- it was queried whether solutions to IT issues had been identified for Care First;
- the outcome of the Family Nurse Partnership was to be commended;
- national IDS data suggested that the coverage of the 27-30 month Child Health Review in Highland had risen from 34% to 82% and it was suggested that this target could be further extended. It was queried what arrangements had led to this successful increase and whether a similar approach could be applied to other areas;
- concerning the bid for funding to improve waiting times for Looked After Children, it was confirmed that the NHS had been successful and the Council awaited to hear how it would be utilised;
- a request was made for performance indicators for adult mental health waiting times and voluntary sector performance to be circulated to Members;
- a request was made for a briefing note on the impending closure of Cairdeas Cottage;
- the educational achievements of Looked After Children had returned to “red” status and an explanatory note was requested on this for the next meeting;
- a request was made for a substantive report on the ambitions set out in For Highland Children’s 4 and the necessary improvements regarding kinship care; and
- it was very disappointing to note that Highland was ranked 32nd in Scotland for the provision of homecare for those aged 65+ with intensive needs.

The Chairman confirmed that the issue of peer support relating to child and adolescent mental health should be investigated and included in the next update report. Waiting times had recently increased due to capacity issues in Tier 3 CAMHS

provision and this situation would be monitored carefully. Referring to the changes to implementation and processes to produce more consistent data through Care First, the Chairman concurred with the request for an update report to provide assurance that the system would be responsive to the needs of both the Council and NHS.

It was also confirmed that Members would be circulated with information on performance indicators for adult mental health waiting times and voluntary sector performance and a briefing note from NHS to address the impending closure of Cairdeas Cottage.

The achievement of a stretch target for the Child Health Review was to be applauded and had been the result of good partnership working with NHS, awareness targeting, training and ensuring a clear process to capture data.

The Chairman also concurred with the need for the Committee to monitor roll out of Personal Outcome Plan to ensure the shift in the balance of care.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the information in the performance report;
- ii. **AGREED** that two measures be removed from the performance framework, as set out in paragraph 1.6 of the Performance Report;
- iii. **NOTED** the issues raised in the Assurance Report – Children’s Services and that the format of this report remained under review;
- iv. **AGREED** that an in-depth report on breastfeeding, including the impact of interventions and data on mixed feeding, be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee;
- v. **AGREED** that an explanatory note on the educational achievements of looked after children be provided to the next meeting of the Committee;
- vi. **AGREED** that a substantive report be provided to a future Committee meeting on the ambitions set out in For Highland Children’s 4 regarding kinship care and the necessary improvements;
- vii. **AGREED** that the issue of peer support relating to child and adolescent mental health be investigated and included in next update report;
- viii. **AGREED** that an update report be provided to a future Committee meeting on the use and management of Care First; and
- ix. **AGREED** that Members be provided with information on performance indicators for adult mental health waiting times and voluntary sector performance together with a briefing note on the impending closure of Cairdeas Cottage.

9. Implementation of *Getting It Right For Every Child* in Highland: Update Buileachadh Ga Fhaighinn Ceart airson Gach Leanabh sa Ghàidhealtachd: Cunntas às Ùr

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/39/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update with regard to the ongoing evaluation of *Getting It Right For Every Child* (GIRFEC) in Highland. The report also made comment on the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014, which would have some impact on the Highland Practice Model.

During discussion a request was made for Members to receive copies of sample children’s plans provided to parents.

Referring to the move towards Family Teams it was acknowledged that there was a range of strands, along with the findings collated to date, to be brought together under an overarching report. It was presently unclear where real action would be taken to address these concerns. The Chair confirmed that the Improvement Group would be asked to provide a progress and a final report to the Committee on this.

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

10. Presentation by Highland Children's Forum on their evaluation of Children's Plans
Taisbeanadh le Fòram Chloinne na Gàidhealtachd mun mheasadh aca air Planaichean Chloinne

Ms G Newman and Ms A Ross, Highland Children's Forum, undertook a presentation on their independent evaluation of the experience by children and families of the Child's Plan. The consultation report, "My Child's Plan: My Views", had been circulated separately as Booklet A.

Details were provided of the outcomes of the evaluation which demonstrated that 96% of children experienced improvements as a result of the Child's Plan. Feedback stated clearly that this percentage would have been higher if the children concerned felt they had been listened to. While the Highland model was working for most children, there were inconsistencies and satisfaction levels indicated a need to work through the practice model.

Information was provided on planning and professional involvement. Overall, parents sought more information on the Highland practice model and wanted more clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the professionals who participated with them and with whom the Child's Plan was shared.

It was suggested that innovative methods such as a My Child's Plan App be developed by young people to engage young people and their families in embracing full ownership of their Plans. It was clear that success could be achieved when each child was involved in their Plan, when all parents were treated as partners to it and when every professional followed the guidance.

During discussion, Members welcomed the evaluation and raised the following issues:

- responding to the suggestion of a My Child's Plan App, it was suggested that the IT department at Wick High School be invited to provide assistance as they had recently won awards for similar innovative App development which could easily be adapted. Wick High School could also be invited to make a presentation to a future meeting of the Committee on their App development work; and
- it was a significant concern that vulnerable children had reported a lack of privacy in their dealings with professionals and other areas of inconsistent practice. It was queried how the Council would respond to the recommendations and tackle the areas of concern.

The Chairman confirmed that the report would be submitted to the Improvement Group of For Highland Children's 4 who would draw up actions to meet the recommendations and report to the Committee. Many of the concerns were around training, respect, privacy and best practice and it would be particularly important to

tackle areas of inconsistency.

Having welcomed the consultation report, the Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the issues raised in the presentation; and
- ii. **AGREED** to invite the pupils of Wick High School to do a presentation at a future Committee on their app development projects, with an accompanying report.

11. High Life Highland Progress Report Aithisgean Adhartais High Life na Gàidhealtachd

Declarations of Interest:

The following Members declared a non-financial interest in this item but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interest did not preclude their involvement in the discussion:-

**Ms J Douglas – Director of High Life Highland
Mr K Gowans – Director of High Life Highland
Mr D Millar – Director of High Life Highland
Mr G Ross – Member of Highland Disability Sport Committee**

In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife was 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 ECAS/40/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which presented information on the performance of High Life Highland (HLH) during the operating period April 2014 to March 2015.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- Members welcomed the report and commended the Chief Executive of HLH and his staff for their efforts, particularly given the challenging financial climate;
- in relation to the percentage of adults satisfied with libraries, the Scottish Household Survey, upon which the figures were based, was very different to the Council's survey of service users. With regard to the number of visits to libraries, it was important to take into account changes to the way people used the service. For example, books could now be ordered online, thereby reducing the number of visits required but improving customer satisfaction;
- reference was made to the difficulties experienced by ex-offenders in terms of securing employment and the significant socio-economic impact thereof. In that regard, it was suggested that there might be an opportunity for HLH, in partnership with the Council, to build on the Inverness Prison Partnership and develop an employability initiative for ex-offenders. In addition, it was suggested that the Council could consider providing transitional employment for a small number of ex-offenders each year. In response, the Chairman explained that the proposed initiative was not solely within the remit of the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee. However, it was an interesting concept and it was suggested that initial discussions take place with HLH and relevant Council

Services, the outcome of which would be discussed with the Chairman and Councillor Fernie. If there was merit in progressing the proposal, a further meeting, including Council HLH Directors, would be arranged;

- Members commended Highland Disability Sport for the opportunities it provided for young people and adults with a disability throughout Highland;
- the cancellation of recent meetings of the Culture and Leisure Contracts Scrutiny Sub-Committee had left a void in terms of opportunities to discuss some of the issues in the report in greater depth;
- with regard to the Council decommissioning its use of the Badaguish Outdoor Education Centre, the importance of providing opportunities for outdoor education was emphasised and a timescale was sought for a replacement service;
- HLH's increasing contribution to the prevention agenda was welcomed, particularly in relation to early years literacy, areas of low physical activity, the Young Persons Leadership Programme, anti-stigma projects and 16+ transitions/youth employability. Gaps that had existed in the past were now being filled by being proactive and this highlighted the importance of partnership working. In relation to older adults, Members commended the coaches involved in the provision of activities. Keeping fit and healthy contributed to keeping people out of hospital and in their own home, as well as providing social benefits;
- in relation to the High Life scheme, the importance of affordable pricing was emphasised and it was suggested that Members had a responsibility to encourage people to sign up;
- HLH had been recognised as a model of good practice by the Scottish Government;
- it was important to ensure that preventative initiatives were properly resourced and it was suggested that that be taken into account when setting budgets; and
- thanks were expressed to staff at the Skye and Lochalsh Archive Centre for their work in commemorating The Battle of Festubert.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** that High Life Highland had met or exceeded the outcomes expected in the Service Delivery Contract with the Council for the period April 2014 to March 2015;
- ii. **NOTED** that, following the decommissioning of the previous provision at Badaguish, Aviemore, High Life Highland had been asked to work on the development of a new outdoor activities service, including proposals for a potential capital project;
- iii. **NOTED** the growing contribution High Life Highland made to the prevention agenda; and
- iv. **AGREED** that discussions take place with High Life Highland and relevant Council Services regarding the possibility of developing an employability initiative for ex-offenders.

12. Facilities Management Review – Update Ath-sgrùdadh air Rianachd Ghoireasan – Cunntas às Ùr

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/41/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which invited Members to note the progress to date with the Facilities Management Review and agree that further consultation with Members and stakeholders on detailed proposals be carried out with a view to reporting recommendations for the future of Facilities Management (FM) to the

August Committee.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- Members had previously raised a number of concerns regarding the cost and effectiveness of the FM model and the pilot scheme had been rolled out too quickly to allow for proper analysis;
- whilst welcoming the report, it did not fully reflect the discussions at the recent meeting in Dingwall and Members looked forward to further opportunities for engagement, particularly at Ward level;
- the importance of the pastoral role of janitors, which had been overlooked in the FM model, was emphasised;
- concern was expressed that FM staff were not permitted to carry out simple tasks such as changing lightbulbs and tightening screws in doors;
- the tier of management and the need for senior FM staff to take vans home in the evening were questioned;
- the overspend of £300k was less than the figure previously reported to Committee and clarification was sought in that regard;
- janitors who had transferred to the FM model had become deskilled and demotivated;
- tasks that FM staff were not permitted to carry out were being undertaken by teaching staff and Members questioned what was being done to protect them in terms of health and safety;
- the FM model did not support Head Teachers in their role as Responsible Premises Officer and it was suggested that consideration be given to peripatetic janitors, as originally requested;
- there had been a lack of consultation on the FM model at a local level. One size did not fit all and it was hoped that the review would take into account the need to find local solutions to local problems;
- the need for fairness was recognised and there was now janitorial provision in schools where there had been none previously;
- it was important to learn lessons from the FM model and ensure that, in the future, when presenting proposals as cost neutral, the views of the profession were taken into account;
- it was important to get the model right and, if the proposed report was not ready for the August Committee, it should not be rushed;
- it was necessary to be innovative and it was suggested that the possibility of working with partners such as NHS Highland, Registered Social Landlords and PPP schools be explored;
- schools had difficulties finding local contractors to carry out repairs and it was suggested that they be provided with a list of local tradesmen that were readily available;
- it was necessary to try and deliver a solution that was cost neutral or as cost effective as possible but provided the appropriate service for each school;
- the review needed to identify best practice from both the former and the new model and financial information was required in respect of any proposed changes;
- it was essential to take the views of teachers, Parent Councils and janitors into account; and
- some Registered Social Landlords employed their own handymen rather than using contractors and this was a cost effective solution.

The Chairman acknowledged the points raised and confirmed that they would be

taken into account in the proposed report to Committee. It was hoped that it would be ready for the August Committee but, if work was ongoing, an update report would be provided with a further report to the following meeting. In relation to the financial pressures, achieving a cost neutral solution was unlikely to be possible and it was important to recognise that. With regard to consultation, he drew Members' attention to the summary of stakeholder engagement that had already taken place and confirmed that that would continue.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the progress to date with the Facilities Management Review; and
- ii. **AGREED** that further consultation with Members and stakeholders on detailed proposals be carried out, taking into account the points raised during discussion, with a view to reporting recommendations for the future of Facilities Management to the Committee in August 2015, if ready.

13. Additional Support Needs Review Update Cunntas às Ùr mu Ath-sgrùdadh air Feumalachdan Taice a Bharrachd

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/42/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which explained that a detailed process of consultation and review of Additional Support Needs (ASN) in Highland was completed during 2013/14 and reported to Committee in May 2014. The review made 26 recommendations for improvements to structures and practices, with the aim of achieving better outcomes for children and young people, which were remitted to the ASN Improvement Group to implement and monitor. The report provided a summary of the work to date in relation to the recommendations of the review. For ease of reporting, recommendations relating to a single theme had been grouped together.

During discussion, Members welcomed the progressive and open approach to the review; the commitment to include the views of children, young people and their families in all Child's Plans; the increase in training and awareness-raising in respect of transitions; the acknowledgement that the ASN policy needed to be equitable and rolled out throughout Highland; and the recognition and efficient recording of ASN.

Information was sought on how Pupil Support Assistants felt about their new role and whether there were any issues, particularly in relation to Gaelic medium provision. In addition, an update on transitions was requested and the Chairman confirmed that this would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

Thereafter, having commended all those involved in the review for their efforts, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the progress to date in relation to the implementation of the recommendations from the Additional Support Needs Review; and
- ii. **AGREED** that an update on transitions be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

14. Recruitment of Head Teachers Fastadh Cheannardan-sgoile

Declaration of Interest: Mrs A MacLean declared a non-financial interest in this item on the grounds of having friends and family who were teachers 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 ECAS/43/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which set out some of the issues around Head Teacher recruitment in Highland. The report was set against the wider context of a growing concern about the recruitment problems that now existed in schools across Scotland.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- in relation to the recent workshop in Dingwall regarding Head Teacher recruitment, it was important for Members to understand the impact policies agreed at Committee had on the day to day running of schools and the model of bringing officials, Elected Members and Head Teachers together for an open discussion was welcomed. Head Teachers had raised a number of issues including the fact that only 20% of their time was spent on teaching and learning; the need for a business manager; the lack of mentoring for Head Teachers; and frustration at the number of reviews that resulted in little or no action;
- information was sought on how the establishment of clusters in the primary sector was perceived by Head Teachers;
- with regard to the feedback provided by Head Teachers, the factors that influenced job satisfaction were largely generic. In order to attract quality candidates, it was important to emphasise what was unique to Highland such as the sense of community and the quality of life. Photographs of outstanding countryside and a vision of where the school was going would attract more people than a simple advert;
- the myjobscotland application form provided very little information about an applicant's qualities and needed to be improved;
- the concept of a business manager in schools was not viable as the salary would be equivalent to that of a Depute Head Teacher but they would be unable to deal with teaching issues. Business support expertise at officer level was already available to Head Teachers and it was suggested that the role of existing clerical support staff in schools could be enhanced. In addition, consideration could be given to a centralised business support service for schools;
- succession planning was essential and it necessary to target principal teachers and faculty heads, identify aspiring Depute Head Teachers and provide a quality training programme for them;
- a common programme was needed in terms of how schools and managers were assessed and Quality Improvement Teams needed to work more closely with Education Scotland in that regard;
- a candidate for a Secondary Head Teacher post could be interviewed by a panel of nine people, none of whom had any experience of senior management in a secondary school, and it was suggested that this be revisited. In response, the Chairman concurred that the size of the panel was excessive and suggested that the views of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff be sought on whether it could be reduced;
- increased connectivity between Head Teachers and Local Members was required;
- the job description of a Head Teacher had changed considerably and it was necessary to streamline it and make it more about teaching and learning than

- issues such as procurement and facilities management;
- historically, Head Teachers were provided with a house and, in order to make Highland a more attractive prospect, it was suggested that consideration be given to offering accommodation on a temporary basis;
- information was sought on whether there had been any joint work with partners on recruitment advertising;
- professional couples needed two jobs in order to relocate and a longer-term coordinated approach to recruitment was required. It would be helpful to have local workforce plans which set out, for the next three years, the recruitment needs of partner agencies and other major employers in specific areas/towns;
- recruitment of Head Teachers was an ongoing issue and it was suggested that a group of officers and Members be established to discuss possible solutions. In response, the Chairman confirmed that the Director, having had time to consider the points raised, would arrange a meeting with a representative of each political group;
- with regard to the Corporate Improvement Plan, caution was called for in relation to the substantial savings target against school office support staff. In response, the Chairman explained that each time the savings target had been brought up it had been delayed for valid reasons and it was necessary to revisit it and agree the way forward;
- it was necessary to deal more effectively with poorly performing teachers and the impact they had on schools;
- corporate changes could have a significant impact and the importance of Head Teachers having the autonomy to shape their school was emphasised;
- some Parent Councils did not fully understand the role of the Head Teacher;
- it was important to recognise that Primary and Secondary Head Teachers had very different roles; and
- when implementing changes such as the FM model, it was essential to consider the knock-on effect.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the key issues highlighted in the report;
- ii. **AGREED** to seek the views of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers on the possibility of reducing the size of Head Teacher Interview Panels; and
- iii. **AGREED** that a meeting be arranged with a representative of each political group to discuss possible solutions to the issues surrounding the recruitment of Head Teachers in Highland.

15. Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Dàimhean, Slàinte Gnèitheasach agus Pàrantachd

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/44/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update about the most recent guidance being issued to schools on the conduct of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education. It took into account the most recent guidance from the Scottish Government and the advice of a working party made up of teachers, Quality Improvement Officers and health professionals.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- Members welcomed the report, which presented facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner within a framework of sound values;
- it was important that children knew what kind of family life they should be expected to experience;
- the references to emotional wellbeing, love, respect and the value of a stable family life were welcomed;
- in a time of less cohesion and fewer extended families, it was more important than ever that schools provided RSHP education and it was essential to get it right;
- it should be made clear to young people that it was not wrong to refrain from sexual activity and that love could be expressed without sex;
- it was emphasised that the Scottish Government's guidance stated that "It is well evidenced that high-quality RSHP education may contribute to a delay in the onset of sexual activity, reduce the likelihood of unintended teenage pregnancies and may contribute to a reduction of sexual relationships under coercive circumstances."; and
- there was a concern amongst those with traditional Christian beliefs that their children would be exposed to teaching that undermined what they were being taught at home and an assurance was sought that the emphasis in popular culture on sex as a recreational activity with little consequence would not influence the delivery of RSHP education.

Responding to the issues raised, the Chairman explained that great care had been taken in preparing the list of recommended resources and schools were being encouraged to explain the reasons behind RSHP education to Parent Councils and individual parents. It was recognised that it was a sensitive issue and, where a parent or carer wanted to remove their child, alternative educational activity would be provided. Members were assured that RSHP education was not just about sexual activity and covered creating and fostering loving relationships and stable families as well as providing information on issues such as violence against women and child sexual exploitation. It was suggested that the Committee's religious representatives be invited to attend a staff training session to see how it was delivered.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- NOTED** the guidance being issued to schools on the conduct of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education; and
- AGREED** that the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee's religious representatives be invited to attend a staff training session on Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood education.

16. Community Learning and Development Plan Plana Ionnsachadh agus Leasachadh Coimhearsnachd

Declarations of Interest:

Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director 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 interest did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.

In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife

was 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 ECAS/45/15 dated 6 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on progress in developing a Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- using the District Partnership framework for CLD was confusing given that the geographical basis for CLD inspections was Associated School Groups and it was suggested that they be amalgamated so that there was one specific boundary. In response, whilst acknowledging the difficulties, the Chairman explained that the District Partnership framework linked in well with other work being undertaken and, on balance, it was considered to be the best option; and
- the collaborative approach was welcomed. However, for the partnership to be successful, additional funding would be required and it was not yet clear where that would come from. In response, the Chairman explained that the outline plan to be presented to the Committee in August 2015 would include resource implications and determine which partners would be involved.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** progress on developing a Community Learning and Development Plan and that an outline of the plan would be circulated to the Committee in August 2015, prior to submission to Education Scotland in September 2015.

**17. Child Protection Committee Biennial Report: April 2013 – March 2015
Aithisg Dà-bhliadhna Comataidh Dìon na Cloinne: Giblean 2013 – Màrt 2015**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/46/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which explained that, as required by the Scottish Government, the Highland Child Protection Committee had prepared a biennial report detailing how functions had been carried out and progress against the priorities identified in the rolling Child Protection Improvement Plan.

The Highland Child Protection Committee Biennial Report had been circulated separately as Booklet B.

The Committee **NOTED** the biennial report of the Highland Child Protection Committee.

**18. Redesign of Community Justice Governance
Ath-dhealbhadh Riaghladh Ceartais Choimhearsnachd**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/47/15 dated 8 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which set out the requirement for new governance and planning arrangements for Community Justice Services. Options for local arrangements were outlined and it was recommended that these were considered by the Community Planning Partnership.

During discussion, Members expressed support for the option whereby the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee would continue to act as the

Strategic Committee, with decision making delegated to an enhanced and extended Criminal Justice Sub-Committee. A new Strategic Committee would be too much and the disadvantages of the remaining options were clearly set out in the report.

Thereafter, clarification having been sought in relation to the £50k additional funding from the Scottish Government, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the planned change in governance arrangements for Community Justice and the options for the future model of planning Community Justice Services, which would be considered further at the Community Planning Partnership; and
- ii. **AGREED** to endorse the option whereby the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee would continue to act as the Strategic Committee, with decision making delegated to an enhanced and extended Criminal Justice Sub-Committee.

**19. Internal Audit Report – Highland Instrumental Unit
Aithisg In-Sgrùdaidh – Aonad Innealan-Ciùil na Gàidhealtachd**

Declaration of Interest: Ms J Douglas declared a financial interest in this item on the grounds of having children who received music tuition 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 ECAS/48/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an overview and update in relation to an internal audit report on the Highland Instrumental Unit, recently considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee **NOTED** the appended internal audit report and action plan and the update provided.

**20. Complaints Review Committee Outcome
Toradh Comataidh Ath-sgrùdaidh nan Gearanan**

There had been circulated joint Report No ECAS/49/15 dated 11 May 2015 by the Depute Chief Executive and the Director of Care and Learning which set out the findings and recommendations following a Complaints Review Committee on 11 March 2015. The report also provided an overview of the complaints process and highlighted the requirement for decisions of the Complaints Review Committee to be reported to the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. that the Complaints Review Committee met to consider the case; and
- ii. the findings and recommendations.

**21. Minutes
Geàrr-chunntas**

The Committee **NOTED**, and **APPROVED** where necessary, the following Minutes of Meetings:-

- i. Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership Strategy Group – 13 November 2014;
- ii. Child Protection Committee – 2 December 2014;
- iii. Adult Services Development and Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 18 February 2015;
- iv. Criminal Justice Sub-Committee – 4 March 2015;
- v. Highland Strategic Commissioning Group – 16 March 2015; and
- vi. Adult Services Development and Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 1 May 2015.

It was also **AGREED** that:-

- i. a rolling Action Plan be prepared in respect of the Adult Services Development and Scrutiny Sub-Committee; and
- ii. where possible, large documents such as consultation reports and annual reports be circulated to Members in advance of agendas and papers.

The meeting concluded at 1.45 pm.