

The Highland Council

Communities and Partnerships Committee – 23 March 2016

Agenda Item	9
Report No	CP/05 /16

Dementia Friendly Highland Working Group

Report by Head of Policy and Reform

Summary

This report summarises the Council's commitment to become a Dementia Friendly Highland and suggests how this work will be progressed to develop an associated action plan.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 17 December 2015, Highland Council Members agreed a [motion](#) to recognise and support a Dementia Friendly Highlands. It was proposed that a group of Members work with Officers and relevant bodies to produce an action plan to bring to a future Council meeting which will make recommendations on ways that we can achieve our goal of a Dementia Friendly Highland.

2. Background

- 2.1 Dementia affects people from all walks of life. It is most common in older people but can affect people in their 40's, 50's or even younger. Alzheimer Scotland estimates that dementia now affects 90,000 people in Scotland; around 3,200 of these people are under the age of 65. This includes over 4400 people with dementia in Highland, 64% of these are women and 36% men¹.
- 2.2 Scotland's first Dementia Strategy was published in June 2010 setting out the work that the Scottish Government and its partners in NHS Scotland, local government and the voluntary and private sectors are doing to improve support, care and treatment for people with dementia, their families and carers. Key outcomes for the current strategy² (2013-16) include:
- more people with dementia living a good quality life at home for longer
 - dementia-enabled and dementia-friendly local communities, that contribute to greater awareness of dementia and reduce stigma.

The Scottish Government is reviewing the progress of the strategy and a third National Dementia Strategy for Scotland will be produced in 2016.

¹ Alzheimer Scotland, [Number of people with dementia in Scotland 2016](#)

² Scottish Government, [Scotland's National Dementia Strategy 2013-2016](#)

- 2.3 Following the integration of Health and Social Care Services, NHS Highland delivers Adult Social Work and Social Care Services on behalf of the Highland Council. This includes services for people with Dementia and their carers. NHS Highland works closely in partnership with organisations such as Alzheimer Scotland. However, many people with dementia live at home and the majority of care and support for people with dementia is provided informally, from family and friends.
- 2.4 Prior to the Community Safety, Public Engagement and Equalities Committee in June 2015, Members of the committee and council staff made commitments to support Alzheimer Scotland's Dementia Friendly Community initiative by becoming Dementia Friends.

3 What is a Dementia Friendly Community?

- 3.1 Alzheimer Scotland's Dementia Friends programme encourages communities across Scotland to build better support, awareness and understanding for people with dementia. A dementia friendly community is made up of the whole community - public service workers, shop assistants, faith groups, businesses, police, fire and ambulance staff, bus drivers, school pupils, clubs and societies, and community leaders - where people with dementia and their families and carers feel included and involved, and have choice and control over their lives.
- 3.2 Being a Dementia Friendly Community involves learning about dementia and doing very simple and practical things that can make a positive difference to the lives of those affected by dementia. There are a number of examples of dementia-friendly cities such as York, Bradford, Edinburgh and Stirling. [Motherwell](#) became Scotland's first dementia-friendly town centre in a partnership between Alzheimer Scotland, North Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire. Aberdeenshire and Moray have also made commitments to becoming dementia friendly and locally Helmsdale is a Dementia Friendly Community.
- 3.3 A guide for local authorities³ states that "a dementia-friendly community may be defined as being a place:
- in which it is possible for the greatest number of people with dementia to live a good life
 - where people with dementia are enabled to live as independently as possible and to continue to be part of their community
 - where they are met with understanding and given support where necessary."

The guide identifies five key domains to address as part of developing a dementia friendly community:

- place - including environment, housing and transport
- people - including attitudes and stigma
- resources - not just health and social care services but shops, leisure,

³ [Developing Dementia – Friendly Communities](#) (LGA 2012)

faith resources

- networks - how people work together to support older people both nationally and locally
- putting the person with dementia and their carers at the heart of the process

3.4 Ensuring that people with dementia and their carers are involved will be key to setting the priorities for a Dementia Friendly Highland. One option to achieve this aim would be through the participation of the [Highland Dementia Working Group](#) led by Alzheimer Scotland.

4. Dementia Friendly Working Group

4.1 During discussion at Council on 17 December 2015, it was suggested that:

- A Councillor-led working group could take the lead with private, public and voluntary partners in creating tangible actions and drawing on best practice to make the Highlands dementia friendly. As such, simple practical upgrades to public buildings and areas were achievable and would make significant improvements for those suffering from dementia;
- Cllr Jaci Douglas should lead the proposed group and that this group should include Members with specific interests in this area. In this regard, the group should report back with an action plan in the Spring;
- local communities, along with Local Committees and District Partnerships, should also consider how to implement initiatives;
- dementia training should also be provided for all Members within the Council;
- following discussion at the Inverness East District Partnership, it had been suggested that the Provost of Inverness should hold a meeting with representatives from the Victorian Market to highlight the need to pursue dementia friendly projects in that location, and that representatives from the Eastgate Centre and the Business Improvement District should also be invited; and
- the role of carers was essential to the development of the action plan and in view of the fact that Connecting Carers was represented on the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee, it was suggested that the recommendations from the group should also be submitted to a future meeting of that Committee.

4.2 An initial meeting of the working group took place on 23 March 2016. The group is chaired by Cllr Jaci Douglas, and members include the following Councillors: Deirdre Mackay, Bet McAllister, Angela McLean, Stephen Fuller, Caroline Caddick, Gregor Rimmell, Kate Stephen and Jamie Stone. Alzheimer Scotland attended the meeting to describe Dementia Friendly Community programme and provide examples of practice from elsewhere. A number of Council officers also attended the meeting.

5 Developing a Dementia Friendly Highland

5.1 During the initial meeting it became apparent that much is already happening

in Highland, for example, awareness raising events and training; [Helmsdale](#) has committed to being a dementia friendly community; activities with the Victorian Market and BID in Inverness; Dementia cafes in Avoch and Nairn. However, under the commitment to becoming a Dementia Friendly Highland such activities could become more formalised and focused.

- 5.2 Suggestion for developing an action plan reflected both the comments in 4.1 and the key domains identified in 3.3 and included:
- Scoping out building on current work as well as learning from other dementia friendly communities in Scotland
 - Working across Council Services is essential, both in terms of awareness raising and in considering access to services and support for people affected by dementia. This should consider issues such as:
 - Built environment – dementia friendly buildings, pathways, signage and lighting
 - Transport
 - Money Advice Services
 - Housing and housing developments
 - Schools, including intergenerational work
 - Developing existing links with partner agencies, in particular NHS Highland in working towards a Dementia Friendly Highland, but also Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, local businesses, transport providers and voluntary organisations. This can be taken forward with community planning partners and it is proposed this is done through District Partnership meetings.
 - Increasing wider understanding of dementia and challenging the stigma associated with the condition
- 5.3 It was also suggested that actions may need to be targeted, for example by geographic areas, and/or by sectors.
- 5.4 In summary, developing a Dementia Friendly Highland will require commitments from all Council services and work with partner agencies. There are examples of good practice across Scotland and beyond which can inform this work, however, the scope of the action plan will require reflect the need for activities to be met within existing resources.

6. Implications

- 6.1 Resources: The action plan will be dependent upon on mainstream service budgets. There are no additional resources available. This means that the action plan has to be realistic and the timescales set feasible.
- 6.2 Equality: Many people with dementia would be considered disabled under meaning of the Equality Act 2010 which places a legal duty on organisations to make reasonable adjustments in their working practices, services and buildings and to avoid discrimination. The commitment to working towards a dementia friendly Highland will help contribute to the Council's requirement to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Dementia Friendly Community programme is underpinned by a human

rights approach which is about making people aware of their rights, whilst increasing the accountability of individuals and institutions who are responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights.

6.3 Rural: If actions are targeted or piloted by geography, rural areas will be included.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members:

- Note the work underway which will be overseen by a Member-led Working Groups and which will contribute towards Highland becoming a Dementia Friendly Community;
- Note that further work will be required across Council services as well as working together with Alzheimer Scotland and Community Planning Partners;
- Agree that a report on progress along with a draft action plan is presented to the next Communities and Partnerships Committee meeting.

Designation: Head of Policy and Reform

Date: 11 March 2016

Author: Rosemary Mackinnon, Principal Policy Officer - Equality

Background Papers:

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/dementiafriendlycommunities>
http://www.alzscot.org/dementia_friendly_communities