

The Highland Council

8 September 2016

Agenda Item	14
Report No	HC/36/16

Social Impact Pledge

Report by the Chief Executive

Summary

The report outlines a request from the Scottish Government for Local Authorities to sign up to the Social Impact Pledge. Members are asked to agree to sign up to the Social Impact Pledge and agree the commitments identified within the report as the mechanism for delivering on the Pledge.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Government have written to all Local Authorities and Health Boards, informing them that they are launching a Social Impact Pledge. The aim is to identify commitments to improve current operations or policies, to order to deliver benefits to communities. This is within the context of a greater focus on tackling inequalities alongside the improved engagement and participation of communities.
- 1.2 The report asks Members to agree to sign up to the Social Impact Pledge and agree the commitments identified within the report as the mechanism for delivering on the Pledge.

2. What is the Social Impact Pledge?

- 2.1 The Social Impact Pledge asks organisations to identify commitments to improving current operations or policies with the aim of delivering greater benefits to communities. Any commitments identified should either be things that the organisation does not currently do and hasn't done before or the significant development of a current activity in order to deliver even greater benefits. Any commitments need to have a tangible impact on people and communities. The Pledge is for one year at a time.
- 2.2 The Government have asked Local Authorities to consider identifying three commitments to deliver on the Social Impact Pledge.

3. Potential Commitments Towards the Social Impact Pledge

- 3.1 The principle of committing to an area of work which would be innovative and make a tangible difference to communities is not a new concept within Highland. The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) agreed last year to commit to developing *Breakthrough Achievements* which all partners would commit to collaborate on. It is therefore suggested that should the Council agree to sign up to the Social Impact Pledge, these existing *Breakthrough Achievements* are identified as the commitments to deliver on the Pledge.

- 3.2 The achievements developed to date are wide ranging and would capture the aspirations of the Social Impact Pledge. These commitments are:
- **Employment of Care Leavers** – that every care experienced young person in Highland should have a job offer from a Community Planning partner or an organisation within the partners' network. This commitment stems from the Corporate Parenting responsibility of organisations and was identified given the significant impact it could make on the lives of this group of young people.
 - **Recruitment of Retained Fire Fighters** – to support the recruitment of retained fire fighters through partner networks in order to close the gaps in community fire stations. Retained fire fighters play a crucial role across the Highlands in the delivery of a fire and rescue service therefore this commitment assists in supporting the sustainability of community fire stations across the area.
 - **Social Isolation and Loneliness** – for partners to encourage staff to support the campaign to take action to help reduce social isolation and loneliness within their communities. Loneliness and social isolation can have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and there are strong links to inequality and social disadvantage. This commitment, part of the Reach Out campaign, seeks to encourage greater action in order address loneliness across Highland.

3.3 In addition to the commitments outlined above, it is recommended that the establishment of Community Partnerships could be a further commitment towards meeting the Social Impact Pledge. Providing a different focus to the commitments outlined in 3.2, the aims of Community Partnerships include an increase in local engagement and community involvement – key principles of the Social Impact Pledge. All the commitments identified would meet the aims of the Social Impact Pledge in their innovation and, more importantly, the positive impact they are intended to have on the Highland community.

3.4 Members are asked to consider whether to sign up to the Social Impact Pledge. If Members agree to sign up to the Pledge, it is recommended that the three *Breakthrough Achievements* already identified by the CPP, along with the establishment of Community Partnerships, are utilised to deliver on the Pledge.

4. Implications

4.1 Resource: There are no specific resource implications from signing up to the Pledge. All four commitments have already been agreed and corresponding resource implications identified.

Legal: There are no legal implications to signing up to the Social Impact Pledge.

Equalities: There are no specific equalities implications from signing up to the Pledge however the commitments identified to support this will impact upon

specific groups within the community including groups with protected characteristics.

Climate Change/Carbon Clever: There are no climate change implications identified at this time.

Risk: The Council has already committed to delivering on the outcomes identified in the paper.

Gaelic: There are no Gaelic implications identified at this time.

Rural implications: There are no specific rural implications from signing up to the Pledge however some of the commitments identified to support this will specifically impact on rural communities and the individuals within them.

5, Recommendation

Members are asked to agree:

- To sign up to the Social Impact Pledge;
- The commitments identified within the report at section 3 as the mechanism for delivering on the Pledge.

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 26-8-16

Author: Alison Clark, Acting Head of Policy (702512)

Appendix 1: Letter from the Scottish Government on the Social Impact Pledge

Appendix 2: Community Planning Partnership Board – extract of minutes on
Breakthrough Achievements

Letter from the Scottish Government on the Social Impact Pledge

Social Impact Pledge

I'm writing to let you know about some work that the Scottish Government have been progressing that might be of interest to local authorities across Scotland.

The First Minister is placing an emphasis on tackling inequalities and reforming how we in the public sector deliver services to ensure that participation and empowerment are at the centre of everything that we do. As part of this drive for a Fairer Scotland, we are launching the **Social Impact Pledge**. The Pledge has been developed in response to feedback from public bodies and builds on good practice across the public sector.

We have targeted the Pledge at Public Bodies, however, we are keen to extend the opportunity to sign up to local authorities and to health boards. We know that there are already many examples of how local authorities are making a positive impact in their communities as well as an appetite to do more.

What is it?

The Social Impact Pledge enables organisations to demonstrate leadership by challenging their policies and operations to ensure that they make a positive contribution to their communities.

What does it involve?

We're asking that if you are interested in signing up you identify **three commitments** to improving your current operations or policies **to deliver benefits to your communities**.

These should be things that you do not currently do and haven't done before, or significant developments of current activity in order to deliver even greater benefits. The commitments don't have to be big, but they should make a tangible impact on people and communities. Examples based on existing practice include:

- providing opportunities for young people to gain experience of the operation of committee meetings;
- providing opportunities for volunteering;
- working with local schools;
- providing access to grounds and facilities
- doubling intake of modern apprentices.

We would encourage you to involve all parts of your organisation in this discussion, including committees and staff. Each commitment should be implemented within a year in order to allow the impacts to be felt in communities in the short term. The Pledge can be renewed annually, and we ask that at least **one** of the commitments

is different from the previous year to ensure that you are continuously reviewing your operations and challenging yourself to deliver ever more social value.

What happens next?

If you choose to sign up, you will be provided with a logo that can be added to your website to acknowledge your commitment to the Social Impact Pledge.

We have been working with the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) who are updating their [Community Channel Scotland](#) website to include a section to showcase the Pledge. The site will be the main portal for information about what the Pledge is and how to get involved, along with inspirational ideas and advice; showcasing examples of successful pledges and blogs from communities who have benefitted.

Pledges will be uploaded on to the website which will include a full list of the bodies and organisations who have signed up to the Pledge and their commitments. The idea is that members of the public will be encouraged to interact with public authorities, helping where relevant, to develop their ideas. An interactive map of Scotland will show the areas that will be impacted by the different pledges and allow users to search for details of activities in their area.

We have asked public bodies to sign up as soon as possible with a view to launching the website at the beginning of June. However, local authorities will be able to sign up at any point throughout the year.

If you have any questions about the Pledge itself, the process of signing up or the website, please get in touch with:

Steven Cullum: Steven.Cullum@gov.scot 0131 244 0673

Hannah Garrow: Hannah.Garrow@gov.scot 0131 244 4625

Steven Cullum

Policy Officer, Public Bodies And Public Service Reform Division

Community Planning Partnership Board – extract of minutes on Breakthrough Achievements

Highland Community Planning Partnership Board

Date: Wednesday, 3 June 2015

11. Breakthrough Achievement for the Highland CPP 2015/16 – Employment of Care Leavers

The Director of Care and Learning, Highland Council, explained that, at its meeting on 26 March 2015, the Chief Officers' Group had undertaken to collaborate on a breakthrough achievement that not only marked the effectiveness of the CPP but had tangible outcomes. Officers had been keen that it addressed inequalities, as well as having links to the economy and employability. Having considered a number of options, partners had agreed to focus on offering employment to care leavers, either within their own organisations or through their networks. At the Chief Officers' Group on 27 May 2015, officers had considered the size of the challenge and recommitted to it. There were approximately 25 care leavers per year in Highland. At present, the Council was in touch with 67 previous care leavers, only 6 of which were in full-time employment, and this summed up how delivering on the challenge would be a breakthrough achievement. Partners had agreed to identify lead officers and the Council had committed to developing an infrastructure to support the initiative.

Having welcomed the proposed breakthrough achievement, the Board **NOTED** the update.

Highland Community Planning Partnership Board

Date: Friday, 11 September 2015

11. Breakthrough Achievements

ii. Recruitment of Retained Firefighters

The Area Manager – Service Delivery, SFRS, provided a verbal update in relation to the proposal by Chief Officers to implement a partnership approach to the recruitment of retained firefighters. It was explained that there were 62 community fire stations in Highland, approximately half of which had vacancies. Some of the more remote and rural stations faced real challenges in identifying potential recruits and Chief Officers had agreed to take a strategic and joined-up approach whereby, on a quarterly basis, information on vacancies would be distributed to all partner agencies for dissemination. This would allow access to staff already based in remote and rural areas who could potentially supplement their existing role and develop a wider skill set by becoming a retained firefighter. The breakthrough achievement would be to close the gaps in community fire stations and make them sustainable for the future. It was hoped this could be achieved as quickly as possible.

It was remarkable what could be achieved as a partnership and the approach being taken was welcomed. It could be a significant breakthrough and Members looked forward to further updates over the coming months.

Highland Community Planning Partnership Board

Date: Friday 30 June 2016

9. Highland CPP Breakthrough Achievement for 2016/17

There had been circulated Report No CPB/06/16 dated 21 June 016 by the Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland, which explained that, at the Chief Officers' Group on 2 February 2016, the Group considered options for a breakthrough achievement for 2016. Following discussion at the Chief Officers' Group on 21 April 2016 it had been agreed to recommend to the Board that a breakthrough achievement for 016/17 should be to contribute to a campaign which aimed to reduce loneliness and social isolation in Highland.

The Board **AGREED** that a breakthrough achievement for 2016/17 to sign up to a campaign that would see 1 in 3 of staff in partner agencies sign a pledge to take action to reduce loneliness and social isolation.