

**Highland Community Planning Partnership**

**Chief Officers Group**

Note of Meeting of the Chief Officers Group held in Committee Room 2, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday 9 November 2018 at 9.00 am.

**Present:**

**Representing the Highland Council (HC):**

Ms D Manson  
Mr D Yule  
Mr S Black  
Mr I Kyle (Substitute)  
Mr W Gilfillan  
Ms A Clark

**Representing Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE):**

Mr D Oxley

**Representing the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI):**

Ms M Wylie

**Representing High Life Highland (HLH):**

Mr I Murray

**Representing NHS Highland (NHSH):**

Prof E Mead  
Ms C Steer

**Representing Police Scotland (PS):**

Ch Supt G Macdonald

**Representing Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS):**

Mr R Dibble (Substitute)

**Representing the Scottish Government (SG):**

Dr D Mackinnon

**Representing Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH):**

Mr G Hogg

**Representing Skills Development Scotland (SDS):**

Ms S Campbell

**Supporting the Chief Officers Group:**

Ms E Johnston  
Mr P Mascarenhas

**In attendance:**

Mr G Bull, Corporate Property Asset Manager, Highland Council  
Mr A Standing, Head of Operations, North Region, Skills Development Scotland  
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Highland Council

**Also in attendance:**

Mr C Taylor, Regional Partnerships Director, Visit Scotland

**Prof E Mead in the Chair**

**Business**

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr G Moir, Mr J Gibbs, Mr R Middlemiss and Mr D MacBeath

2. **Note of Previous Meeting**

The Note of Meeting of the Chief Officers Group held on 4 September 2018 was **APPROVED**.

3. **Matters Arising**

i. **Community Partnership Resourcing**

The Acting Head of Policy, Highland Council, on behalf of the Community Partnerships Subgroup, summarised the discussions at the previous meeting and explained that feedback from the Scottish Government Location Director was that it was unlikely that any government funding would be made available. That being the case, it was proposed to proceed to convene a meeting of lead agencies to agree how to progress Community Partnership resourcing.

Having emphasised the need for equity and fairness, the Group **NOTED** the proposed course of action and **AGREED** that it be fed back to the Board that work was in progress.

CP  
Subgroup

ii. **Accessing funding for Fairer Scotland Duty and Child Poverty Action Plans**

With regard to how partners could access the funding associated with Child Poverty Action Plans, the Scottish Government Location Director explained that she had a contact and undertook to confirm the position by email. The Group so **AGREED**.

DM

In relation to Community Partnership resourcing/the Local Governance Review, it was explained that feedback from community planning officials was that if the proposal was limited to community planning it was unlikely that Scottish Government support would be available. However, if the proposal went beyond the scope of the Community Empowerment Act and was to address a genuine governance challenge for local partners, there could be funding available. David Milne, Community Planning Team Leader, Scottish Government, had offered an early meeting with colleagues in Highland to discuss any potential proposals and whether they were worth developing.

The Chief Executive, Highland Council, added that Councils

had received a letter from COSLA, which she undertook to circulate to partners, offering an extension for submissions to the Local Governance Review. The Council's view was that an extension would be beneficial.

It was **AGREED** that the matter be discussed further under item 8, which related specifically to the Local Governance Review.

### **iii. Education Scotland - Community Learning and Development (CLD) Inspection**

The Children's Planning Manager, on behalf of the Interim Director of Care and Learning, Highland Council, explained that the strategic phase of the CLD Inspection had taken place between 8 and 10 October 2018, and initial feedback was generally complimentary of the work taking place in Highland. Positives included the upbeat culture amongst partners, and that they were positive about the fact they were on a journey in terms of engaging and working with communities; the partnership approach being taken and the dispersed leadership arrangements; the approach to community engagement; the local and flexible structures; the work in relation to the CHAMPS Board and the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme; how adult learning contributed to wider agendas such as social isolation, loneliness, and health and wellbeing; professional development for staff and volunteers; and the considered approach to participatory budgeting. Amongst the challenges identified were the need to further evaluate the impact being made and how to evidence it locally; and how the flexible structures linked together locally and at a Highland level.

The place-based phase had taken place that week in Mid Ross and a feedback session was scheduled to take place later that day. The inspectors had seen a wide range of work by a wide range of partners and feedback to date was that it was of high quality. The Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme, a youth rowing club in Cromarty that had wider community benefits in terms of health and wellbeing, and the Muir of Ord Hall and Facilities Company had been highlighted as particularly strong pieces of work. Inspectors had seen the same buy-in to partnership working as had been seen during the strategic phase, and had noted the benefits of the approach to chairing Community Partnerships. Areas for improvement had been identified in relation to community co-design, coproduction and capacity building, as well as linking established activity in communities with the new work taking place by Community Partnerships, and these would be explored at the feedback session, with a further update being provided at the next

COG.

The importance of a joint, pro-active approach to communicating any risks and good news having been emphasised, the Group **NOTED** the position and that a further update would be provided at the next meeting.

IK

#### iv. **Child Protection Committee**

The Unit Manager – South Highland, SNH, referred to a Children’s Panel training event earlier that week, and commended the joint presentation by representatives of the Child Protection Committee, who had set out the community planning context and had come across as pragmatic and solution-focussed.

The Group **NOTED** the positive feedback and commended the commitment of the Child Protection team.

#### 4. **Community Asset Reviews**

The Community and Democratic Engagement Manager, Highland Council, gave a presentation on Community Asset Reviews, during which detailed information was provided on the policy context; the current picture in terms of the Council’s use of assets, the proposed Community Asset Review process; the key outputs and benefits; and potential models.

Detailed discussion ensued on the issues associated with utilising legacy properties; the possibility of carrying out pilots in a small number of areas of over-provision; the benefits of co-location; the importance of savings being re-invested in communities; the need to join up with the review of operational depots and stores; the Local Governance Review and the potential for a targeted, outcome-focussed approach, whether it be place-based or issue-based, aimed at reducing inequalities; the need to identify the biggest issues/areas of greatest risk; the potential to change policy; and existing examples of co-location.

The Group:

- i. **NOTED** the presentation;
- ii. **AGREED** to support the joined-up approach described and to identify some key areas, whether place-based or issue-based, to initiate some work;
- iii. further to ii. above, **AGREED** that partners consider their key issues/areas of over-provision and feed back to the Community and Democratic Engagement Manager to inform a further report to the next COG; and
- iv. **AGREED** to update and seek the endorsement of the Community Planning Board at its meeting on 19 December 2018.

PM

## 5. Highland Public Sector Property Group – Annual Report 2017/18

There had been circulated Report No COG/17/18 by the Corporate Property Asset Manager, Highland Council.

During discussion, partners emphasised the links with the previous item, and the need to focus on and accelerate Action 2 (Seeking opportunities for sharing, co-location and integration of property/land to aid the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan and the local action plans of Community Partnerships) and Action 3 (Seek opportunities for jointly considering combining property (re)development, regeneration and disposals to aid co-location and financial benefit to the public purse). In addition, the Chair emphasised the need to focus on the benefits to be achieved and move forward on opportunities without individual partners' resources becoming an obstacle.

The Group:

- i. **NOTED** the report;
- ii. **AGREED** that a link to the Highland Public Sector Property Group Land and Property Map be circulated to partners;
- iii. **AGREED**, in terms of priorities, that there was a need to link with the previous item, and focus on and accelerate Actions 2 and 3 as set out in the Annual Report;
- iv. **AGREED** that a RAG report, setting out responsible officers and timescales against the actions, be presented to the next COG for noting; and
- v. **AGREED** that an update on progress be presented to the COG in six months.

**GB**

## 6. VisitScotland

The Regional Partnerships Director, VisitScotland, gave a presentation during which detailed information was provided on the role of VisitScotland; the customer journey; marketing activity, including working with social media influencers; the #scotlandisnow campaign; the content calendar; the VisitScotland Growth Fund; international engagement; and support for tourism business.

Detailed discussion ensued on the importance of the environment and culture and heritage to tourism in Highland; the need for investment in infrastructure; the need for the CPP to consider how it could support tourism as a key part of the Highland economy; the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund; the increase in air services in Highland; the potential visitor levy; links with talent attraction/retention and the potential to expand the concept of VisitScotland to encourage people to work in Scotland; the impact of tourism on the availability of housing; opportunities for officers

to promote Highland on social media; links with the work being undertaken in relation to Green Health; and, linked with the earlier discussions on public sector assets, the potential for a public sector Airbnb type arrangement for staff.

The Group otherwise **NOTED** the presentation.

## **7. Participation Measure and Skills Development in Highland Council**

There had been circulated Report No COG/18/18 by the Regional Skills Planning Lead, Skills Development Scotland. Disaggregated Regional Skills Assessment reports in respect of North, West, and Inverness and Central Highland had also been circulated.

In addition, the Head of Operations, North Region, Skills Development Scotland, presented a case study of a customer journey following self-referral to Skills Development Scotland on becoming unemployed.

Detailed discussion ensued on the need to look at every part of the potential workforce, and the key role of Skills Development Scotland in that regard; the need to use local data, eg on the impact of Universal Credit, to take a targeted approach; the work taking place in relation to autism, and the need to reduce barriers to employability by people with a learning disability and other disadvantaged groups; and the importance of retaining people in Highland to train and work.

The Group:

- i. **NOTED** the report and presentation;
- ii. **AGREED** that the Third Sector should be added to My World of Work as potential career opportunity; and
- iii. **AGREED** that a more detailed report on Foundation Apprenticeships be presented to a future meeting of the COG.

**SC**

## **8. Local Governance Review**

There had been circulated Report No COG/19/18 by the Acting Head of Policy, Highland Council.

Further to the discussions under item 3ii, the Scottish Government Location Director reiterated David's Milne's offer to meet with colleagues in Highland, and suggested that it would be helpful to meet separately from the COSLA workshop on 4 December 2018. Officials would assist in scoping proposals, but it was suggested that it would be helpful to focus on tackling inequalities or driving economic growth, and how to add value to the work of the CPP. With regard to Community Partnerships, it

was considered that they had appropriate authority, structures and accountability in place to operate.

The Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland, highlighted the need for partners to feed in to the discussions in terms of whether they intended to submit individual proposals, whether there had been any discussions within single agency national networks, and who their lead officer was. She went on to update the group from an NHS Highland perspective.

Discussion ensued, during which partners welcomed the extension of the timeframe for submissions; emphasised the importance of engagement and dialogue; expressed support for an outcome-focussed, place-based approach, as discussed under item 4; and emphasised the importance of all statutory agencies being represented at the workshop on 4 December 2018.

The Group:

- i. **NOTED** the extension of the timeframe for submissions to the Local Governance Review;
- ii. **AGREED** to participate in the COSLA workshop on 4 December 2018, and that partners consider who they might have appropriately briefed and available to attend;
- iii. **AGREED** to accept David Milne's offer to meet with partners to scope out potential proposals, and that the Local Governance Review Working Group coordinate officer-level attendance at that meeting; and
- iv. further to ii. and iii. above, **AGREED** that a proposal be presented to the Community Planning Board on 19 December 2018 for consideration.

**All**

**Local  
Governance  
Review  
Working  
Group**

## **9. Single Use Plastics**

At the COG on 26 April 2018, it had been agreed that partners explore the feasibility of implementing the following measures within their respective organisations:

- Make all partners' premises plastic straw free.
- Eliminate all single use plastics in partners' catering operations - eg plastic glasses, cutlery, coffee cups etc.
- Require those tendering for services to declare what single use plastics would be included and introduce a criterion to tender assessments to consider single use plastics.

The Unit Manager – South Highland, SNH, provided a verbal update on the feedback received, explaining that most partners were already taking action in relation to plastic straws and removing plastics from catering operations, and some were working with contractors and suppliers on the procurement side. The Council in particular had been taking structured action and had approved a Single Use Plastic Strategy and Action Plan. He

went on to refer to the high and sustained level of public attention on the issue of single use plastics; the links with tourism, climate change and waste management; the need for action to be evidence-based and well researched; and the political work taking place at a national and European level that was likely to become legislation.

He concluded by proposing that a breakthrough achievement be progressed and that it be broadened to include a fourth measure, namely, collaboration across partner organisations to minimise duplication, share knowledge, experience and thinking, and focus on raising awareness externally throughout Highland.

The links with the Council's Waste Strategy and the need for a partnership approach to waste management having been emphasised, the Group **AGREED**:

- i. that the Unit Manager – South Highland, SNH, prepare a report to the Community Planning Board on 19 December 2018 recommending the adoption of a breakthrough achievement based on the four measures described; and **GH**
- ii. that the Council's Single Use Plastic Strategy and Action Plan be circulated to partners for information. **SB**

#### **10. UK Vertical Launch Centre in Sutherland**

The Director of Business and Sector Development, HIE, gave a presentation on the proposed UK Vertical Launch Centre in Sutherland, during which detailed information was provided on the government approach; the market; the economic impact; the timescales and next steps; and the opportunities and risks. He also presented a short video of a vertical launch on a similar scale to that anticipated in Sutherland.

Following discussion on the associated regulatory aspects, the potential need to upgrade the roads in the area, and the opportunities in terms of Modern Apprenticeships, the Group **NOTED** the presentation.

#### **11. The Fairer Scotland (Socio-economic) Duty**

There had been circulated Report No COG/20/18 by the Acting Head of Policy, Highland Council.

The Group:

- i. **NOTED** the implementation of the new Duty on listed bodies; and
- ii. **AGREED** to adopt the definition of socio-economic disadvantage across the CPP, as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report, and that consideration be given to whether it could be refined locally. **All**



## 12. Breakthrough Achievement (Suicide Prevention) Update

There had been circulated Report No COG/21/18 by the Head of Health Improvement and the Health Promotion Specialist, NHS Highland, on behalf of Ch Supt Macdonald, Police Scotland.

During discussion, partners were reminded of their commitment to contribute to the Highland Prevent Suicide App, the total cost of which was £8000. In relation to training, the first dates were 20 November in Invermoriston and 23 November in Brora, and partners were asked to encourage staff in those areas to sign up.

The Group:

- |      |  |               |
|------|--|---------------|
| i.   | <b>NOTED</b> progress with the breakthrough achievement on suicide prevention;   |               |
| ii.  | <b>AGREED</b> to encourage staff from partner organisations to sign up to the SIPP training;   | <b>All</b>    |
| iii. | <b>AGREED</b> to issue a reminder regarding the Highland Prevent Suicide App Launch, to ensure organisational representation at the event, and to invite representatives of the Scottish Government Mental Health Directorate; and | <b>CS/All</b> |
| iv.  | <b>AGREED</b> to invoice partners for their share of the cost of the Highland Prevent Suicide App.   | <b>CS</b>     |

## 13. Scottish Government Location Director Update

There had been circulated an update by the Scottish Government Location Director.

The Scottish Government Location Director emphasised that part of her role was to act as a liaison with other parts of Government, and officers should feel free to contact her between meetings at [Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot](mailto:Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot) or Tel 0131 244 4822.

In addition to the update that had been circulated, she highlighted the following:

- There had been a substantial increase in resource in relation to Mental Health, which was now a Directorate as opposed to a Division. Donna Bell had been appointed as Director of Mental Health and there were two Deputy Directors below her.
- Stephen Gallagher had been confirmed as Director of Local Government and Communities.
- Claire McPherson was the new Deputy Director with a remit for the Local Governance Review, and it might be helpful to invite her to participate in the proposed discussions with David Milne.

It having been confirmed that updates should continue to be provided to the COG, which could escalate any salient points to

the Board, the Group **NOTED** the update.

#### 14. Minutes of Community Planning Board

The draft Minutes of the Community Planning Board held on 4 October 2018 were **NOTED**.

#### 15. Future Agenda Items

##### Community Planning Board – 19 December 2018

The Group **AGREED** to recommend the following:

- Developing Community Partnerships – i) Updates from Chairs; and ii) Update from Chief Officers' Group, including Community Partnership resourcing, the community engagement posts funded by the Aspiring Communities Fund, and the outputs from the Community Partnerships Conference on 16 November 2018. **CP  
Chairs/CP  
Subgroup**
- Community Asset Reviews **PM**
- Proposed Breakthrough Achievement – Single Use Plastics **GH**
- Local Governance Review **AC**

##### Chief Officers Group – February 2019

It having been suggested that there was a need for a discussion/information-sharing on the implications of Brexit, the Director of Development and Infrastructure, Highland Council, highlighted that a Brexit event was scheduled to take place in the Council Chamber on 30 November 2018, an invitation to which would be extended to partners.

The Group **AGREED** the following items and that, given the timescales in relation to Brexit, the meeting be brought forward to January: **MM**

- Draft Dementia Strategy for Highland **BP**
- Presentation on the role of creativity and culture in regeneration and talent attraction/retention in Highland **IM/SB**
- Discussion on the implications of Brexit/feedback from the event on 30 November 2018 **All partners/  
SB**
- HOIP Delivery Group Updates **Delivery  
Group  
Leads  
PM**
- Community Asset Reviews **PM**

It was further **AGREED** that the following item be postponed to the April COG:

- CivTech: harnessing new technologies to improve public sector services **GH**

At the conclusion of business the Chair, on behalf of the COG, thanked Steve Barron, Chief Executive, Highland Council, for his contribution in his various roles and wished him well in his retirement.

She added that she would be stepping down as Chief Executive of NHS Highland at the end of the year, and thanked officers for their support over the years. David Oxley, Director of Business and Sector Development, HIE, would commence his term as Chair of the COG on 1 January 2019.

The meeting ended at 12.00 noon.