

Agenda Item	13.
Report No	CLH 23/19

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Care, Learning and Housing

Date: 14 March 2019

Report Title: Care and Learning Improvement Planning Framework

Report By: Interim Director of Care and Learning

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the service improvement model that has been in place for some time and has been used to determine outcomes, identify improvement priorities and quality assure the work around the planning for Highlands' children. The Council is considering a new corporate approach to performance improvement that makes the connections with the Council Programme, and budget strategy at its meeting in March 2019. This would mean adapting the current model of improvement planning. Several strategic improvement priorities being considered at the Council meeting in March relate to children and young people.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the information provided in this report.

3. Background

- 3.1 In February 2014 The Scottish Government passed the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill. The Bill places duties on public bodies to coordinate the planning, design and delivery of services for children and young people with a focus on improving wellbeing outcomes, and report collectively on how they are improving those outcomes.
- 3.2 For Highlands Children 4 (FHC4) is the integrated Children's Service Plan which responded to the requirements of this legislation.
- 3.3 FHC4 is a five year plan which completes its cycle during 2019.
- 3.4 For Highlands Children 5 (FHC5) is due to be published later this year and any changes to the current improvement model outlined within this report in relation to planned service redesign within Care and Learning will be reflected in FHC5. This will also take into account any corporate approaches agreed by the Council to improving performance, to be discussed at the Council meeting in March 2019. This highlights the need for a consistent approach to improving performance across all Council services, making the connections with the wider Council programme and budget strategy. This means considering not only service quality and outcomes but also cost and efficiency and ensuring that self-evaluation is robust, draws on a range of data, including benchmarking performance and cost, and is validated.
- 3.5 The [report to Council in March 2019](#) also includes several proposed strategic improvement priorities that relate directly to services for children and young people, as well as others that apply to all Council services including those for children and young people. They are listed at Appendix 1. If agreed at Council, these will have corporate support and enhanced scrutiny at senior officer and member levels. They will be reflected in FHC5 and the current improvement planning framework described below will be adapted.

4. Current Improvement Planning Framework

- 4.1 FHC4 outlines a service improvement model to determine outcomes, identify improvement priorities and quality assure the work of the Care and Learning Service.
- 4.2 The achievement of better outcomes for Highlands's children, their families and the communities in which they live is at the heart of our improvement planning framework and the improvement framework takes an outcomes based approach.
- 4.3 The outcomes articulated within the framework are designed to consider the ways in which;
 - Children and young people receive the help and support they need to optimise their well-being at every stage.
 - Children and young people get the best start in life and enjoy positive, rewarding experiences growing up.
 - Children and young people benefit from clear protocols, procedures and effective systems for recording observations and concerns which take account of best practice in information-sharing.

4.4 The outcomes relate to the impact of services on the well-being of children and young people using the SHANARRI indicators. It focuses on their experiences and the extent to which their lives and life opportunities will be enhanced to ensure they are;

- Safe
- Healthy
- Achieving
- Nurtured
- Active
- Respected and Responsible
- Included

4.5 The current outcomes are :

1. Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.
2. Children are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves safe.
3. Young people and families live in increasingly safer communities where anti-social and harmful behaviour is reducing.
4. Children and young people experience healthy growth and development.
5. Children and young people make well-informed choices about healthy and safe lifestyles.
6. Children and young people are equipped with the skills, confidence and self-esteem to progress successfully in their learning and development.
7. Children and young people are supported to achieve their potential in all areas of development.
8. Children and young people thrive as a result of nurturing relationships and stable environments.
9. Families receive support, advice and guidance which is well-matched to their needs and available in ways which helps them to prepare for the various developmental stages.
10. Children and young people are physically active.
11. Children and young people know their rights and are confident in exercising these. They are able to express their views and be involved meaningfully in decisions which affect them.
12. Families are valued as important contributors and work as equal partners to ensure positive outcomes for their children and young people.
13. Children, young people and their families are supported well to develop the strengths and resilience needed to overcome any inequalities they experience.
14. Children, young people and families are enabled to tell us what they think about services and the community in which they live, and improvement is determined with their involvement and by understanding their views, wishes, and expectations

5. The Planning Process

5.1 Through an agreed improvement planning process, fourteen themed improvement groups currently drive forward the improvement agenda. The membership of the improvement groups, include officers from Highland Council, NHS Highland, SCRA, Police Scotland, elected members, Head Teachers and third sector partners.

5.2 There is currently elected member representation on the Play, Young Carers, Mental Health, Youth work and Equalities groups.

There are groups for:

- Schools
- Early Years
- Child Protection
- LAC
- Youth Action
- Mental Health
- Additional Support Needs
- Young Carers
- Play
- Youth Work
- Equalities
- Supporting Parents
- Practice model

5.3 A leadership group currently overviews the on-going work of the improvement groups. This group has broad membership, including lead officers from Highland Council and NHS Highland, SCRA and Police Scotland. In addition there are staff representatives from NHS Highland and Highland Council and third sector partners.

5.4 Across the leadership and improvement groups a clear articulation of the relationship between them has been developed. This enables the strategic thinking to be determined by the leadership group and places an emphasis on improvement planning within the improvement groups. To facilitate this, the chairs of each improvement group are members of the leadership group.

6. Self-evaluation

6.1 Improvement groups use a self-evaluative approach to identifying priorities for improvement. This approach considers three key questions: How good are we now? How do we know? And What do we plan to do next? The process also describes how children and young people, their parents and carers and other stakeholders are consulted with.

6.2 Self-evaluation is central to continuous improvement. It is a reflective process through which improvement groups for services for children and young people get to know how well they are doing and identify the best way to improve their services.

This model:

- Encourages reflection upon practice and identify strengths and areas for improvement
- Recognises the work which has a positive effect on the lives of children and their families
- Identifies where quality needs to be maintained, where improvement is needed.
- Allows services to inform stakeholders about the quality of services for children, young people and families

6.3 Self-evaluation is based on professional reflection, challenge and support and involves taking informed decisions about actions which result in clear benefits

for children, young people and families. It is a dynamic and continuous process. It establishes a baseline from which to plan to improve outcomes for children and promotes a collective commitment to set priorities for improvement.

- 6.4 Currently, each improvement Group works to a dynamic improvement plan with priorities identified through self-evaluation. Each plan uses a common format detailing outcomes for children, specific actions, the timescale for each action and the ways in which the priorities are evaluated. The priorities in each plan show all current improvement priorities centred on the Key outcomes. The plans are monitored and updated regularly. Each plan is formally evaluated on an annual basis. Detailed improvement plans for each Improvement group are maintained on the For Highlands Children Website.

7. Performance Management

- 7.1 For Highlands Children 4 provides a performance framework for planning. The framework articulates the mechanism agreed for evaluating and measuring outcomes, responsibilities and timescales. Each of the performance measures outlined in the framework is owned by the improvement groups and where performance is of concern it is the responsibility of the group to articulate the action it is taking within its improvement plan.

8. Quality improvement

- 8.1 The Improvement Groups have adopted a quality improvement model, supported by Scottish Government funded improvement collaboratives. In addition, frontline staff and managers across a range of services are using this 'Model for Improvement' to accelerate change.
- 8.2 The National 'Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative' (CYPIC) continues to develop the method and culture for delivering improvement.
- 8.3 Working alongside the improvement groups there is a Supporting Improvement Co-ordination Group that has a key role in leading and driving forward this work. A series of quality Improvement learning networks have been established and three 6 month learning programmes were undertaken last year. The programmes provided an opportunity for a total of twenty participants to develop skills to support the use of improvement methodology and build capacity within services.

9. Implications

- 9.1 The new approach to performance improvement across the Council, to be considered at the Council meeting in March, makes explicit connections between performance improvement and budget strategy. This means focusing not only on improving quality and outcomes but also on cost and efficiency. New processes for supporting and scrutinising improvement priorities for children and young people would be put in place, affecting the current arrangements for improvement planning as described in this report.

9.2 There are no new legal, community (equality, poverty and rural), climate change/carbon clever, risk or Gaelic implications arising from this report as it does not report on outcomes and makes no proposals to change in service provision. However, the new framework will be required to address these implications.

Designation: Interim Director of Care and Learning

Date: 5 March 2019

Author: Ian Kyle, Children's Planning Manager

**Proposed strategic improvement priorities relating to children and young people,
to be discussed at the Council meeting in March 2019**

1. Improve educational attainment for all groups and reduce the attainment gap for young people from deprived areas.
2. Improve the sustainability of education provision by: increasing support to Head Teachers; rebasing school staffing allocations to be transparent and in line with national standards; delivering best value; upgrading and replacing school buildings, introducing more efficient working practices; and improved budget management.
3. Transform the approach to supporting children with additional needs adopting a whole system approach to wellbeing and inclusion organised in school clusters and with partner and community support.
4. Improve outcomes for looked after children and young people and achieve better value from resources to support them.
5. Significantly reduce the end to end process for people applying to be foster carers and increase the number of foster carers and adoptive parents in Highland.
6. Extend free child care across the region to support families, invest in new facilities, achieve best value and embed early years services within the school system to improve outcomes.
7. Improve home/school transport provision, reducing associated costs and carbon emissions.
8. Work with NHS Highland to continue to shift the balance of care to more community settings and to improve the arrangements and outcomes for young adults with care needs transitioning to NHS care and support.

Improvement priorities that affect all Council services, including those for children and young people:

9. Deliver meaningful engagement with Highland communities, listening and responding to what we hear and encourage more community activity and community run services.
10. Deliver a change programme based on the four budget strategy themes of: making the Council more efficient, commercialisation and income generation, redesign and improvement and flexible and well managed workforce.
11. Improve Council performance with the right staff in the right place with the right skills through effective workforce planning including training and development, wellbeing support, performance management and appraisal, transition, sustainability, flexibility and redeployment.
12. Improve staff attendance and reduce costs associated with covering absence.
13. Improve budget management and expenditure controls.