

**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 Thursday 23 January 2020 at 2.00 pm.

**Present:**

**Representing the Highland Council**

**(HC):**

Ms A Clark

**Representing the Scottish Government**

**(SG):**

Ms M Ross Grey (Substitute)

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

Mr D Oxley

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

Mr G Neville

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

Mr S Walsh

**Representing the Community Justice Partnership (CJP):**

Mr N MacLennan

**Representing NHS Highland (NHS):**

Ms C Steer

**Supporting the Chief Officers Group:**

Ms E Johnston

Mr P Mascarenhas

**Representing Police Scotland (PS):**

Ch Supt G Macdonald

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

Mr R Middlemiss

**In attendance:**

Mr I Kyle, Chair, Community Learning, Development and Engagement Delivery Group  
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Highland Council

**Mr D Oxley in the Chair**

**Business**

**Action**

**1. Introductions and Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr G Moir, Mr S Black, Ms L Weber, Mr J Gibbs, Mr I Donald, Mr I Stewart, Dr D Mackinnon, Mr S Sheridan and Mr D MacBeath.

## 2. **Note of previous Meeting**

The Note of the Meeting of the Chief Officers Group held on 14 November 2019 was **APPROVED**.

## 3. **Update on preparations for/impact of leaving the European Union**

A verbal update was provided during which it was explained that the main reason behind the standing item was concern regarding a no deal scenario. However, it was now known that there was a deal and Britain would leave the EU on 31 January 2020. There had been no discussions regarding a trade deal as yet, and HIE in particular would take a keen interest in that.

From a resilience planning perspective, the national structures that had been put in place had been suspended and, depending on the outcome of discussions regarding a trade deal, it was likely they would not be reinstated until there was clarity in terms of any potential outcomes. Similarly, most Scottish Government groups had been stood down or were meeting less frequently. It was therefore now a matter of awaiting further developments.

The Group **NOTED** the position.

## 4. **Community Asset Reviews**

The Community and Democratic Engagement Manager, Highland Council, provided a brief verbal update during which it was explained that a useful session had taken place in Portree in December, comprising Elected Members, community representatives and a variety of Council officers including planning officers. Arising from the session was a desire to have an accelerated version of the Fort William 2040 process for Portree, and Malcolm MacLeod, the Council's Executive Chief Officer with geographical responsibility for Skye, had been in discussion with Scottish Government planners in that regard. The group saw a Community Asset Review as a component part of the process. However, what they were talking about was much broader. Two key issues that had arisen were the location of the oil tanks at the pier, which were seen as hindering development of the village, and the missing link in the Portree Link Road, which was of particular pertinence to the emergency services.

In relation to Caithness, which was the other initial area of focus, a further meeting was awaited and there was no further progress to report at this stage.

Following discussion, during which support was expressed for the proposed way forward in Portree, and the need for Community Asset Reviews to be a component part of all place

planning initiatives was emphasised, the Group **NOTED** the position.

## **5. Community Learning and Development Re-inspection Report**

There had been circulated, for consideration and discussion, the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Re-inspection Report by Education Scotland.

In introducing the report, the Chair of the Community Learning, Development and Engagement Delivery Group, commented that HM Inspectors continued to be happy with CLD delivery in Highland. However, they were of the view that insufficient progress had been made in terms of strategic leadership. The decision to route CLD through Community Partnerships as opposed to the traditional Council delivery model had been a challenging one. However, there were clear opportunities and benefits identified. The next steps were critical, and it was highlighted that there were now five CLD networks in operation.

The report referred to the need to align what was happening within Community Partnerships to what was happening strategically, and key to that was the new Partnership Coordinating Group (PCG) which comprised Community Partnership Chairs and HOIP Delivery Group Chairs, and which had met for the first time last week. That connection was welcomed and had already paid dividends in terms of increasing understanding of the issues and what people's responsibilities were. Going forward, it was necessary to remind and encourage Community Partnership Chairs to take advantage of the resources that had been developed and the support that was available, particularly from Fiona Richardson, CLD Support Officer, High Life Highland.

The Acting Head of Policy, Highland Council, added that the Inspectors recognised that there was a strong commitment to CLD at a strategic level. However, there was a disconnect between that and what was happening operationally, and there was a need to ensure clear messages of purpose and direction. Communication was therefore key as the CPP moved forward with its new arrangements.

Following discussion on the Highland CLD model, during which it was recognised that it was new and time was needed to evidence the impact it was having, the Group **NOTED** the CLD Re-inspection Report.

## **6. Community Planning Board Minutes**

The draft Minutes of the Community Planning Board on 18 December 2019 were **NOTED**.

## 7. Proposed agenda items for the Community Planning Board on 28 February 2020

The Group **AGREED** the following:

- Developing Community Partnerships - Updates from Chairs (standing item)
- Report on the outcomes of the Aspiring Communities Project
- Community Planning Partnership Development update, including progress re the identification of an independent Chair
- Update on potential opportunities to access CashBack for Communities funding to support CPP priorities
- Highland Council Best Value Assurance Report

**CP Chairs**

**RM/EdW  
COG  
Subgroup**

**Partnership  
Coordinating  
Group  
EJ**

In relation to the standing item on preparations for/impact of leaving the European Union, it was **AGREED** that it be paused until further information was available.

**Board Chair/  
relevant  
partners**

In relation to Community Asset Reviews, it was **AGREED** that an update was not required at the February Board, and that it no longer needed to be a standing item. It was further suggested that, in future, it should become about how place-based planning was progressing in Highland.

**Board  
Chair/PM**

On the point being raised, it was **AGREED** that it would be useful, at a future meeting of the Board, to have an update on the climate emergency and the associated adaptation plan for Highland.

**Board  
Chair/GN**

It was highlighted that, in terms of the new CPP arrangements, the focus of the February Board should be priority-setting for the forthcoming year. However, given that there was still work to be done around evidence gaps, it was **AGREED** that priority-setting should take place at the June Board.

**Board Chair**

In terms of governance, it was suggested that, in future, there should be standing items on updating the HOIP, HOIP Delivery Plans and Locality Plans.

Discussion took place on whether it was intended to continue to have CPP Breakthrough Achievements, during which it was suggested that, going forward, these should not be articulated as breakthrough achievements but core priorities/areas of focus identified during the priority-setting process. It was further suggested that suicide prevention, which was the subject of the most recent breakthrough achievement, might continue to be an area of focus. The need for supporting data was recognised and it was highlighted that the outcome of research work on suicide should be available for the June Board.

The Acting Head of Policy and the Corporate Audit and Performance Manager spoke to the findings of the Council's Best Value Assurance Report which, it was highlighted, contained a specific recommendation that the CPP should increase the pace in developing the remaining locality plans in line with the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act. It was explained that it had been agreed that 25 locality plans were needed in Highland, due to its geography, whereas other others might only have two or three. Nevertheless, the auditors had been critical of the slow progress that had been made and it was necessary to discuss, at the February Board, how to pick up the pace of delivery.

## **8. Community Planning Governance Update**

Representatives of the Community Planning Partnership Development Subgroup provided verbal updates on progress in taking forward the decisions of Board on 18 December 2019.

In relation to identifying an Independent Chair, this was scheduled for discussion at the next meeting of the Subgroup.

The Partnership Coordinating Group (PCG) had had a positive first meeting which had focussed on the HOIP Delivery Plans and what was missing from a Community Partnership perspective with a view to improving links between local and strategic priorities. The next meeting would focus on local plan priorities. Key performance measures was another critical area and the PCG would report back to the June Board in that respect. Going forward, it was considered that it would be a good forum for improving performance management and ensuring good structures were in place to report to the Board, as well as developing approaches to shared training and understanding learning across the partnership.

With regard to the Risk Register, the format had been agreed and Ch Supt Macdonald had undertaken to prepare a first draft based on the discussions that had taken place and circulate it to the Subgroup. A small number of key risks had been identified to begin with which included:

- failure to engage effectively in terms of the Board and Community Partnerships;
- non-delivery of key priorities;
- the commitment of partners in terms of representation, drive and ownership;
- knowledge of information gaps; and
- communication regarding community planning in its broadest sense.

A further meeting would take place in mid-February at which the

risks would be scored and ragged appropriately. Thereafter, it was intended to look at some potential operational risks where there were blockers or challenges in terms of delivery of key themes, and these would also feature in the risk register going forward. It was confirmed that the draft Risk Register would form part of the Community Planning Partnership Development update report to the Board on 28 February 2020.

Detailed discussion ensued, particularly in relation to how the Risk Register would be maintained and the process for escalation of issues by Community Partnerships. The need for the Board to review the Register on a regular basis was emphasised, and it was suggested that it would be good practice to carry out a thorough annual review of the key risks. It was also suggested that a number of the updates to the Register would come from the PCG, so it could be a standing item on the PCG agenda. In addition, it had been agreed at the PCG that it would be helpful to have a standing item on the Board agenda whereby the Community Partnership representative on the Board would provide feedback, including any emerging risks.

In relation to the Small Grants Budget, HTSI had agreed to administer the funding and further information would be provided at the next Board in terms of how that would work in practice. It was recognised that there was some urgency in terms of getting the funding for the current financial year in place.

With regard to the filling of vacant Community Partnership Chair posts, it was explained that NHS Highland had identified a Chair for Badenoch and Strathspey Community Partnership, and this would be formally agreed by the NHS Highland Board at its meeting on 28 January. The new Chair would then meet with the outgoing SFRS Chair, Derek Wilson, for a handover. Appointments and promotions were taking place within SFRS on Monday 3 February, and someone would be appointed as Chair of East Ross Community Partnership at that time. SFRS would then start working on developing Lochaber Community Partnership and, following expected retirements and further appointments in May, someone would be appointed to take forward CLD.

In relation to community engagement training, the Chief Officer, HTSI, had confirmed that HTSI was happy to deliver it and had come back with a proposal which would be circulated to the Subgroup. It was intended to deliver 10 dates (20 half day sessions), one in each Community Partnership area initially, at a cost of £50 per session to cover admin and materials - £1000 in total. There would be additional costs for venues, depending on availability of partner premises. The proposal would be presented to the Board on 28 February for approval.

On the point being raised, it was confirmed that there would not

be a set tenure for Community Partnership Chairs and it would be a matter for the responsible organisation to appoint a new Chair as and when required.

Discussion took place on the need to review the arrangements for chairing the Community Justice Partnership (CJP). It was suggested that there might be merit in adopting the same arrangements as the Community Planning Board – ie extending the tenure to 18 months. However, going forward, the same organisation should not Chair both the Board and the CJP at the same time. The Group **AGREED** that the Chair of the CJP should seek the views of the CJP and come back to the June Board with recommendations.

**NM**

The Group otherwise **NOTED** the various updates.

At the conclusion of the meeting, given that the new Partnership Coordinating Group was now operational, it was **AGREED** that this would be the final meeting of the Chief Officers Group. It had been a useful and important forum but things had now moved on and the new structure was more fit for purpose. The Chair thanked partners for their attendance and contribution over the years.

The meeting ended at 2.55 pm.