

Agenda Item	7.
Report No	CPB 04/20

## **Highland Community Planning Board**

**Date:** 5 November 2020

**Report Title:** Integrated Children's Services Plan 2020

**Report By:** Head of Integrated Children's Services – The Highland Council

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report provides an update to the board on the progress made in developing the latest iteration of the Integrated Children's Service plan (ICS).
- 1.2 The report provides assurance to the board that the delay in publishing this report is in line with Scottish Government guidance allowing partnerships to consider the impact of the current Covid19 pandemic within the plan.
- 1.3 The report outlines the revised timeline for publication of the ICSP in April 2021.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
  - i. Note the work undertaken by the Integrated children's service plan board in progressing the plan.
  - ii. Note the decision to route this plan through the community planning partnership board in line with Scottish Government advice.
  - iii. Note the revised timeline for publication of the ICS in April 2021

### **3. Background and Context**

- 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. For Highlands Children 4 (FHC4) is the current integrated Children's Service Plan which responded to the requirements of this legislation.
- 3.2 FHC4 is a five year plan which completes its cycle during 2020. This plan continues to provide the backdrop for current partnership working and has been subject to significant review over the last two years.

- 3.3 In December 2019, Scottish Government wrote to each of the strategic leads for ICS planning issuing new guidance to support the development of ICS plans across Scotland. This guidance determined that ICS plans should be embedded within Community Planning Partnerships.
- 3.4 The Community planning partnership is currently reflecting on the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and its impact upon communities including children, young people and families. Our needs assessment work in developing our latest integrated children's service plan needs to take cognisance of the impact of the pandemic and our priorities for improvement require to be reflected in what has been learnt in recent months.
- 3.5 In August 2020, Scottish Government wrote out to strategic leads for ICS planning recognising that the impact of the pandemic would result in an inevitable delay in meeting requirements to publish the plan by April 2020. They advised that partnerships could provide an update on progress in developing the plan by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 with a view to publication by April 2021.

#### **4 Developing the plan**

- 4.1 Over the last 18 months considerable work has been undertaken to draft the next iteration of the Highland Integrated Children's services plan. We are currently in a transition period where the pre-existing framework for integrated children's services planning is being replaced with a framework which is aligned to the Highland Community Planning partnership.
- 4.2 An integrated children's services plan board has been established to develop the new plan and is currently meeting monthly. The board membership includes partners from Highland Council, NHS Highland, Police Scotland and a range of other local and national bodies including the Highland Third sector interface.
- 4.3 The new plan is being developed in line with the Scottish government guidance for partnerships issued in December 2019.
- 4.4 The plan outlines what partners are doing to ensure that services are integrated for service users including children, young people, and families, that we make the best use of resources and are meeting our aims to safeguard, support and promote wellbeing, early intervention and prevention.
- 4.5 The plan sets out a clear, ambitious shared vision of what will be achieved by the end of the plan and has been developed to ensure it reflects relevant National Performance Framework Outcomes and incorporates a robust evidence-based joint strategic needs assessment. It includes analysis of quantitative and qualitative evidence and data relating to both service performance and child wellbeing. It Sets clear indicators for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of children's services in terms of their success in responding to and addressing children's wellbeing needs.

#### **5 Reporting and Governance**

- 5.1 The Children's Services Plan is set within a complex planning and reporting landscape and has links to a number of other planning responsibilities and reports. In particular, our Community Planning Partnership Plan (The Highland Outcome Improvement Plan)

includes ambitions that seek to improve wellbeing and life chances for children and young people. Our Children's Services Plan assists partners to achieve these aspirations. In addition, the understanding of local needs and circumstances that are developed to inform the HOIP and Locality Plans, also underpin the strategic needs assessment. For this reason the latest iteration of the integrated children's services plan for Highland is significantly different from previous iterations of the plan in that governance for the plan is routed through the Highland Community Planning Partnership.

Highland Community Planning Partnership brings together public agencies, third sector organisations and other key community groups to work collaboratively with the people of Highland to deliver better outcomes.

## **6 Links with the Highland Outcome Improvement plan**

- 6.1 The Highland Outcome improvement Plan 2017—2027 (HOIP) is focused on working together to reduce inequalities in Highland and outlines our aspirations for Highland and the specific actions we will undertake to deliver them. It was developed following extensive engagement with communities across Highland.
- 6.2 The HOIP's main ambition is to tackle the issues that lead to inequalities, to make the Highlands a fairer place, so that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of our region. We endeavour to do this by listening to our communities and working with them to make Highland an even better place to live, work and play.
- 6.3 Whilst the aspiration of the Highland integrated children's services plan are consistent with those of the HOIP plan it is recognised that there are distinct features of partnership planning for children, young people and their families which requires a distinct planning infrastructure.
- 6.4 The plan is being developed through embedding children's rights articulated within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The participation of children and young people is central to both the development of the plan and determining future priorities for improvement. That evidence for our priorities for improvement are established through improved processes for needs assessment and that performance management is central to improvement and that evidence of impact should be evidenced through improved use of data.

## **7 Proposed Structure**

- 7.1 The plan reflects the values and principles of Getting it right for every child. It places individual children at its centre, and considers services and support for those children individually, support for their wider families community assets and more specialist services.
- 7.2 The plan articulates where partnership working improves outcomes for children, young people and their families. Individual services will have their own plans and where partnership working would enhance the priorities of discrete service plans they are included within our priorities
- 7.3 Where pre-existing partnership groups exist, these have been brought into the integrated children's service plan framework to provide oversight and governance. These includes the Highland Child Protection Committee, The Corporate Parenting Board and Highland drug and alcohol Partnership.

- 7.4 Pre-existing HOIP delivery groups have discreet sub groups for integrated children's services including those with a focus on poverty and Mental Health. These provide a partnership place to develop a coherent approach to child poverty and to determine a whole system approach to mental Health.
- 7.5 The Integrated children's planning board have also established two discrete groups to progress planning around equalities and children's rights and the transition from childhood to adulthood.

## **8 Timeline for completion**

- 8.1 The integrated children's services board are currently meeting monthly to finalise our refreshed needs assessment in relation to the pandemic and to refine our priorities for improvement taking due consideration of the impact of Covid 19 on our children, young people and communities. It is anticipated that this work will be completed early in 2021 and will be signed off through the community planning board with a publication date of April 2021.

Designation: Head of integrated children's services – The Highland Council

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> October 2020