

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Health, Social Care and Wellbeing** held **remotely** on Thursday 12 November 2020 at 10.30am.

Present:

Mrs J Barclay	Mrs D Mackay
Mr B Boyd	Mrs I Mackenzie
Mrs I Campbell	Mrs L Munro
Miss J Campbell (sub for Mr W Mackay)	Mrs M Paterson
Mrs M Cockburn	Mr D Rixson
Mrs M Davidson	Mr K Rosie
Mr J Finlayson	Ms E Roddick
Mr A Jarvie	Mr C Smith
Mr D Louden	Miss N Sinclair

Non Members also present:

Mr R Bremner	Mr J McGillivray
Mr A Christie	Ms A MacLean
Mr A Henderson	Mr D Macpherson

Participating Officials:

Mrs D Manson, Chief Executive
Mrs F Malcolm, Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care
Ms K Ralston, Head of Children's Services and Chief Social Work Officer
Mr I Kyle, Head of Improvement and Performance
Mr B Porter, Head of Support Services
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator
Ms F MacBain, Committee Administrator

Also in attendance:

Mr S Steer, Director of Adult Social Care, NHS Highland

**An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council.
All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to Committee.**

Linda Munro in the Chair

BUSINESS

Preliminaries – amendment to order of business

In accordance with Standing Order 8, the Committee **AGREED** that Item 6 be considered as a private item at the end of the agenda.

Preliminaries – Good New Stories

- i. **Connecting Scotland** was a Scottish Government programme set up in response to coronavirus. Phase 1 (April – July 2020) had focused on those who were at risk of isolation due to coronavirus because they were in the extremely high vulnerability group ('shielding') or the higher risk of severe illness group. Phase 2 had launched on 18 August 2020 and focused on households with children, or where a child was normally resident, including pregnant women with no child in the household, and care leavers up to the age of twenty-six (in line with eligibility for aftercare support). Organisations working with people in the target groups for Phase 2 were able to apply for devices to distribute and the Highland Council had successfully bid for 308 Chromebooks and 302 iPads – a total of 610 devices, which would be allocated for 111 young care leavers and 499 families;
- ii. **Highland Champs Event** - Clachnaharry, young people with care experience and members of Highland Champs had met at Bught Park to enjoy an outdoor adventure day on Sunday 1 November 2020;
- iii. The transfer of **Home Farm Care Home** from HC-One to NHS Highland had been agreed, with NHS Highland formally taking ownership of the care home from Monday 2 November 2020;
- iv. **Echo Sessions** - the next series in Staff Wellbeing and Resilience through Covid started the week following the meeting;
- v. **Statement from a Care Experienced Young Person**; and
- vi. Speech and Language Therapy team's '**Words up Wednesdays**' was a new book which highlighted a collection of stories from across the Scottish education system, showcasing some of the most innovative, effective and impactful examples of learning during lockdown.

The Chair welcomed the good news and praised the hard work that had gone into the achievements, especially during a pandemic crisis.

The Committee **NOTED** the Good News Stories.

1. **Apologies for Absence** **Leisgeulan**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr W Mackay.

2. **Declarations of Interest** **Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

The Committee **NOTED** the following declaration of interest:

Item 9 – Ms L Munro (financial)

3. **Presentation: Green Health, Ailsa Villegas, NHS Highland** **Taisbeanadh: Slàinte Uaine, Ailsa Villegas, NHS na Gàidhealtachd**

The Green Health Partnership in Highland aimed to develop opportunities and build on existing resources to support individuals and communities to improve their physical and mental health, and wellbeing and resilience, through engaging with and appreciating the natural environment.

A presentation was provided outlining the aims and achievements of projects to reach people who rarely or never engaged with the outdoors. The benefits of spending time in the natural environment were summarised and a survey was underway to understand the socio-economic factors influencing people's behaviour. Work with partners was ongoing to improve greenspace provision.

During discussion, the following main points were considered:-

- Members referred to the benefits they had experienced from the outdoors and various kinds of outdoor exercise and several offered to submit photos of themselves enjoying the outdoors as 'Green Health Champions' for the Communications Team to use to promote such activities;
- attention was drawn to local groups working at ward level and with schools helping people to get outdoors. Local initiatives could be added to the Green Partnership directory;
- it was important that outdoor learning was encouraged in education and it was hoped steps could be taken to reduce the bureaucracy around consent and risk assessments which could be time-consuming and discourage teachers from taking children outdoors;
- teenagers could be a difficult group to reach and to encourage outdoors and it was hoped solutions to this could be found to get them out walking or cycling, noting there were charities which could help families to procure bikes. A summary was provided of initiatives undertaken to encourage teenagers to use outdoor spaces during school breaks;
- some outdoor charities such as Cycling without Age had been forced to stop or reduce activity due to Covid-19;
- consideration was being given to the provision of 'free parts' play in play parks, and to the provision of a public facing weblink to allow people to easily source their nearest green space;
- there was guidance online for care homes and 'bringing the outdoors in' projects, and reference was made to a case study on improving outdoor access for care home residents;
- stakeholder events on social prescriptions would be starting the following week; and
- the next steps would be further discussed with the Chair outwith the meeting.

The Committee **NOTED** the presentation and **AGREED**:-

- i. the Chair discuss the next steps with the Highland Green Health Partnership Senior Development Officer; and
- ii. the Council's Communications Team be asked to contact Members of the Committee who might be willing to submit photos of themselves enjoying the outdoors.

4. Violence Against Women Partnership Com-pàirteachas Fòirneart An Aghaidh Bhoireannach

**Presentation by James Maybee, Principal Officer (Criminal Justice Services)
Taisbeanadh le James Maybee, Prìomh Oifigear (Seirbheisean Ceartas Eucoirean)**

There had been circulated Report No HSW/15/20 dated 7 October 2020 by the Interim Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

A presentation covered the definition of violence against women, with some key statistics on its prevalence and the impact of Covid in recent months. The structure and aims of the VAW Partnership were outlined and a summary was provided on the work being undertaken in social work, with reference to the Safe and Together model, an internally recognised suite of tools to help inform professionals in this area which had been considered by the Chief Officer Public Protection Group in 2019. Resources were a key issue if the Safe and Together model was to be implemented.

During discussion, the following main issues were considered:-

- information was sought on whether there were sufficient resources to support victims of violence, especially in rural areas, with concerns that funding was being reduced. These concerns would be addressed in the 2021-24 Plan;
- rather than teaching young girls how to stay safe, as had been the focus in the past, it was important the emphasis shifted to teaching all young people about consent;
- recent statistics suggested Highland experienced higher levels of domestic violence than the average for Scottish Local Authorities and information on the reasons for this would be helpful;
- Inverness Women's Aid had been in existence for over forty years and it was hoped lessons could be learned from their valuable experience;
- noting the importance of early intervention and prevention of violence, reference was made to Education initiatives to help teach consent, such as Safe, Strong, Free, and further consideration of the content of Personal and Social Education in schools was required to ensure it was appropriate and up to date (this was to be considered further by the Council's Education Committee);
- more information was required on the impact and implications of the Covid-19 crisis;
- in rural locations victims of domestic violence often had fewer choices of places to escape to;
- safe spaces could make more use of technology and virtual support;
- an ambition of this Committee was to involve all services across the Highlands to help reduce domestic violence and Members were urged to attend the training and make appropriate financial decisions in relation to supporting this vital service; and
- the Safer Together model would be further discussed outwith the meeting.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the content of the report and presentation and **AGREED** that a copy of this be circulated to the Committee;
- ii. **NOTED** the work of the partnership in progressing the national Equally Safe agenda and local plan resulting from this;
- iii. **NOTED** the statistical information about the HVAWP response to this matter throughout Covid-19; and

iv. **AGREED** the Safer Together model would be further discussed outwith the meeting by the Chair, the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care, Head of Children's Services (Operations), and the Principal Officer (Criminal Justice Services).

5. Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing A' Toirt Taic do Shlàinte Inntinn agus Sunnd

There had been circulated Report No HCW/16/20 dated 4 November 2020 by the Interim Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

The Chief Executive summarised the report, which detailed two Scottish Government grants, one for the development of community mental health and wellbeing services for 5 -24 year olds, their families and carers, and another which could be carried forward to 2021/22 in response to the increasing children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing issues arising as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The rationale behind choosing Caithness as a pathfinder project to inform a pan Highland approach was explained.

During discussion, the following main issues were considered:-

- the particular difficulties relating to mental health that had been experienced in Caithness in recent times were acknowledged and support was voiced for choosing Caithness as the pathfinder project, noting that many other areas of Highland experienced similar problems, and that the processes and learning from Caithness would be rolled out across the Highlands in future;
- the proposed 'whole system' approach was welcomed and it was further suggested a child-upwards approach should be adopted. It was important that services provided were determined with significant input from service users;
- the functioning of Community Planning Partnerships across Highland was erratic, with only some meeting regularly and functioning as intended;
- in relation to the age range for assistance of 5-24, it was important nobody was missed, noting that young people were moved from Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHs) to Adult Services at 18, and that not all children and young people attended school regularly and could miss out on school-based services. Service providers had to seek out the people who needed them;
- school based services allowed children the opportunity for peer support;
- it was vital that people with lived experience were invited to contribute to the 'mental health and well-being summit' proposed for February 2021;
- with regard to recruitment challenges that had been faced in Caithness and other areas of Highland, it was intended the whole system approach would help to remodel services to better meet needs, in partnership with other organisations and communities;
- many of the issues relating to children and schools would also be considered at the Education Committee the following week, and particular attention was drawn to the need to update Personal and Social Education;
- any new approach should link to models and practices already in place;
- the funding was welcomed and efforts should continue to obtain more;
- with reference to a conference the previous week on Adverse Childhood Experiences, attention was drawn to the importance of prevention and early

intervention on mental health issues, and turning adversity into positive action;

- work was ongoing with NHS Highland on efforts to improve the assessment process and waiting list for CAMHs, as part of the whole system improvement process which would feed into the proposed summit in February 2021;
- small improvements could sometimes make a significant difference to people, and it was important to engage with the public on this;
- one of the focus points of the pathfinder initiative would be to build on good mental health work that was already taking place and the importance of engaging with all Council staff on this area of work was emphasised;
- the importance of listening to the communities was emphasised, with flexibility and facilitation where required, as was the need to achieve some short time successes;
- close effective working with partners as well as communities and the young people most affected was vital;
- with regard to timescales for workshops, it was important to give clinicians at least six weeks' notice of required attendance to ensure clinical activity did not have to be cancelled. It was confirmed consideration would be given to evening events to provide flexibility and a special Area Committee meeting was planned before the end of the year with anticipated contribution from NHS Highland and other partners. It was important the professional views were taken on board as well as lived experience voices;
- creative ways of engaging with hard to reach young people were required;
- the Chief Executive voiced gratitude to the Chair of the Committee and all staff involved with the ACEs conference the previous week; and
- in summary, the Chair drew attention to the following aspirational paragraph from the report appendix: 'Every child and young person and their families or carers will get the help they need, when they need it, from people with the right knowledge, skills and experience to support them. This will be available in the form of easily accessible support close to their home, education, employment or community.'

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the report and the grants awarded;
- ii. **APPROVED** the approach set out in terms of convening a Mental Health Workshop to inform a whole systems approach and working with all services across the Council and with our Third Sector and community planning partners to achieve that;
- iii. pending the approach set out above being agreed in terms of a pan Highland approach, **APPROVED** some initial investment in Caithness by way of a pathfinder project to inform a pan Highland approach;
- iv. **AGREED** to hold a Mental Health and Wellbeing summit in February 2021 as set out in paragraph 6.2 of the report; and
- v. **AGREED** that immediate actions be taken in Caithness as set out in paragraph 6.3 of the report.

7. **Integrated Children's Services Plan 2020 Plana Seirbheisean Amalaichte Chloinne 2020**

There had been circulated Report No HSW/18/20 dated 6 October 2020 by the Interim Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following main issues were considered:-

- this report was an interim progress update and the draft Plan would be presented to the Committee in February 2021. As it was generally considered that December was not an ideal time to consult with children and young people, this would start in January 2021 and might not be completed in time for the February draft. Members were keen to understand the creative methods used to reach and engage with young people, particularly those who were care-experienced and who lived in remote and rural locations;
- concern was expressed that the ineffective functioning of some of the Community Planning Partnerships could impact on the progress with the Plan, which should be reported to every meeting of the Committee. The need for support for the community partnerships was emphasised, noting that those which were functioning well had dedicated staff resources, and the Chief Executive offered to discuss the resourcing requirements with the other statutory partners and report back on this to the Chair of the Committee;
- the Chair of the Community Planning Board spoke of the importance of the Council, NHS Highland, relevant third sector agencies, local community partnerships and other partners inputting into and signing off the Plan. Given the logistics of submitting it to several relevant committees, it might be more efficient to submit it directly to the full Council. Of key importance was how the Plan would be evaluated and held to account, and more information on this was required;
- key issues relating to the plan included having a robust planning process in place, clear articulation of responsibilities, a ragged system to track timelines, and a consistent approach to a performance management framework, noting that traction could be lost in complex planning environments;
- it was explained that this Plan would replace what would have been For Highland Children 5 and it was hoped the Plan would be a key focus of the community partnerships;
- at a recent meeting with the Highland third sector interface, the importance of engaging with young people at a time that best suited them had been clear, and further information was sought on the methods for obtaining feedback from young people and the various groups that represented them; and
- the importance of a whole system approach with communities at the centre was emphasised, as was the importance of effective relationships with partners.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the work undertaken by the Integrated Children's Service Plan Board in progressing the Plan;
- ii. **NOTED** the decision to route this Plan through the Community Planning Partnership Board in line with Scottish Government advice; and
- iii. **AGREED** the Chief Executive discuss the resourcing requirements of the Community Planning Partnerships with the other statutory partners and report back on this to the Chair of the Committee.

8. Revenue Budget Monitoring 2nd Quarter 2020/21
Sgrùdadh Buidseit Teachd-a-steach Ràith 2 2020/21

There had been circulated Report No HSW/19/20 dated 2 November 2020 by the Interim Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following main issues were considered:-

- various financial queries were raised including on the figures for residential care, foster care fees and electricity charges and these would be discussed in detail outwith the meeting. It was explained there was no budget for temporary agency worker fees as these were usually the result of vacancies and expenditure was balanced against vacancy savings;
- the layout and content of the report was welcomed, with particular reference to the budget glossary in Appendix 2, the recruitment of ten new social workers and the planned rebasing of the budget; and
- the Chair thanked officers for the recent useful financial training and urged Members to attend in the New Year if they had not already done so.

The Committee **NOTED** the revenue budget outturn forecast for the year.

9. Adult Social Care – Care Home Assurance Report
Cùram Sòisealta Inbheach – Aithisg Barantais Dachaigh-Cùraim

Ms L Munro declared a financial interest in this item as a Self-directed Support Specialist but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion

There had been circulated Report No HSW/20/20 dated 9 October 2020 by the Interim Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following main issues were considered:-

- the stress on the care home system due to Covid-19 was unprecedented, with eleven closed to admissions at present, this being a loss of around 60 beds. This was causing pressure on finances and on staff and unpaid carers;
- information was sought and provided on policies in place to ensure hygiene and infection control between patients and to deal with gaps in staffing due to staff having to self-isolate, with attention being drawn to the contingency plans all care homes required to have in place and to NHS Highland's rapid response team for emergency staff shortages;
- in response to a query about delays in care home staff receiving Covid-19 test results, the Director of Public Health would be asked to provide information to Members on this and other relevant test-related issues;
- care home inspections were still being carried out but were often virtual rather than in person;
- it was important to look after the safety and emotional well-being of care home staff, with many working under considerable additional pressure, and to value

- their important role. It was hoped the forthcoming national review of social care needs would focus on care workers, not only on social workers;
- the issue of dementia or other areas of mental incapacity which could make social distancing a challenge had been raised at the Committee in July 2020 and it was requested that future reports relating to adult social care assurance would cover this issue. It was explained that this was a challenging issue and assurance was provided on measures in place to ensure patients' rights were not compromised; and
 - in response to a query about the uptake of Self-Directed Support, a report on this would be presented to the Committee in February 2021.

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report and **AGREED**:-

- i. the Director of Public Health be asked to provide a brief summary for Members of the Covid-19 testing concerns, especially in relation to reported delays in test results;
- ii. the issue of dementia or other areas of mental incapacity which could make social distancing a challenge be covered in future reports relating to adult social care assurance; and
- iii. a report on Self-Directed Support be brought to the next meeting of the Committee on 10 February 2021 with NHS Highland to provide an input.

10. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

The following Minutes had been circulated and **NOTED**:-

- i. Highland Child Protection Committee held on 4 June 2020;
- ii. Highland Violence Against Women Partnership Group held on 15 June and 17 August 2020;
- iii. Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership held on 3 December 2019, 18 February 2020 and 26 May 2020;
- iv. Highland Community Justice Partnership held on 20 June 2020; and
- v. Highland Council/NHS Highland Joint Monitoring Committee held on 22 October 2020.

Close of Public Meeting

Karen Ralston, Head of Children's Services and Chief Social Work Officer, would be leaving the Council in December 2020, and Members thanked her for her hard work and professionalism during her time with the Council, wishing her well for the future.

Exclusion of the Public Às-dùnadh a' Phobail

The Committee **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting for Item 6 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 8 & 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

6. North Coast Care Facility
Goireas Cùraim a' Chost a Tuath

There had been circulated to Members only Report No HCW/17/20 dated 4 November 2020 by the Interim Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

Following discussion, the Committee **NOTED** the recommendations as set out in the report.

The meeting ended at 3.30pm