

Minutes of Meeting of the Community Planning Board held remotely on Wednesday 9 June 2021 at 9.30 am.

Present:

The Highland Council:

Councillor Alasdair Christie, Depute Leader

Carron McDiarmid, Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place (Substitute)

Highlands and Islands Enterprise:

Eann Sinclair, Area Manager – Caithness and Sutherland (also representing Community Partnerships)

NHS Highland:

Ann Clark, Vice Chair, NHS Highland Board

Pamela Dudek, Chief Executive

Tim Allison, Director of Public Health

Police Scotland:

Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett, Divisional Commander, Highland and Islands

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service:

Derek Wilson, Local Senior Officer

The Scottish Government:

Donna MacKinnon, Scottish Government Location Director

Community Partnership representative:

Eann Sinclair, Chair, Caithness Community Partnership (also representing HIE)

High Life Highland:

John West, Head of Culture (Substitute)

Highland Third Sector Interface:

Mhairi Wylie, Chief Officer

NatureScot:

Graham Neville, Area Manager (Northern Isles and North Highland)

Skills Development Scotland:

Stephen Sheridan, Regional Skills Planning Lead

University of the Highlands and Islands:

Chris O'Neil, Principal and Chief Executive, Inverness College UHI

In attendance:

Ian Kyle, Co-Chair, Community Learning, Development and Engagement Delivery Group
John West, Co-Chair, Community Learning, Development and Engagement Delivery Group
(also representing High Life Highland)
Lindsay Tulloch, Chair, Community Safety and Resilience Delivery Group
Cathy Steer, Chair, Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Group
Alison Clark, Chair, Poverty Reduction Delivery Group
Ross MacKillop, Chair, Community Justice Partnership
Debbie Stewart, Coordinator, Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership
Melanie Murray, Committee Administrator, The Highland Council

Mr A Christie in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Margaret Davidson, Donna Manson, Steve Walsh and Margaret Somerville.

2. Minutes of Meetings

The Board **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Community Planning Board held on 31 March 2021.

3. Action Tracker

The Board was asked to review progress of its agreed actions as set out in the Action Tracker which had been circulated.

In relation to Communications – Press and Public Awareness, the Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland, explained that partners' communications leads had met and produced an initial scoping paper. Further work was required, and it was intended to present a detailed report and recommendations to the September Board.

In relation to Proceeds of Crime Funding, the Chair of the Community Safety and Resilience Delivery Group explained that the funding was specifically for steering young people away from offending/reoffending, and it was necessary to consider whether there were any opportunities to fund initiatives in that regard. The Child Protection Committee had established a new sub-committee, looking at children and young people and drug and alcohol misuse, which it was hoped could explore how Proceeds of Crime Funding could be used to good advantage. The Chair suggested that a further update be provided at the next meeting.

The Board:

- i. **NOTED** the Action Tracker and the updates provided; and
- ii. **AGREED** that a further update on Proceeds of Crime Funding be provided at the next meeting of the Board.

4. Highland Integrated Children's Service Plan 2021-2023

There had been circulated Report No CPB/07/21 by the Head of Integrated Children's Services.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- the Chair commended the Highland Integrated Children's Service Plan (the Plan) and expressed thanks to all involved;
- in response to a question regarding the role of the Board going forward, it was explained that the Integrated Children's Service Plan Board, which oversaw the Plan, fed into the Community Planning Board. There was a statutory requirement to provide annual updates on the progress of the Plan, and these would be presented to the Community Planning Board prior to submission to the Scottish Government; and
- the Plan was an important document in terms of the position post-Covid, trying to give children in Highland the best possible life chances, and how partner agencies worked with families. The Board should be extremely interested in progress and whether the Plan was having an impact, and it was suggested that consideration be given to more frequent than annual reports to the Board.

The Board:

- i. **NOTED** the work undertaken by the Integrated Children's Service Plan Board in producing a draft of the Highland Integrated Children's Service Plan 2021–2023;
- ii. **AGREED** the Highland Integrated Children's Service Plan 2021-2023; and
- iii. **AGREED** that consideration be given to more frequent than annual reports to the Board on the progress of the Highland Integrated Children's Service Plan.

5. Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (HADP) Strategy 2020-2023

There had been circulated Report No CPB/08/21 by the HADP Coordinator.

In introducing the report, the HADP Coordinator explained that the HADP had been without a Chair for some time. However, an advertisement for an Independent Chair would be published in the next few weeks and it was hoped they would be in post by September when they would take up the role of reporting to the Board.

The Chair suggested that if the HADP needed any help publicising the opportunity for an Independent Chair the details be sent to the Board Administrator for distribution to partners.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- thanks were expressed to the HADP for the excellent workshop that had taken place for Board Members;
- information was sought, and provided, as to how it was intended to respond to the discussion points raised at the workshop, as set out in section 4 of the report. The Chair suggested that more detail in that regard, including timelines, be provided as part of the HADP annual report to the Board in September;
- collective effort was required to achieve the right outcomes at a local level;
- the Chief Executive, NHS Highland, confirmed that she was happy to liaise with the HADP Coordinator regarding the possibility of utilising a programme budgeting and marginal analysis approach, which was a fair and inclusive way of undertaking planning and resource distribution. However, it was quite labour intensive; and
- discussion took place as to how to incorporate drug and alcohol activity into the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, during which it was suggested that it was most closely aligned with the Community Safety and Resilience Delivery Group, which was looking to review its priorities. However, Members added that the HADP cut across a number of themes, particularly Poverty Reduction and Mental Health and Wellbeing,

and its role in the Partnership Coordinating Group would be key. Whilst it was recognised that the HOIP was a 10-year plan, it was suggested that the importance of the HADP should be recognised in an updated version of the strategic document as well as in the priorities within the specific themes. The Chair suggested that officers consider how to fully embed HADP activity in the HOIP and report back to the September Board.

The Board:

- i. **APPROVED** the HADP Strategy 2020-2023 as set out at Appendix 1 of the report;
- ii. **AGREED** that more detail as to how the points raised at the HADP Strategy workshop were being taken forward, including timelines, be provided as part of the HADP annual report to the Board in September; and
- iii. **AGREED** that consideration be given to how to fully embed HADP activity in the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, and that an update be provided at the September Board.

6. Brexit Update

There had been circulated Report No CPB/09/21 by the Area Manager – Caithness and Sutherland, HIE.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- in relation to the impact on trade, the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place, The Highland Council, highlighted that, despite the new arrangements that had been put in place to try to ease the way for the sector, the number of Export Health Certificates had decreased. She also provided an update on the Council's new responsibilities in respect of imported food and feed, explaining that Environmental Health and Trading Standards staff would be required to carry out documentary checks from October 2021 and physical inspections from January 2022. The Scottish Government was offering set-up funding which the Council had put in a bid for. However, the intention was that once the service was up and running it would be self-financing;
- with regard to the new funds that were intended to replace European funding, it was highlighted that the Council was submitting bids. However, it was considered unlikely that they would be successful given how local authority areas had been prioritised. Discussion ensued, during which Board Members expressed concern regarding the considerable loss of investment to the region. In response to a question, it was confirmed that, in parallel with the work being undertaken by the Council, collective work was underway to try to highlight the challenges with the new criteria and, in terms of the bids that were being worked up, it was necessary to provide a compelling narrative that emphasised the lifeline nature of Highland's roads and infrastructure;
- in relation to the impact on the labour market, it was difficult to disentangle the effects of Brexit and Covid, and it was hoped that the position would become clearer as Covid restrictions eased. The Regional Skills Planning Lead, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), highlighted that there were pockets of mismatch where the unemployment benefit claim count was rising significantly but there were also a substantial number of hard to fill vacancies. SDS was working hard, through the Employability Partnership and with the Department for Work and Pensions, to get to the bottom of what was happening at a local level, and the need for radical thinking and targeted interventions to support employers to recruit was emphasised. The Principal and Chief Executive, Inverness College UHI, added that it would be useful to know which sectors employers were having difficulty recruiting into so that provision could be tailored to support young

people into employment. It would be necessary to establish whether or not credit frameworks were available and to work quickly and closely with employers to come up with appropriate solutions. The Regional Skills Planning Lead, SDS, undertook to liaise with him in that regard; and

- the impacts of Brexit were going to be felt for some time and it was suggested that there should be a standing item on the Board agenda focussing on the three key areas, namely, trade, the labour market and structural funds.

The Board:

- i. **NOTED** the report; and
- ii. **AGREED** that the impacts of Brexit, particularly on trade, the labour market and structural funds, should be a standing item on the Board agenda.

7. Highland Outcome Improvement Plan – Performance Framework

There had been circulated Report No CPB/10/21 by the Delivery Group Chairs.

In introducing the report, the Chair of the Poverty Reduction Delivery Group highlighted that it was intended to add an indicator relating to drug deaths, which had yet to be defined, to the proposed indicators set out in the report.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- the complexities associated with measuring performance were recognised;
- there was a question in terms of attributing success or failure to the CPP or individual partners when many of the issues covered by the proposed performance indicators were structural and outwith their control. Nevertheless, it was necessary to find a way of understanding whether the CPP's interventions were having an impact;
- the CPP needed support in terms of data collection and analysis, and it was necessary to consider how this could be provided;
- in relation to Indicator 2: Reduce the proportion of households in employment and claiming Universal Credit, a degree of caution was required as, in rural settings, there tended to be underclaiming and an increase in claims would be seen as positive. However, it was important to understand and start to measure in-work poverty. Public sector organisations had a role to play and, if rates of pay could not be increased, it was necessary to consider what else could be done to support staff on low wages;
- in relation to the Community Participation and Dialogue outcome, it having been queried whether there was scope to look at the scale of Community Asset Transfers and what collectively was being done to support communities to take on assets and run services, it was explained that discussion had taken place in that regard but it was more likely to be a delivery plan action measure rather than high level trend data. It was also highlighted that a partnership seminar on land ownership, including community land ownership and asset transfers, had taken place prior to the Council's Communities and Place Committee on 12 May 2021. One of the themes emerging from the seminar was the possibility of other partners, such as the Development Trusts Association Scotland and Community Land Scotland, being brought in to report through the CPP structure, and it was suggested that the outcomes from the seminar be shared with the Board;
- it was important that performance indicators were meaningful to the population and clear in terms of the direction they needed to go;
- the proposed indicators relating to reducing the number of suicides and drug-related deaths were welcomed. However, it was important to see them in context and be realistically patient about when outcomes could be achieved;

- the links between Covid and performance were emphasised. Covid infections, and the associated effects on the community in terms of employment, mental health etc, were likely to continue for some time and it was necessary to be cautious about how performance was framed. However, there were some areas, such as community cohesion and community resilience, where performance had improved because of Covid;
- in relation to target setting, the need for caution was emphasised. Success on the ground was more important than hitting a numerical target, and it was important to listen to feedback from communities;
- given the CPP's ambition to reduce inequalities, it was queried whether consideration had been given to how many of the indicators could be broken down by protected characteristic. In response, it was explained that some of the data could be disaggregated but much could not, even to a local level. However, other information, such as the annual volunteering survey carried out by HTSI, could potentially be used to supplement the indicators;
- it was suggested that it was necessary to remove the words increase, reduce etc from the indicator descriptions. How the CPP wanted an indicator to trend was a separate issue from the indicator itself;
- in relation to Indicator 5: Increase the proportion of people who indicate they feel they have influence over decision-making in their community, it was questioned whether the Citizens' Panel survey was the best indication in respect of the intended beneficiary group, ie those who were most disadvantaged and disengaged, and it was suggested that it was necessary to provide a description in terms of the limitations of the information the survey would provide;
- it was necessary to have a backdrop of statistical information but it was also necessary to be upfront about what the statistics did and did not show. Using crime as an example, the crime rate across Scotland as a whole was decreasing but that was not the case in the most disadvantaged communities. It was necessary to question whether the proposed indicators were going to show whether the individuals that were the target of the CPP's inequalities agenda were experiencing benefit. However, it was acknowledged that this was difficult to do; and
- the proposed indicators were a good starting point but it was necessary to consider what else could be layered on to provide a more holistic sense of change/progress. The report referred to the need to capture qualitative data, and it was queried whether there was potential to use the Place Standard on a recurring basis to track changes in perception about community life. Discussion ensued in that regard, during which it was commented that the Place Standard was heavily focussed on the built environment and did not necessarily pick up on the intricacies around the various communities that existed within one space. Nevertheless, it was a useful tool which could potentially be adjusted to fit the CPP's needs.

The Board:

- i. **NOTED** the work undertaken to develop a Performance Framework for the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan;
- ii. **NOTED** that further work was required in several key areas, notably mental health and wellbeing and economy, to develop a set of key indicators, and that a further report would be presented to the next meeting of the Board;
- iii. **AGREED** the framework outlined in the report; and
- iv. **AGREED** that the outcomes from the recent Council-led partnership seminar on land ownership, including community land ownership and asset transfers, be shared with the Board.

8. Community Planning Partnership Development Update

There had been circulated Report No CPB/11/21 by the Head of Policy, The Highland Council.

In addition to the report, John West, Co-Chair, Community Learning, Development and Engagement (CLDE) Delivery Group, gave a presentation on the development of the new Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan.

Discussion took place on the various sections of the report as follows:

CPP Board Vision Statement

- in relation to the statement that the CPP recognised that inequalities were different within Highland's diverse geographical communities, it was necessary to be able to explain how that had influenced the subsequent work. The Chair concurred regarding the need to be able to evidence how the vision statement was being met, and suggested that it be approved on that basis.

CLD inspection journey and development of the new CLD Plan

- the Chair requested that the CLD presentation be circulated to Board Members;
- there were underlying issues in terms of how well CLD was managed and resourced within Highland. However, things appeared to be moving in the right direction, and the developments set out in the report and presentation were welcomed;
- whilst it was right that the engagement element of the CLDE Delivery Group did not form part of the CLD Plan, concern was expressed that there had been a loss of focus on the need for improved engagement which was an important part of the feedback from the community engagement sessions in 2017;
- support was expressed for the proposed priorities and the direction the CLD Plan appeared to be taking, and the engagement and planning work that had taken place in that regard was commended; and
- Board Members queried the extent to which the activities in the CLD Plan supported the process of locality planning, commenting that there were significant links between the work that might fall out of the Plan and the kind of engagement with hard to reach groups that was necessary for locality plans to have a focus on inequalities. John West, Co-Chair, CLDE Delivery Group, explained that locality plans had been looked at as part of the engagement process but, as indicated in the report, they were not all in place. The nine Community Partnership CLD leads would be facilitators locally and would have a key role in terms of ensuring that localities were reflected as action plans were developed. Resources would be critical, and the need to ensure that CLD leads were supported in their role was emphasised. The Chair suggested that more detail on this matter be provided when the draft CLD Plan was presented to the Board for consideration.

A new approach to Locality Planning

- the honest assessment of the current approach to locality planning, which was perhaps too ambitious given the level of resources available, was helpful, and support was expressed for the recommendations;
- concern was expressed that section 6.3 did not set out how it was intended to target those who were most disadvantaged, and that Community Partnerships were becoming generic area-wide development partnerships rather than focussing on inequalities. The Chair acknowledged the concern, commenting that, if the Board

approved the proposed new approach, it was essential to ensure that locality plans addressed those most in need/disadvantaged, including those with protected characteristics;

- given that resourcing was part of the difficulties Community Partnerships had faced in developing locality plans, concern was expressed about deciding what the new approach to locality planning should be without first having the proposed discussion on resourcing. The Chair suggested that the proposed approach to taking forward locality planning be revisited at the September Board following the workshop on resourcing;
- in relation to the proposal that each Community Partnership be required to deliver one locality plan, the worry was that this would result in several plans in one document. Members challenged the CPP to go further in terms of focus and think about, for example, whether Community Partnerships should be asked to prioritise one theme, such as poverty reduction;
- there was an issue in terms of how to engage the wider community whilst ensuring that work was focussed on the CPP's key purpose of tackling inequalities;
- it would be helpful to provide a synopsis, and associated action plan, of what was expected from partners in terms of resourcing/commitment and aligning existing resource, so that partner organisations could review what they were doing and what could be redirected so their work was more effective in collaboration with the CPP; and
- reference was made to the mapping work being undertaken within the Council which would indicate whether the poverty reduction work taking place was properly aligned to the HOIP, and it was queried whether other partners could carry out a similar exercise to inform the proposed workshop on resourcing and make the best use of partners' time. The Chair suggested that this be taken forward by the Delivery Group Chairs, and that consideration also be given to the suggestion of a synopsis of what was expected from partners in terms of resourcing/commitment. In relation to the proposed mapping exercise, it was added that it was important the officers carrying out the work liaised with each other so there was a consistent approach.

The Board:

- i. **AGREED** the updated vision statement at section 2 of the report, subject to the comments regarding the need to evidence how it was being met;
- ii. **NOTED** the update on the Highland Economic Recovery Partnership at section 3 of the report;
- iii. **NOTED** the update on the CLD inspection journey outlined at section 4 of the report;
- iv. **NOTED** the update on the development of the new CLD plan including the proposed priorities in section 4 of the report, and the accompanying presentation;
- v. **NOTED** the audit findings outlined in section 5 of the report;
- vi. **NOTED** the update on resourcing at section 7 of the report and **AGREED** that a Board workshop be held prior to the next Board meeting to explore how best to address the issue of resourcing the partnership;
- vii. **NOTED** the update on locality planning at section 6 of the report and **AGREED** that the proposed approach to taking forward locality planning be revisited at the September Board following the workshop on resourcing;
- viii. **AGREED** that, in advance of the workshop on resourcing, the poverty reduction mapping work being undertaken by the Council be shared with Delivery Group Chairs with a view to other partners potentially carrying out a similar exercise to establish alignment with the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, and that consideration be given to the suggestion of a synopsis of what was expected from partners in terms of resourcing/commitment;
- ix. **AGREED** that the CLD presentation be circulated to Board Members; and

- x. **AGREED** that more detail on the extent to which the engagement activity in respect of the CLD Plan supported the locality planning process be provided when the draft Plan was presented to the Board for consideration.

9. Review of Strategic Risk Register

The Board was asked to consider and review the Strategic Risk Register which had been circulated, including the revised risk description in respect of Resourcing of Partnership Activity (formerly Commitment of Partners) as agreed by the Board on 31 March 2021.

The Board **APPROVED** the revised Risk Register.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The Board **NOTED** that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 22 September 2021 at 3.00 pm.

11. Any Other Business

The Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, highlighted that a public consultation on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's long-term vision was currently underway. He summarised the content and key messages of the long-term vision document and encouraged partners to respond to the consultation by the closing date of 18 July 2021.

It was **AGREED** that a link to the public consultation on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's long-term vision be circulated to partners.

The meeting ended at 11.15 am.