

Agenda Item	6
Report No	HCW/22/21

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Committee

Date: 11 November 2021

Report Title: Sutherland Pathfinder Project

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report to is provide an update on the progress to date on the Sutherland Pathfinder Project and to identify next steps, and to recommend production and implementation of the Sutherland Pathfinder Project.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i) Consider a Sutherland wide engagement process with communities working in collaboration with Sutherland Community Partnership, Third Sector Organisations and Statutory Services.
- ii) Consider an engagement process for working collaboratively with children and young people across Sutherland to enable them to have an active role in shaping the Sutherland Youth Action Plan and the Child's Plan.
- iii) Approve the creation of a Sutherland Pathfinder signed up to by Young People, Highland Council, Community Planning Partners and Third Sector Organisations.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource

No additional resource required as funding received from the Scottish Government as set out in section 5.1 of this report will be allocated to support the work of the Sutherland Pathfinder project.

3.2 Legal

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 stresses the importance of

everyone involved with a child taking responsibility for their wellbeing, and ensuring they work together to enable the child to reach their full potential.

- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - Each area of Sutherland is unique, and it is important to recognise the views and experiences of all people from all backgrounds. Planned engagement work will support all people's views to be listened to. The method of communication with communities and Young People needs to be designed in inclusive ways and responsive to the unique context of the Sutherland area. Planned engagement and pilot work will support better outcomes and take cognisance of the specific challenges of equity, poverty and rurality.
- 3.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever
There are no implications specifically related to climate change. The consultation events will occur locally or digitally.
- 3.5 Risk
There are no implications of risk.
- 3.6 Gaelic
Materials generated through the consultation should be made available in Gaelic and can be accessed for translation. It would be beneficial to have a Gaelic speaker connected to the project.

4. Background

- 4.1 As noted in the November 2020 Committee paper on the Whole Systems Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing, supporting mental health and wellbeing in our communities is a high priority. This high priority comes at a pertinent time for our communities, and involves a systems review in relation to the revised [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland](#), the need to implement [The Promise](#), the [UNCRC \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) which provides both preventative methods for protecting child rights, as well as strong accountability measures. There are also concerns about drug and alcohol use in communities and the impact of Covid on mental health and wellbeing.
- 4.2 This report provides an account of the early work undertaken in Sutherland since September 2021. Building on the Caithness Cares project, Sutherland held a specific Youth event on the 1st of September and two stakeholder events on the 7th of September. The Caithness Cares concept enabled the Caithness Community to collaborate with statutory services to improve services and identify gaps in provision to aid good mental health and wellbeing. It is proposed that the Council will be replicating this process in Sutherland. The early stage of the project is based on a needs analysis whilst running short-term pilot work in parallel to help those in crisis. The long-term plan is to facilitate community empowerment and enable the community 'to support public service providers to work together and with local communities via [community planning](#) to shape and deliver better services' (Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act, 2015) whilst working within the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework which notes 'How community mental health and wellbeing supports and services are

constructed will vary according to local structures and the needs identified by children, young people and their families in each local area.'

4.3 Step 2 is the collation of all responses gathered within the youth stakeholder event and the subsequent two community stakeholder events. A project board will then be created with 5 workstreams based on the analysis of the results from all stakeholder events and subsequent community engagement to get everyone's voices heard and a ground up approach from the communities involved. At two stakeholder events 35 young people from across the 5 high school areas and between 50 and 60 people attended from across Sutherland. There will be a further youth event in November to agree the Youth Action Plan going forward to make sure that their voices and opinions have been encapsulated. The young people will feed in to the 5 workstreams to ensure their actions are jointly considered along with community action plans.

4.4 The following principles were followed in Caithness and will be replicated in Sutherland:

- To enable hope, dreams, entitlement and purpose for the young people and their families to hold onto; and where Sutherland is a place they can live, thrive, and access opportunities.
- Fundamental to the pathfinder being successful is the need to engage, listen and coproduce solutions with young people. Pivotal to achieving this will be how we will increase capacity to reach people who have previously not been consulted.
- Overall a dual approach to delivering services was agreed: 1) Respond to immediate crisis situations and 2) Preventative (longer term). There were differing views around where the balance should lie and whether work should progress in parallel or start by responding to the immediate crisis.
- While there was support for a community-led approach this does not replace the statutory responsibilities of various agencies. Given some of the recruitment challenges across mental health specialities this will need to drive new approaches and innovative thinking. It was also recognised appropriate support for professionals to support young people is required.

5. Budget Options

5.1 A new Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing fund has just been announced. Opportunities are being considered to bid into this fund. Previous funding has been allocated by the Scottish Government (grants of £178k and £534k) for supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people. Whilst some of this has been allocated and spent within the Caithness Pathfinder, money should still be available to help fund the Sutherland Pathfinder.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care

Date: 1 November 2021

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Background Papers: Appendix 1 Sutherland Pathfinder Milestones

Sutherland Pathfinder Sept 2021- June 2022

Step

Step 1

Stakeholder Events and Project Board

- 1) Sutherland holds a series of stakeholder events to develop overall aspirations
- 2) Draft details shared with community
- 3) Facilitators identified
- 4) Project Board formed and terms of reference created
- 5) Sub-groups and terms of reference for each sub-group based on the initial stakeholder engagement events

Step 2

Short-term Action Planning

- 1) Sub-groups identify immediate priorities for small pilot work
- 2) Sub-groups create short-term action plans
- 3) Sub-groups implement short-term action plans and monitor progress and outcomes to inform June review and longer-term funding requirements
- 4) Sub-groups evaluate the impact of short-term pilot work

Step 3

Community Engagement Events

- 1) Project Board and sub-groups undertake community engagement to identify needs, changes, challenges during March
- 2) Community voices captured and collated initially by Feb 2022
- 3) Information analysed and returned to the Board by end March
- 4) Initial findings shared with young people in Sutherland for dialogue

Step 4

Data analysis and long-term Action Planning

- 1) International, national and local research analysed and shared with the Board and sub-groups to inform long term plan
- 2) Initial findings from small pilot work shared with the Board and sub-groups
- 3) Long-term plan creation by May 2022
- 4) Strategy group incorporated into the CPP by June 2022
- 5) Forward planning for funding and sub-group management established

Step 5

Re-design and Change Management

- 1) Strategy group begin re-design process based on the long-term action plan
- 2) Strategy group create new milestones (June 2022 – June 2025)

Step 6

Evaluation and Planning for 2022-25

- 1) CPP, strategy group and project board undertaken on-going evaluation