

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Committee** held **remotely** on Wednesday 11 August 2021 at 10.30am.

Present:

Mrs J Barclay	Mr D Louden
Mr B Boyd	Mrs D Mackay
Mrs I Campbell	Mr W Mackay
Mrs M Cockburn	Mrs I Mackenzie
Mrs M Davidson	Mrs L Munro
Mr J Finlayson	Mr K Rosie
Mr D Fraser	Mr D Rixson
Mr A Jarvie	Mr C Smith

Non Members also present:

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair	Mr A Henderson
Mr A Christie	Mrs E McAllister
Mr K Gowans	

Participating Officials:

Mrs D Manson, Chief Executive
Ms F Duncan, Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care and Chief Social Work Officer
Ms K Lackie, Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance
Ms F Malcolm, Interim Head of Integration Adult Social Care, Health and Social Care
Mr I Kyle, Head of Improvement and Performance, Health and Social Care
Ms J Park, Interim Head of Health, Health and Social Care
Mr B Porter, Head of Support Services, Health and Social Care
Mr M Mitchell, Service Finance Manager, Resources and Finance
Mr J Robertson, Programme Manager, Health and Social Care
Miss J Maclennan, Principal Administrator, Performance and Governance
Ms F MacBain, Committee Administrator, Performance and Governance
Ms M Zavarella, Committee Administrator, Performance and Governance

Also in Attendance:

Ms L Bussell, Chief Officer, NHS Highland
Ms R Connolly, Connecting Carers
Ms B Brown, Connecting Carers
Ms K Blowers, Caithness and Sutherland Women's Aid
Ms A Newlands, Ross-shire, Skye and Lochalsh Women's Aid
Ms E Fetherston, Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Women's Aid
Ms L Revitt, Lochaber Women's Aid

**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

**1. Apologies for Absence
Leisgeulan**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs M Paterson and Ms E Roddick.

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

Ms L Munro declared a general financial interest as a Specialist SDS Advisor with Carr Gomm Community Contacts Team but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that the interest did not preclude her involvement.

Item 5 – Mrs I Mackenzie (non-financial)

Additional Item – National Care Service for Scotland Consultation

With the agreement of the Chair, under Standing Order 8, there had been circulated Report No HCW/20/21 dated 10 August 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer - Performance and Governance, as an item of urgent business, due to the significant impact the consultation could have on the Council and the timescales involved.

At this stage, the consultation was being brought to the Committee's attention and, given the complexity of the issues, a more detailed report would be taken to the Council for debate in September 2021. Consideration would be given to holding a seminar in the meantime.

The Committee **AGREED**:

- i. the approach outlined in section 5 of the report;
- ii. that the proposals were of such significance that the consultation response should be remitted to Council, with an update report provided to the next meeting on 9 September 2021; and
- iii. to approach COSLA to seek an extension on behalf of all Scottish local authorities to the Scottish Government's deadline of 18 October 2021.

**3. Good News
Deagh Naidheachdan**

Detail was provided on the success of the Placement Service Change Programme and efforts that were being made to ensure as many children and young people could remain at home in future.

The Committee **NOTED** the Good News and **AGREED** a letter be sent on behalf of the Committee to all staff involved on the Placement Service Change Programme to thank them for their valued work.

4. Appointments Cur an Dreuchd

NHS-HC Project Management Board Bòrd Stiùireadh Pròiseict NHS-CnG

Mr David Fraser, the new Vice Chair of the Committee, introduced himself and summarised his background and aims.

The Committee **AGREED** his appointment to the NHS-HC Project Management Board to replace Nicola Sinclair.

5. Presentation: Women's Aid in Highland Taisbeanadh: Cobhair Bhoireannach sa Ghàidhealtachd

Mrs I Mackenzie declared a non-financial interest as Council-nominated Board member of Inverness Women's Aid but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that the interest did not preclude her involvement.

A presentation was provided by representatives from Women's Aid, who outlined the structure of the organisation across the Highlands, the services they provided to women and children, and the partner organisations and education services they worked with. They gave an overview of domestic abuse statistics, explained the impact of domestic violence on people's lives and summarised the impact of Covid on their activities.

During discussion, the following issues were considered:-

- information was sought, and provided, on the healthy relationship message that was delivered to school pupils, with contact being made at S2 and S4 levels, through a variety of age-appropriate programmes, including the established YPI programme;
- the support offered in remote areas was summarised, with two domestic abuse specialists currently covering Sutherland, and 3 more further north. Meetings with women seeking support could be held in a women's home, a local café, in a place of safety, or in a different area, as part of a blended support mechanism. The impact of lockdown was highlighted, as were the awareness-raising campaigns being run, including on social media, on radio and in public buildings;
- a refuge in Caithness had closed in 2012 for economic reasons. However, since 2013, strong links had been developed with Housing services. There was also a national network of refuges;
- an effective working relationship had been developed with the police in recent years, as part of a multi-agency approach to supporting victims and dealing with perpetrators;
- it was disappointing the incidents of domestic abuse remained high, and clarification was sought, and provided, about out of hours arrangements, which included Women's Aid staff being on call, national helplines and police for those in the most vulnerable positions;
- the importance of preventative work was emphasised and information was provided on activities being undertaken, including community engagement, social media campaigns and Own My Life courses;

- it was important to continue raising awareness and for connections with this Committee to be maintained; and
- support for male victims of abuse was provided by Abused Men in Scotland, which had a national helpline (03300 949 395). Consideration would be given to local activities for men.

The Committee **NOTED** the presentation and **AGREED** the presentation and information on Domestic Abuse services for men be sent to the Committee after the meeting.

6. Presentation: Young Carers Strategy **Taisbeanadh: Ro-innleachd Luchd-cùraim Òga**

A presentation was provided by representatives from Connecting Carers who summarised the structure and work of the organisation across the Highlands. Information was provided on the wide range of activities undertaken by young carers including emotional support, looking after siblings, social support, and practical, physical, personal, medical and communication assistance. The impact on their own lives was significant and included detriment to their physical health, especially from disrupted sleep, emotional wellbeing, social inclusion, their home environment and, notably, their education.

The impact of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 was summarised, including the requirement for Local Authorities to have a Young Carer Statement (YCS), and further detail on this was provided, along with the results of a survey that was undertaken in 15 secondary schools and 15 primary schools to establish awareness of YCSs, and measures required to address lack of awareness. The importance of identifying young carers was highlighted.

During discussion, the following issues were considered:-

- the presentation was welcomed as it highlighted the challenge for us all to ensure that all young carers were aware of the YCS and the support that could be given to them. With this in mind, the Chair asked that an urgent meeting be convened with key partners within the coming month to consider what action was required. Information was provided on work currently being undertaken in schools, and outwith them, to support young carers;
- whilst it was vital all schools were aware of the importance of the YCS and the need to provide support and a safety net where required, it was stressed that this process should not solely lie with education. Partners needed to work together to ensure YCS could be completed in a variety of settings. Rural and urban areas might require different approaches and these needed to be considered;
- the timely identification of young carers was vital and schools had an important role to play in this regard, as did Members with their local knowledge and as corporate parents. Reference was made to a recent staff training day, attended by 200, at which a young carer had given a moving presentation;
- attention was drawn to the numbers of young carers who were well supported and to the wide variety of family situations which could involve a young carer; and
- other issues highlighted included the importance of liaising with guidance teachers and the possible role of the community planning partnerships and community development trusts.

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

- i. the presentation be circulated to the Committee after the meeting; and
- ii. a meeting be convened with key partners, within the coming month, to discuss access issues about young carers and the Young Carers Statement.

**7. Revenue Budget Monitoring – Out-turn for 2020/21 and Quarter 1 for 2021/22
Sgrùdadh Buidseat Teachd-a-steach – Shuidheachadh airson 2020/21 agus Cairteal 1 airson 2021/22**

There had been circulated Report No HCW/16/21 dated 29 July 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following issues were considered:-

- the report was welcomed, with particular reference to the success of the Placement Service Change Programme, which had reduced the number of out of authority placements, and to the recruitment of additional social workers;
- more detail on underspends and overspends would be beneficial for decision-making for the Committee, and this would be discussed further outwith the meeting. It was highlighted that the format of statement had been improved and expanded during the previous financial year and into this, and in terms of the basis of the statement, there might be timing issues which were allowed for in the statement and forecasts presented to members. It was explained that there was no specific budget for temporary agency nursing staff as this was covered from vacancy savings from the permanent staff budget. Other specific issues raised, including the residential care budget, foster care fees, the APTC staff underspend, Self-Directed payment underspends, and the impact of government grants would be addressed outwith the meeting;
- it was suggested that more detail could be included into future reports for residential expenditure, to provide detail on repair, staff and emergency stay costs;
- in relation to the cost avoidance of around £11m as a result of the Placement Service Change Programme, the basis of calculating avoided costs were summarised;
- the vacancies in nursing and Allied Health Professional posts were of concern to Members and, noting the national recruitment challenges, support for recruitment to those posts was urged;
- the increased hourly rate for personal assistants was welcomed;
- in relation to vacancies, assurance was sought that services were adequately staffed;
- information was sought, outwith the meeting if necessary, on absence statistics and numbers of staff referred to occupational health as a result of Covid-19, and the cost of employing agency staff to cover;
- while detailed scrutiny was welcomed, it was suggested the Chair and Vice Chair should decide what was reasonable in relation to Members' requests for additional information, some of which was covered in the appendices to the report, and taking into account the staff time required to compile additional information;
- in response to a query about a children's unit in south Loch Ness, this had been opened for a specific reason, and Local Members could be briefed outwith the meeting, if this was requested;
- there was only a single line in the report on Adult Social Care, and more detailed scrutiny would be appropriate going forward; and

- it was clarified that the 14 children who had been returned to residential units had been returned to the Highlands from out of authority placements.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the revenue out-turn position for the 2020/21 financial year;
- ii. the forecast revenue position for the 2021/22 financial year, including the management action being taken and the risks and uncertainties set out within the report;
- iii. the progress update provided in relation to budget savings delivery; and
- iv. the progress update provided in relation to the Placement Services Change Programme.

8. Children's Champions Gaisgich Chloinne

There had been circulated Report No HCW/17/21 dated 29 July 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During a verbal update, the Chair of the Committee highlighted that the role of Children's Champions would be expanded to include children and families with a focus on strengthening communities, families and the services that were provided to them. The roles would also include an additional responsibility of Looked After Children. The three Children's Champions were identified as Councillor Margaret Paterson, Councillor Muriel Cockburn and Councillor Isabelle Mackenzie. It was emphasised that these roles did not lessen the duty of Corporate Parents, the Champions' primary obligation was to raise awareness and ensure that the voices of children were heard throughout Highland.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the report; and
- ii. formally **AGREED** the appointment of Councillor Margaret Paterson, Councillor Muriel Cockburn and Councillor Isabelle Mackenzie, into the Children's Champions posts – as part of the year pilot.

9. Revised Highland Partnership Integration Scheme Sgeama Amalachaidh Ath-sgrùdaichte Com-pàirteachas na Gàidhealtachd

There had been circulated Report No HCW/18/21 dated 22 July 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care. It was confirmed that the revised scheme had been submitted to the Scottish Govt on 27th July and receipt had been acknowledged. Any comment were expected within the next 6 – 8 weeks.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- appreciation was expressed to the Interim Head of Integration Adult Social Care on the vast amount of work completed on the Scheme;
- clarification was sought, and provided, on the amount of overspend the Council could be responsible for at year end;
- in response to a comment, it was confirmed that there was a typographical error at Paragraph 6.1 of the report in the fourth paragraph that should have read "this group has now been re-established" and would be corrected in the report;

- due to an increase of visitors to the area and high costs, housing had been identified as a risk that was interfering with the recruitment of staff and it was agreed to recommend to the Council that this risk would be added at Section 3.5 of the report and highlighted that this concern would be further developed in a report to the next meeting of the Committee;
- in response to a query, it was confirmed that the work of the Joint Officer Group (JOG) would be overseen by the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) in terms of the action plan appended to the report and the Committee would be privy to the minutes of those meetings where appropriate as well as any points raised by the Chair;
- it would be important to work closely with the Redesign Board of the Highland Council due to shared transformation objectives;
- it was important to recognise recovery and hidden costs associated with Covid-19 and post-Covid-19 to avoid any surprises that had the potential to stifle progress; and
- in response to a question about user, carer and community involvement in the JMC it was highlighted that there was legislation that ensured Third Sector Participation in the governance of the partnership

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report.

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the report;
- ii. **NOTED** a typographical change in Paragraph 6.1 of the report on the fourth paragraph should read “This group has not been re-established to ensure the necessary attention and rigour to the required Integration Scheme actions”; and
- * iii. **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to the Council that housing for staff be added to the risk section at Section 3.5 of the report.

10. Update on Joint Transformational Programme with NHS Highland Fios às Ùr mu Cho-Phrògram Cruth-atharrachaidh le NHS na Gàidhealtachd

There had been circulated Report No HCW/19/21 dated 28 July 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- in response to a request, it was agreed that a report on the Shared Lives approach would be taken to the next meeting of the Committee;
- concern was expressed by Members that the risk and RAG rating system outlined in the report did not accurately reflect the work being completed and, as a result, it was agreed that the rating system would be made more clear and consistent to allow for better scrutiny in future reporting;
- clarification was sought, and provided, on the risk adjusted pipeline total being inconsistent throughout the report;
- the Leader of the Council expressed that inadequate feedback was provided to Members about the work of the Programme Board. As a result at the last meeting, the Leader expressed concern to members of the Board about slow progress and emphasis on savings rather than improved services and consequently a workshop was agreed to that had positive success;
- clarification was sought, and provided, on the uptake of Self-Directed Support (SDS);

- early intervention support and prevention for families was everyone's responsibility and it was important that the Council was not left solely responsible; and
- it was highlighted that the Council should be taking the lead on early intervention and prevention as many communities did not have effective Community Partnerships.

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report.

11. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

The following Minutes are circulated and were **NOTED**:-

- i. Highland Violence Against Women Partnership Group held on 15 February and 19 May 2021.

The meeting ended at 3.27pm.