

Agenda Item	8
Report No	HCW-04-22

## THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Health, Social Care and Wellbeing

**Date:** 10 February 2022

**Report Title:** Children and Young Persons Champions Update

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer – Health and Social Care

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 In August 2021, the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing committee formally agreed to appoint three nominees into the Children and Young Persons Champions posts as part of a one-year pilot.
- 1.2 Within the pilot plan each Champion gave a commitment to this role and the service gave a commitment to supporting them in this. Each Champion was to identify an area of particular interest within their role to help define the role remit and any influence they can have.
- 1.3 This paper provides an update on the work of this pilot to date and makes recommendations for the further development of the champions role.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
  - i. Note the contents of the report; and
  - ii. Agree the future development planned to develop the role of the Champions.

### 3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource: There will be no additional resource implications during the pilot period. However, future review and assessment process will consider any resource impacts/issues and identify any implications if the pilot was to be extended or Champions to be permanently established.

- 3.2 Legal: There are no legal implications as a result of this report.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island): Champions will work alongside the community and partners, promoting and advocating needs and rights of all children and young people of The Highlands.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever: There are no climate change implications as a result of this report.
- 3.5 Risk: The Champion's role is to work alongside services and partners to ensure that the needs and rights of children and young people are acknowledged and responded to.
- 3.6 Gaelic: There are no Gaelic implications as a result of this report.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 Three Children and Young Persons Champions were provided with the opportunity to undertake the Children and Young Persons Champion role for a period of one year from August 2021. The Champions were identified as individuals who were willing to work together and use their influence to promote the interests of children and young people.
- 4.2 Highland Council has a strong history of creating and developing Champion roles within the organisation. At the heart of the Children and Young Persons Champion role is the aim of promoting, liaising, and encouraging change so that children's needs are recognised and prioritised.
- 4.3 The report presented to the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Committee in August 2021 proposed that three Children and Young Persons Champions be nominated to take forward this role. The role is to act as role models; be advocates for views and needs of children; provide information and advice to relatives and carers; recognise and celebrate good practice and challenge poor practice or blocks in the system; and be committed to attending in-house training and educational sessions.
- 4.4 The Pilot Plan stated that training sessions were planned to help give the Champions more in-depth understanding of specific themes and that there would be active promotion of these roles, with clear remit and rationale being articulated. It was also agreed that the Champions should work together and support one another via a Champions Network.
- 4.5 It was also agreed that the pilot period be reviewed and assessed in April 2022 to allow both the practicalities of the role to be examined, alongside the impact it has had. This evaluation would help advise whether the Children and Young Persons Champion roles should be continued, in what capacity, and with any additional resource requirements.

#### **5. Progress to date**

- 5.1 It is recognised that the opportunity to develop the role of the Children and Young Persons Champions has been limited to date. It is evident that there requires to be greater clarity around roles and responsibilities of both the champions and officers who will provide support to the champions.

- 5.2 It is clear that the work of the champions requires additional support and a review of the framework within which they are working would enhance the support offered in moving this forward.

## **Recommendations**

**6.**

In order to progress and enhance the role of the champions during the period of this pilot it is recommended that;

6.1

1. An officer with responsibility for supporting the champions be determined by the service.
2. Regular meeting between champions and officers be agreed to ensure that Champions are supported to undertake their role.
3. This role should be formally evaluated in July 2022 in order to make recommendations as to whether to continue the role of the Champions.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer – Health and Social Care

Date: 14 January 2022

Author: Ian Kyle, Head of Integrated Children's Services