

Agenda Item	4
Report No	JMC-22-23

The Highland Council / NHS Highland

Committee: Joint Monitoring Committee.

Date: 15 December 2023

Report Title: Integrated Children's Services Update

Report By: Chair Integrated Children's Services Planning Board

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on the Integrated Children's Services Board and Delivery Groups.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. **Note** and **comment** on the work undertaken by the children's services planning partnership in delivering the Highland Integrated Children's Services Plan 2023 - 2026.
- ii. **Note** the work of the delivery groups.

3. Implications

3.1 **Resource** – The children's services planning partnership will help determine future resource needs and priorities for improvement. Further resource implications may be identified within the duration of the plan (2023 - 2026)

3.2 **Legal** – There is a statutory requirement for partnerships to produce an Integrated Children's Service plan every three years as outlined at 4.1 of this report. The plan will have a focus on meeting the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as at 7.4.

3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – The ICS plan is delivered through the Community Planning Partnership infrastructure and is aligned to the aspirations of the Highland outcome improvement plan with a focus on community resilience and participation.

3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – None

3.5 **Risk** – None

3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – None**

3.7 **Gaelic – None**

4. Background and Context

4.1 In February 2014, the Scottish Government passed the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill. The Bill places duties on public bodies to coordinate the planning, design, and delivery of services for children and young people with a focus on improving wellbeing outcomes, and report collectively on how they are improving those outcomes.

4.2 In December 2019, Scottish Government wrote to each of the strategic leads for Integrated children's services planning issuing new guidance to support the development of ICS plans across Scotland. This guidance determined that children's services plans should be embedded within Community Planning Partnerships. This guidance also provides the structure and framework for our 2023 - 2026 plan.

5. Integrated Children Service Board

5.1 August saw the official launch of the Highland Children's services plan in an event titled "Vision 26" Over 80 stall holders and 150 attendees came along to the event, bringing together partners from Third Sector, Highland Council and NHS together representing the aspirations of the Highland Children's Service plan and the remarkable depth and breadth of work across the highlands to support children and families of which we can continue to build and strengthen through the delivery of the plan.

5.2 Feedback has been sought from all those exhibiting and attending. Positive feedback was received across a variety aspect of the launch, especially in relation to networking opportunities. There were many requests for another event of a similar nature possibly annually. There is now ongoing opportunity to build on the momentum of the event and the promotion of the Highland Children's Service plan going forward for the life of the current plan 2023-26.

5.3 Following the development of the Highland Children's Service plan, the board have reverted to meeting quarterly, a proposal for this to become more frequent is being considered to maintain the consistent level of engagement and progress.

5.4 A body of work is underway by the board drawing priority focus on a reviewing the Neurodevelopmental Specification against current service and addressing approaches to Neuro Developmental Service challenges and integrated solutions.

5.5 The Children and Young people participation strategy which sits alongside the Highland Children's Service plan is in development. This work is being led by Inspiring Young Voices, ensuring that the meaningful and equitable participation of children and young people is at the heart of the strategy development process. Two young people have been employed as facilitators of focus group sessions. This strategy will be completed by March 2024. This strategy will support the work of the board and delivery groups in the meaningful participation of children and young people.

5.6 A Leadership Forum subgroup of the ICSB has formed to bring together the chairs of the delivery groups and programme managers from Whole Family Wellbeing and The Promise. This forum supports the robust reporting mechanisms, avoidance of duplication and any need to overcome challenges. As a priority the forum is reviewing the Integrated Children's Service Board Performance Management Framework and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment aligning outcomes of the Highland Children's Service plan 2023-26 – drawing from expertise in data intelligence teams within Highland Council and NHS and maximising opportunities to incorporate valuable third sector data.

6. Delivery Groups

6.1 In order to deliver on our commitments and planning for Highland families, a number of strategic oversight boards and committees are accountable for delivery of the priorities and plans using the life course approach set out in the Highland Children's Service Plan.

All delivery groups report to the Integrated Children's Service Planning Board.

These are:

- Highland's Poverty Group
- Highland's Child Protection Committee
- The Promise Board (Corporate Parenting)
- Highland's Rights and Participation Group
- Highland's Health and Wellbeing Board – including mental health
- Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership Group

6.2 Highland's Poverty Group

On the back of the thematic areas agreed as part of the new Integrated Children's Services Plan, the Poverty Reduction Delivery Group has undertaken a mapping exercise in order to identify areas for action going forward. The mapping took the form of two strands; considering what is happening and being delivered and alongside this, where the gaps and opportunities are for shared partnership action. A survey of third sector groups supported this exercise, followed by a review and reflection session.

A summary of the emerging priorities identified are outlined below and work is commencing to develop core actions and delivery plan related to these.

Information and Awareness Raising

Supporting Practitioner Learning – developing the approach to poverty related practice. Building on existing learning packages to create a suite of materials to support practitioner learning.

Shared partnership resources targeted to support people experiencing poverty.

Resources to support individuals access the advice and services required. Developing routes for sharing and referral routes (building on learning from health visitor pathway)

Addressing Stigma – building an approach into practitioner learning and shared resources

Community Based Approaches

Collective practitioner support - providing support and advice where individuals are coming together e.g. parent and toddler groups/community growing spaces/community cafes/tenants

Lived experience - developing our approach to understanding lived experience and using this to identify areas for development

Specific Strands of Work

Developing the approach to period poverty in schools

Roll out of cost of the school day toolkit

Developing flexible models of childcare in rural areas

6.3 **Highland's Child Protection Committee**

In line with priorities identified in the Integrated Children's Service Plan and delivery of the Inspection Improvement Plan, a group has been established to focus on the needs of Older Young People, particularly those at risk of harm through exploitation, drugs and alcohol and youth justice issues. The NSPCC supported Highland Child Protection Committee in undertaking a self-evaluation exercise in relation to harmful sexual behaviour with the findings to be considered as part of this Older Young People subgroup. The Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) and Action for Children are working with partners in Highland on 'Re-imagining Youth Justice' and how best to support children, young people and families in Highland. The National Missing People project has carried out a scoping exercise in relation to our processes for responding to missing children and young people and supporting Highland in improving our approaches. Highland have received funding from CORRA's Promise funding to support young people who are being criminally or sexually exploited. This funding is available until March 2025 and will increase our capacity to work directly with children, young people, and families. In October 2023, Highland introduced the Scottish Child Interview Model to support the interviewing of children and young people following abuse or neglect. It is child focussed, trauma informed and delivered by highly trained, specialist staff.

In relation to pre-birth/early years, a review of the vulnerable pregnancy pathway is currently underway to ensure we provide the most effective approaches for pregnant women and their families.

6.4 **The Promise Board (Corporate Parenting)**

The board and programme manager have undertaken and developing many work streams including continued focus towards Trauma Informed approaches across partnership is with work undertaken around Trauma Informed approaches in Leadership with H&SC at early stages and launch of 'Roadmap' from NHS Education for Scotland (NES) to support progress. A Trauma Summit is in the planning and intended to go ahead- early 2024. Mapping work /alignment of Mental Health Delivery Group through Integrated Children's Service Board is being conducted.

The Promise Ambassador initiative has been extended to education colleagues and early discussions on extending to Highlife Highland colleagues (Phased Approach) and Promise Awareness Raising sessions to be developed through the Child Protection Committee training calendar. The board are exploring the development of thematic sub-groups around the 5 foundations of Voice, Family, Care, People and Scaffolding. The promise plan / corporate parenting plan has been initiated and will be produced in collaboration with stakeholders.

6.5 Highland's Rights and Participation Group

The Rights and Participation group prepared a committee paper presented to elected members on the work undertaken thus far in, embedding Children's Rights within the Education and Learning Service. Some work has been undertaken in Analysis of the use of Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments (Article 12, 23, 24,25....) Analysis from reports presented to the last 3 Highland Council Full Committees: 11 items that would have an impact on children and young people. There was no evidence of Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment in any report, although equalities screenings were mentioned as possible in 3. Further Ongoing work on Integrated Impact Assessments is taking place and workshops for Highland Council middle managers planned for November.

6.6 Highland's Health and Wellbeing Board – including mental health.

This delivery groups also sits in the context of the Mental Health Delivery Group (MHDG). The group is in the development stage but has a clearly defined delivery plan; as the nature of the Health & Wellbeing in a mental health context is large body of work within itself, A Health and Wellbeing delivery group will be established to focus the work required within this area and in turn will translate into better and more timely outcomes.

6.7 Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership Group

This partnership has taken a training and awareness focus including the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness – a newsletter has been published and read by 877 staff to coincide with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day. FASD training, dates have been set for community midwives.

By April 2024, "Pregnancy Alcohol and Drugs Advice and Support Sessions" will be attended by 50% of midwives supporting women and families who are affected by continued drugs or alcohol use during pregnancy. The partnership has achieved improved liaison and collaboration with Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service (DARS) and Improved communication between Obstetric/Maternity Services and Drug and Alcohol Recovery, this will support the planning for obstetricians to take lead role on Drugs and Alcohol. The Assertive outreach teams are now active in Inverness (to extend to Mid and East Ross) and Caithness providing support to those at higher risk of harm, the Inverness team includes a social worker post and the collaboration of a Harm prevention police officer. Future work developments of ADP will have a focus on treatment elements.

6.8 Whole Family Wellbeing Programme

The Vision of the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme in Highland is to ensure that families can access the support they need, where and when they need it, and for as long as they need it. The programme manager and 6 locality co-ordinators are now in post, there has been significant engagement with partners across highland over the last few months. During November and December, the Whole Family Wellbeing team is running a series of participation events for professionals from all sectors, who work alongside children, young people, and families in Highland. Following this there will be participation sessions with Families and Children. Collectively this will help shape the delivery of the programme recognising the varying needs across localities.

Designation: Chair of the integrated children's services planning board

Date: November 2023

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