

The Highland Council

Minutes of the meeting of the **Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday, 14 February 2024 at 10.30am.

Present:

Dr C Birt	Mr A MacDonald
Mrs M Cockburn	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr D Fraser	Mrs A MacLean
Mr R Gunn (remote)	Ms K MacLean
Mrs B Jarvie (remote)	Mr T MacLennan
Ms L Johnston	Mrs P Munro (remote)
Ms E Knox (remote)	Mrs M Paterson
Ms L Kraft	Mrs M Reid

Non-Members present:

Mr M Baird	Mr J Grafton (remote)
Mr B Boyd	Mr B Lobban (remote)
Ms T Collier (remote)	Mr J McGillivray (remote)
Ms S Fanet (remote)	Mr D Millar (remote)
	Mrs T Robertson

NHS Highland representatives:

Dr T Allison, Director of Public Health, NHS Highland (remote)
Ms P Cremin, Chief Officer, NHS Highland (remote)
Mr S Steer, Director of Adult Social Care

Third sector representatives in attendance:

Ms J Douglas, Care and Learning Alliance
Mr H Tedstone, Highland Hospice

Participating Officials:

Ms F Duncan, Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care and Chief Social Work Officer
Ms F Malcolm, Head of Integration Adult Social Care, Health and Social Care
Mr I Kyle, Lead Officer Strategy, Performance and Quality Assurance, Health and Social Care
Ms M McIntyre, Head of Children and Justice Social Work, Health and Social Care
Ms J Hutchinson, Strategic Lead Care and Support, Health and Social Care
Ms M Morrison, Strategic Lead Early intervention & Protection
Mr E Williamson, Practice Lead Forensic Mental Health Officer and Interim Principal Mental Health Officer
Ms M MacDonald-Dawson, Programme Manager – Home to Highland
Mrs L Dunn, Joint Democratic Services Manager, Performance and Governance
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer, Performance and Governance

**An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council.
All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to Committee.**

Mr D Fraser in the Chair

Preliminaries

- Mr A MacDonald was welcomed as a new Member of the Committee;
- Friday 16 February 2024, was Care Day and Highland would be hosting several events to mark this on Saturday 17 February 2024; and
- Attention was drawn to the attendance of representatives from Community Contacts, an independent Carr Gomm project offering impartial advice, information and support about Self-Directed Support.

1. Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence Gairm a' Chlàir agus Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms M Smith and Ms L Bussell (Director of Nursing, NHS Highland).

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt/ Aithris Fhollaiseachd

There were none.

3. Service Achievements Coileanaidhean Seirbheis

The Committee **NOTED** updates on the Families 1st Strategy, the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) and the Autism Hero Award.

4. Highland Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan Adult Services 2024 - 2027 Seirbheisean Inbheach Plana Ro-innleachdail Com-pàirteachas Slàinte is Cùram Sòisealta na Gàidhealtachd 2024–2027

There had been circulated Report No HCW/01/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- several Members welcomed the plan and highlighted the importance of its effective implementation, and the challenges this would entail, especially in relation to workforce availability. Communities and locality committees would play a vital role in the plan's implementation, and regular updates would be provided to the committee;
- third sector representatives drew attention to the importance of all partners working together with a 'no blame' culture;
- assurance was sought and provided that the target date of April 2024 for all District Locality Planning Groups to be in place was likely to be achievable for most of the nine localities, which mirrored the community planning areas;
- information was sought and provided on the partnership's ability to provide equality of service across the Highlands;
- concern was expressed that some partners were operating with a reduced workforce and this might impact the provision of person-centred care;
- the importance of prevention and early intervention was emphasised, and in this respect the roles of GPs, community hospitals and community groups were highlighted;

- the management and monitoring of the plan's implementation would be key to its success, and information was provided on governance and the role of the NHS Highland – Highland Council Joint Monitoring Committee, as well as local and Committee Members. Members could raise urgent concerns with officers without waiting for a committee meeting;
- information was sought and provided on the commissioning of services from third sector partners;
- attention was drawn to the value of face-to-face engagement with certain groups of consultees, especially older adults, with roadshow-type engagement being a useful example;
- in relation to the dissemination of consultation information to the public, attention was drawn to the benefits of the use of Plain English, British Sign Language, and subtitles;
- information was sought and provided on progress developing a housing policy for key workers, which was an especially significant issue in remote and rural Highland, and on increases to the flexibility of Self-Directed Support policies;
- it was important that any areas of good practice were shared;
- the Howard Doris Centre, Lochcarron, was praised for its services and a plea was made for NHS Highland funding to support it;
- further issues highlighted as important included the provision of community-led support for local managers, the inclusion of families from the start of care provision, the need for premises for the use of groups, for example to provide day care activities, and the importance of identifying early onset dementia to facilitate preventative action, for example home modifications; and
- the intention for performance and quarterly reporting was welcomed.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the:

- i. content of the agreed Strategic Plan 2024 – 2027; and
- ii. proposed implementation of the Plan.

**5. Mental Welfare Commission (MWC) Mental Health Act Monitoring Report, 2022-23: Highland Mental Health Officer (MHO) Service Response
Aithisg Sgrùdaidh Achd na Slàinte-inntinn aig Coimisean na Sochair Inntinn, 2022-23: Freagairt Seirbheis Oifigeair Slàinte-inntinn na Gàidhealtachd**

There had been circulated Report No HCW/02/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the report was welcomed and it was hoped further updates would be provided in future;
- information was sought and provided on the risks, challenges and processes for dealing with individuals suffering from mental health issues, including the role of the Mental Health Officers (MHOs), community support facilities, preventative approaches, and the role of the Chief Social Work Officer in scrutinising the MHOs;
- concern was expressed about access to inpatient mental health services and police cells being used as a place of safety for people suffering a mental health crisis. It was pointed out that while police custody was a 'safe place', multi-agency efforts were made to avoid this. It was pointed

out that Police Scotland had dealt with around 750 mental health issues per month the previous year, and highlighted the recent decision of certain other police forces to no longer deal with non-urgent mental health incidents;

- assurance was sought that mental health incidents were not being inappropriately criminalised;
- information was sought on the procedures for children experiencing a mental health crisis, but these would be better directed to medical professionals and the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service. It was clarified that active conversations were being undertaken to avoid police cells being used for children in these circumstances;
- attention was drawn to the correlation between mental health and social deprivation, and information was sought on policies that promoted access to mental health services;
- attention was drawn to the increase in mental health issues in the elderly population, particularly the over-85 age group and males, and it was queried whether this was the result of social isolation, loneliness and deprivation, and what could be done to tackle it. In response, proactive planning and adequate resourcing of the appropriate teams were highlighted; and
- it was suggested the development of an Autism Strategy should be expedited.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the:

- i. contents of the report; and
- ii. analysis of local performance in the context of national indicators.

6. Health and Social Care - Revenue Budget Monitoring and Performance Reporting for Q3 2023/24 – 01 October 2023 to 31 December 2023
Sgrùdadh Buidseat Teachd-a-steach –
Slàinte is Cùram Sòisealta – Aithris Sgrùdaidh agus Coileanadh
Buidseat Teachd-a-steach Ràith 3 2023/24 – 01 Dàmhair 2023 gu 31 Dùbhlachd 2023

There had been circulated Report No HCW/03/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the report evidenced how better outcomes could be delivered at a lower cost through transformational change;
- in response to a query from Dr C Birt on an entry in Appendix 3 of the report to 'Increase health behaviour change activity in line with public health data', it was explained that this referred to a programme in secondary schools tackling alcohol and drugs;
- the NHS Highland Chief Officer sought and received clarification on the section in the report entitled 'Commissioned Adult Services' at paragraph 4.9;
- it was queried and confirmed that some of the savings made on Self-Directed Support (SDS) related to workforce shortages. The process for SDS for children was separate and would be clarified to Ms L Johnston outwith the meeting;

- it was important that staffing vacancies were not used as a recurring savings measure, and a summary was provided of innovative solutions being developed to tackle recruitment challenges;
- it was queried whether the United Nations Commission on the Rights of Children (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill, due to come into force in Scotland in July 2024, would impact the Council's budget, and if it would be relevant to the Council as a Corporate Parent;
- reference was made to the Highland Carers Team, which had provided around £80k to different committees to support children and young people and, in response to a query on whether this had evolved into a different initiative, discussions were ongoing on how this funding would be reflected in the budget, noting that it covered both children's and adult services;
- it was clarified that the implications section of the report was standard for all reports, and that specific implications relevant to the topic of a report would be included in the main body of a report;
- assurance was sought and provided that any plans to reshape services would take a holistic approach and include the third sector; and
- it was important to value the role of support workers and provide careers for them.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- NOTED** the forecast revenue position as at Q3 of the 2023/24 financial year;
- NOTED** the progress update provided in relation to budget savings delivery;
- NOTED** the Service's performance, improvement and risk information; and
- APPROVED** the change to the target for the number of foster carers as outlined in paragraph 7.2 of the report.

7. Home to Highland Programme - Evaluations Prògram Dhachaigh dhan Ghàidhealtachd – Luachaidhean

There had been circulated Report No HCW/04/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- Members welcomed the positive progress detailed in the report;
- information was sought on the robustness of the transition process to NHS Highland's Adults Services;
- it was important to never lose sight of the child- and family-centred approach, especially during a period of budget challenges;
- the value and importance of the programme was emphasised;
- attention was drawn to the improvements being worked on for The Orchard following a recent Care Inspectorate report, and the excellent staff in the facility were commended; and
- it was clarified, in response to a question, that specialist care for a young person in psychiatric care would come from Highland Council budgets.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the:

- report and evaluations; and
- areas for improvement and next steps contained within the evaluations.

8. Service Workforce Plan Annual Progress Report Aithisg Adhartais Bhliadhnaile Plana Feachd-obrach Seirbheis

There had been circulated Report No HCW/05/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- with recruitment and retention, especially in remote and rural areas, being so challenging, information was sought and provided on the use of data gained from exit interviews, which should be proactively undertaken. Other suggestions included the implementation of flexible employment policies, tailoring working hours to suit a candidate, and targeting specific demographics to recruit from;
- attention was drawn to the benefits of providing work or voluntary experiences, mentoring, or shadowing in care settings to children and young people to demonstrate the range of career opportunities in that sector;
- significant challenges included workforce shortages, the ageing population, and the resultant pressure on existing staff;
- some 'grow your own' recruitment strategies had been successful but it took time for new recruits to complete training and gain experience;
- assurance was sought and provided that sickness and absence levels in Health and Social Care were on a par with other services. In relation to tackling stress and mental health issues, attention was drawn to management policies and return to work interviews;
- it was suggested that consideration be given to the use by the Council of the NHS Highland social work staff bank, and this would be investigated; and
- discussions were underway with UHI about the development of training modules for support workers.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the four-year action plan and progress report.

9. Champions Updates Cunntasan nan Curaidhean

A short presentation was provided by the following champions to give an update on their work:

Adult: Mr Bill Boyd

Mr Boyd highlighted the work of national and local organisations which provided support for older adults, and expressed his aspiration to bring representatives from Age Scotland to speak in Highland about their work. Results of an informal survey he had conducted showed key issues of concern for older people included universal benefits (such as bus passes and free prescriptions), roads and traffic, public transport, and communication with the Council, NHS Highland, and utility companies.

Children: Dr Chris Birt

Dr Birt made reference to a Highland charity, Growing2gether, which aimed to give young people the chance to realise their unique potential, and build their mental health, educational engagement and life skills, so that they could contribute to stronger communities. He highlighted the opportunities for the use of Raddery House, on the Black Isle.

Dr Birt spoke of the importance of children's health, from drugs and alcohol, to nutrition, physical health, education, transport, and recreation, with many issues affecting children's health crossing service boundaries. The impact of poverty on health was significant and provided a challenge for the committee to tackle.

Trauma: Ms Liz Kraft

Ms Kraft reminded Members there was online Trauma training on Monday 19 February 2024, and she played a short video, 'Opening Doors Trauma Informed Practice for the Workforce'.

The Chair thanked the Champions for their presentations and valuable work, and the Committee **NOTED** the updates and that consideration would be given to the format of future Champions updates to the Committee.

10. Minutes **Geàrr-chunntas**

The following Minutes had been circulated and were **NOTED**:-

- i. Highland Child Protection Committee held on 11 May 2023 (the meeting on 31 August 2023 was cancelled);
- ii. Highland Council / NHS Highland Joint Monitoring Committee held on 27 September 2023; and
- iii. Highland Violence Against Women Partnership Group held on 10 August 2023.

The meeting ended at 2.25pm