

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE COMMITTEE
13 March 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Library Service - Developing Cancer Information and Support Services

Summary

This Report describes a proposed partnership between the Library Service, NHS Highland and Macmillan Cancer Care to support the provision of Cancer Care Services and information.

1. Programme for Administration

This report refers to the Programme for Administration objective to work in partnership with NHS Highland to agree new management and service arrangements to meet the health and caring needs of our population.

2. Background

The Service has been exploring with NHS Highland and Macmillan Cancer Support, the possibility of using public libraries to present and promote relevant information and resources on cancer care to the public in the Highlands. This is in response to an identified need nationally and within Highland for more information access points to be available within communities on a wide range of issues connected to long term conditions, so that patients can be better informed and therefore more actively participate in their own treatment and care. The proposal discussed possibilities around a library about to undergo refurbishment so that an informal, welcoming meeting area including shelving and computer resources for use by cancer sufferers, their families and carers could be incorporated. The facility would allow cancer nurses to use it for informal interviews and act as a meeting place for all those affected by cancer, including carers and families, to share knowledge and provide mutual support.

This initiative meets published NHS recommendations included in the document "Better health, better care", Scottish Government 2007. It also meets The Highland Council's well being agenda and that of the Well Being Alliance.

Recognising that most Highland libraries are restricted by space it was agreed that the best way to serve our communities in this respect was to work collaboratively to create sections of a library which bring together a range of materials reflecting the wider agenda of health and well being.

3. Pilot at Fort William Library

Fort William library is due for refurbishment during 2008 and has been selected as very suitable to trial the partnership with NHS Highland and MacMillan Cancer Care.

It is hoped that this pilot will develop and be a cornerstone for building the Service's input into a health information and support infrastructure for the Highlands.

It is agreed that each of the partners will contribute their own areas of expertise: NHS to contribute specialist cancer nurse support; MacMillan to contribute funding and information resources; Library Service to provide welcoming, neutral accommodation and expertise in information management.

Other objectives include; to provide mutual staff development and understanding of community health needs and how best to develop services to meet these needs during 2008 and beyond; to explore further partnership working using this model with other health information providers such as Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland and the Maggie Centre and appropriate benefit organisations; to test this model of service provision for future development within the Highlands within six months of the centre being established.

4. Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications for the Service as a result of the proposal.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that members endorse the proposed pilot partnership at Fort William library with NHS Highland and MacMillan Cancer Care.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date:

Author:

Background Papers: