

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL AND NHS HIGHLAND
JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Joint Committee on Children and Young People** held in the Brahan Room, Netley Centre, Inverness on Friday, 14 March 2008 at 10.30 a.m.

Present

Members

Mrs E MacDonald)
Mrs E McAllister)
Mr A M Millar) Highland Council
Mr W Fernie)
Mrs J Urquhart)
Mrs M C Davidson)

Ms P Courcha (Chairman))
Mrs G McCreath) NHS Highland
Mrs J Baird)

Dr D Alston, Highland Drug and Alcohol Action Team
Miss G Slider, Youth Convener

Officers:

Mr H Fraser, Director of Education, Culture and Sport)
Mrs H Dempster, Director of Social Work) HC
Mr A McMahon, Children's Rights Officer, Social Work Services)
Ms S Brogan, Senior Childcare and Family Resource Officer)
Mr S Iliffe, Senior Manager, Additional Support Needs)
Mr I Forsyth, Waterloo Day Centre Manager)
Miss J MacLennan, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Office)

Mr B Alexander, Head of Integrated Children Services) HC/NHS

Ms S Amor, Child Health Commissioner) NHS
Ms J Veasey, Women and Children's Services Manager)

In attendance:

Mrs L Munro, Children's Champion
Mr D Bremner, Highland Councillor
Mr R Coghill, Highland Councillor
Mr C Munro, Highland Children's Forum

Ms C MacLean, CHIP+
Mrs A Brady, Care and Learning Alliance (CALA)
Mr L O'Neill, Depute Chairman of the Children's Panel

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr A S Park, Ms J Douglas, Mr I Gibson, Mr C Punler, Mrs R Morrison, Ms A Darlington, Ms L Taylor and Chief Insp. J MacDonald.

2. **Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Committee held on 18 January 2008**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 18 January 2008 were circulated and **NOTED**.

Arising from the Minutes, also **NOTED** that, in relation to Item 8, Members would be advised of the arrangements for meetings of the Childcare and Family Resource Partnerships.

3. **Revenue Budget 2007/08 – Monitoring**

Report No CYP8/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated providing monitoring information on those areas of expenditure delegated to the Joint Committee for the period 1 April 2007 to 31 January 2008 and which showed a projected year-end overspend of £2.088m.

Members were also informed of a proposal to deliver a pan-Highland Midnight/Community Football Programme which had the aim to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour and group conflict in young people. Funding had been obtained through the anti-social behaviour fund and match funding was now being sought to deliver a full programme of activities.

NOTED the monitoring report and **AGREED** to award £25,000 from the Local Action Fund to the Midnight/Community Football Programme.

4. **Early Years Review**

Report No CYP9/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated which updated Members on progress in relation to the review of Early Years services. The review had been undertaken to ensure stability, move to a network of sustainable services and to match demand to local provision. However, given the need to manage the Early Years budget, it would be an on-going exercise. The recommendations were detailed, as was the consultation process, and it was reported that following the meeting in Maryburgh the recommendation was to continue discussions with the Playgroup and Nursery with the aim of a consensus view being reached bearing in mind the plans for an amalgamated school with Conon Bridge.

Amongst the points raised against the amalgamation of the Playgroup and Nursery in Lybster were the following:-

- Lybster Lightbeams Playgroup was at the heart of the community
- amalgamation with Lybster Nursery would result in a loss of a local job

- constant review would be damaging and there was a need to stabilise the situation
- provision would be inadequate if the Lybster community grew
- it would disenfranchise those children under 3 currently attending the playgroup
- there was strong feeling in the community against amalgamation

However, others were of the view that better provision could be provided in the one setting, whether at the school or the village hall run by either CALA, the Council or parents. If it was to be based at the school, work would be required to provide outdoor space but a clear commitment would have to be given that resources would be found. The amalgamation of 3 and 4 year olds into one setting had worked well elsewhere resulting in more sustainable provision. The paramount issue was one of quality and not cost. There was disappointment however that time constraints had meant that the outcome of the consultation had not been fed back to Ward Members. Surprise was also expressed that CALA and/or a parents groups could run toddler groups cheaper than the Council and an investigation of the costs of services and other relative factors would be beneficial.

AGREED:-

- i that, other than where it was stated it was not achievable in 2008, all facilities now be commissioned and operated with both 3 and 4 year olds;
- ii where local capacity allowed, local authority nurseries accept 3 year olds from the week after the child's 3rd birthday, involving a charge of £6 per session that was comparable with childcare fees in the private and voluntary sector;
- iii that in the Ross, Skye and Lochaber area
 - the status quo be retained at present at the Nevis Nippers Playgroup/Caol Nursery, Upper Achintore Playgroup/Upper Achintore Nursery and Inverlochry Playgroup/Inverlochry Nursery but that these be reviewed in one year
 - the status quo be retained at Kilmallie Playgroup/Banavie Nursery
 - new provision be commissioned in Elgol
 - discussions continue with Maryburgh Playgroup/Maryburgh Nursery with the aim of reaching a consensus
- iv that in the Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross area
 - the status quo be retained at Fearn Playgroup, Norlin Playgroup/North Nursery, Brora Playgroup/Brora Nursery and Reay Playgroup/Melvich Nursery
 - Thrumster Nursery be retained
- v that in the Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey area the Peter Pan Playgroup be decommissioned;
- vi a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Joint Committee on cost comparisons and other related factors across the sector in early years provision.

In relation to provision in Lybster, Ms P Courcha, seconded by Mrs E MacDonald **MOVED** approval of the recommendation that 3 and 4 year old provision in Lybster be combined in one setting.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mrs E McAllister, seconded by Mr A M Millar moved that the status quo be continued for Lybster Lightbeams Playgroup/Lybster Nursery and no amalgamations be put forward.

On the matter being voted upon, the **MOTION** received 9 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 1 vote.

Accordingly, the **MOTION** was carried.

Decision

AGREED that 3 and 4 year old provision in Lybster be combined in one setting.

5. NHS Highland Children's Champions

Report No CYP10/08 by Jan Baird, Director of Community Care was circulated informing Members of the outcome of discussions which had taken place in regard to the proposals for Children's Champions across NHS Highland. This followed on from the recommendation made by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 7 November 2007 that each Community Health Partnership and Specialist Services Unit should have a Children's Champion.

Highland Children's Forum welcomed the clarification of the position of Children's Champions in NHS Highland and Highland Council and indicated its willingness to meet them and, if requested, provide them with a secretariat service.

NOTED:-

- i that, with the exception of the North Community Health Partnership area, NHS Highland's membership on the Joint Committee already reflected the other Community Health Partnership and Specialist Services Units;
- ii Colin Punler, Non-Executive Director had been nominated as the Children's Champion for the North Community Health Partnership; and

AGREED:-

- iii that Colin Punler assume the voting rights of the clinical lead post currently vacant;
- iv that NHS Highland's clinical membership be addressed when the clinical leadership review in children's services was concluded; and
- v NHS Highland's remaining Non-Executive Directors assume the role of Children's Champions.

6. For Highland's Children 3

Report No CYP11/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated providing an update on the review of "For Highland's Children 2" and consultation with parents to progress proposals for "For Highland's Children 3". Members were reminded that an earlier report explained the background to Children's Planning and the requirement to now work within the Single Outcome Agreement which was currently under negotiation.

AGREED:-

- i to align the various planning frameworks to ensure an appropriate fit of children's plan improvement objectives and targets;
- ii not to progress to a new generation of the Children's Plan at this time but to take stock on the basis of the Single Outcome Agreement, the supporting framework and the new partnerships that were forged around it;
- iii in the meantime, that the various strategic groups continue to work towards defining the strategic priorities for children's services for the next three years across the authority;
- iv a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Joint Committee on progress on the issues raised at the "For Highland's Children 2" seminar.

7. Housing Support for Care Leavers

At its meeting on 13 December 2007, the Highland Council recognised that aftercare services for looked after children required further development, including the need to develop housing support options that kept young people away from general homelessness provision. Accordingly, the Highland Council agreed that the Joint Committee on Children and Young People should further consider how it might address enhanced housing support for care leavers. In this regard, Joint Report No CYP12/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated setting out and seeking agreement for two specific housing support initiatives for care leavers namely, supported accommodation and a supported lodgings scheme which would provide choice to young people leaving care. In addition, it was hoped that these measures would give young people confidence to move on from there and, in this vein, discussions were taking place with the Council's Housing Association partners.

AGREED the development of the dedicated supported accommodation and supported lodgings scheme for care leavers in Highland.

8. Getting It Right for Every Child

Report No CYP13/08 by Marj Stewart, Project Manager was circulated updating Members on the development and implementation of "Getting It Right for Every Child" in Inverness and Highland. Staff training was now underway and the Scottish Government were considering an application for extending funding of the GIRFEC project for a further year to allow not only further testing of the approach and materials but to mainstream the approach into operational management across Highland. Attention was also drawn to the briefing note issued to lead officers which advised of working practices which were now mandatory and a request was made to amend the wording regarding the Referral for Compulsory Measures to the Children's Hearing System as follows:-

3rd Bullet point - "Referral to the Children's Hearing System for compulsory measures should only be agreed at a Child's Plan Meeting, and only where there is a Child's Plan that details how needs or risks *can* be addressed".

AGREED the change of wording to the Briefing Note and otherwise **NOTED** the progress that continued to be made.

9. Implementation of the Mental Health Framework

Report No CYP14/08 by Sally Amor, Child Health Commissioner was circulated detailing how children, young people and carers had been involved in the development of the Highland Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Framework Implementation Plan to date and considering further options for how children, young people and their carer would be involved in the development and implementation of the plan over the coming months.

NOTED the report.

10. Future Business of the Joint Committee for Children and Young People

Report No CYP15/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated setting out a proposed list of reports to be considered at future meetings of the Joint Committee on Children and Young People.

NOTED the list and **AGREED** reports also be considered on the following topics:-

- Communication Strategy on Integrated Children's Services
- Play Strategy
- Children's Commissioner's Report on "Moving and Handling"
- Outcomes of Housing and Young People
- Highland Users Group report on Mental Health

11. Date of Next Meeting

NOTED that the next meeting would be held in the Council Chamber, Highland Council Headquarters, Inverness on Friday 6 June 2008 at 2.15 p.m.

The meeting ended at 12.30 pm.