

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 Chamber, Town House, Inverness on Friday, 18 January 2008 at 2.15 p.m.

Present

Members:

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

Ms P Courcha (Chairman))
Mrs A Bethune) NHS Highland
Mrs G McCreath)

Ms J Douglas) Children's Champions
Mrs L Munro)

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

Officers:

Ms M Campbell, Co-ordinator (Disability Services), Social Work Services)
Mr A McMahon, Children's Rights Officer, Social Work Services) HC
Miss J Maclennan, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Office)

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

Ms S Amor, Specialist in Public Health) NHS
Mr D McDonald, Head of Finance Community Care)

In attendance:

Mr C Munro, Highland Children's Forum
Ms C MacLean, CHIP+
Ms L Taylor, NCH Scotland
Mrs A Brady, Care and Learning Alliance (CALA)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr A S Park, Mrs M C Davidson, Mr I Gibson, Mrs J Baird, Mr R Gibbins, Ms A Darlington and Mr H Fraser.

2. Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Committee held on 7 November 2007

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 7 November 2007 were circulated and **NOTED**.

Arising from the Minutes, also **NOTED** that:-

- i.
- ii. in relation to item 7, at its meeting on 13 December 2007 the Highland Council had appointed Ms J Douglas, Mrs L Munro and Mrs M E Paterson as Children's Champions and that NHS Highland was due to consider the matter at its next Board meeting on 5 February 2008; and
- iii. in relation to item 9, Impact Assessment Frameworks had yet to be incorporated into relative reports to the Joint Committee but it was hoped this would be achieved in the near future.

3. Revenue Budget 2007/08 – Monitoring

Report No CYP1/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated providing monitoring information to 30 November 2007 and the projected year-end position on those areas of expenditure that had been delegated to the Joint Committee. The overspend on out of authority placements was in the region of £2.9m and, although additional savings had been identified, a projected year end overspend of £2.088m still remained. As the Joint Committee was unable to address this overspend, in terms of the joint protocol for the management of the budget, the Highland Council's Education, Culture and Sport Committee at its meeting on 17 January 2008 had agreed to refer the matter to the Resources Committee for a supplementary estimate of £2.088m. Officers were continuing to progress work to address the budget gap. Amongst the options being investigated included the expansion of the service provided by the Black Isle Family Resource Centre, a report on which was anticipated before the end of the financial year.

NOTED the report and that the projected overspend had been referred to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee.

4. For Highland's Children 3

The morning's seminar on the preparation of the new Children's Plan had been well received with many valuable points being raised. In particular, the importance of involving children in genuine and meaningful consultation was highlighted. Reference was made to the Joint Committee's commitment to seek the views of young people as a matter of course when reports were being prepared and disappointment was expressed that this had not always been adhered to. It was accepted a more sophisticated system for seeking young people's views was required so that they could be incorporated into policy and service development proposals timeously. Involving young people was relevant throughout organisations whether it was at senior management level or at the day-to-day delivery of services.

NOTED:-

- iv. i. the outcomes of the seminar; and
- ii. the continued importance of genuine and meaningful consultation with children and young people.

iii.

5. Reorganisation of Disability Services

Report No CYP2/087 by Bill Alexander Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated updating Members on the outcomes of the recent consultation on children's disability services and the recommendations that had been presented to the Highland Council's Housing and Social Work Committees on 16 January 2008. It included proposals to continue a multi-disciplinary specialist service, extending this across the authority, and including specialist advice and support for families with children with autistic spectrum disorder. The key benefits of the revised structure were detailed as was the manner in which its success would be evaluated, including gauging its impact on other Services.

NOTED the outcome of the consultation and the decisions taken by the Housing and Social Work Committee at its meeting on 16 January 2008 to reorganise Disability Services accordingly.

6. Getting it Right For Every Child

Report No CYP3/08 by Marj Stewart, Project Manager was circulated updating members on the development and implementation of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Practitioner training had commenced and positive developments were taking place with children and their families indicating greater satisfaction and understanding of the process. National GIRFEC road shows were to take place to help other local authorities implement their planning models and a business case was also being presented to the Scottish Government to extend funding to allow GIRFEC to be taken further forward in Highland.

In discussion, the contribution made by the voluntary sector was recognised as having been invaluable. Whilst acknowledging the positive results that had been achieved by GIRFEC, only a small number of young people had been involved in consultation on the detail of its implementation and it was therefore important that children and young people be involved in the evaluation process.

NOTED the progress made and **AGREED:-**

- i. an update be provided on the contribution made by the voluntary sector to GIRFEC; and
- ii. that when GIRFEC was being evaluated children and young people were involved.

7. Mental Health Framework

Report No CYP4/08 by Sally Amor, Specialist in Public Health was circulated providing an update on "The Mental Health of Children and Young People: A Framework for Promotion, Prevention and Care", published by the Scottish Executive in November 2005, with a ten year timescale for implementation. The Framework detailed how NHS systems and integrated children's service partners in Highland and Argyll and Bute were required to address a range of needs across the whole continuum of mental health, from mental health promotion, through preventing mental illness, to supporting, treating and caring for those children and young people experiencing mental health difficulties of all ranges of complexity and severity. The report also detailed the progress that had been made in developing a Highland Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Framework Implementation Plan and provided information on the series of consultation events that had taken place with integrated children's service partners across Highland that were informing this approach. However, it was recognised that there was a gap in the provision of drop-in facilities for young people to seek advice and information on various topics including mental health.

NOTED the update on the implementation of the Mental Health Framework plan.

8. Early Years Review Update

Report No CYP5/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated which provided an update on progress following the Early Years Review report presented to the Joint Committee on 7 November 2007 and also in relation to the consultation on Childcare and Family Resource Partnerships. The consultation process had taken longer than anticipated but it was hoped specific recommendations about changes to service provision would be made to the Joint Committee's next meeting.

NOTED the Early Years Review progress and **AGREED** the recommendations made as a result of discussions held on the future of the Childcare and Family Resource Partnerships, namely:-

- iii. that there was one Childcare and Family Resource Partnership in each of the Highland Council's administrative areas, to be held twice yearly with responsibility for advising the Highland Council on local planning of priorities and budgets;
- iv. in Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross there would also be geographically based sub groups that could be supported with small delegated budgets;
- v. that, bearing in mind discussions were ongoing and a final structure was still to be decided, Ross, Skye and Lochaber consider the possibility of retaining smaller geographic sub groups and expanding the formal constitution held by the Lochaber Childcare and Family Resource Partnership to cover the wider area;
- vi. that Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey would not have geographically based sub groups but hold four meetings each year in each of the four localities;

- vii. the Strategic Core Group would continue to represent the Partnerships for planning and service development with regard to the Children's Plan; and
- viii. the Highland Family Resource Alliance continue as an occasional forum sharing best practice and consultation on a conference basis.
- ix.

9. Aftercare Services

Report No CYP6/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated providing an update on progress on developments in aftercare services and which addressed issues raised at the last meeting of the Committee. In particular, Members were advised additional funding had been given to Barnardo's Springboard to allow the level of aftercare service provided by them to be sustained and the Highland Council had also identified a Resource Manager for looked after children and child protection with lead responsibility for throughcare and aftercare. However, a joint member/officer working group was not thought necessary with throughcare and aftercare being better managed by a high level officers group with progress reported regularly to the Joint Committee. With regard to the gap between residential/foster care and temporary and permanent accommodation, proposals were being developed for a supported lodgings scheme and dedicated hostel accommodation.

NOTED:-

- i. the report;
 - ii. the progress made to date on a number of the issues raised at the Joint Committee's last meeting;
- and **AGREED:-**

- iii. that further reports be submitted on the development of housing support services, namely, a supported lodgings scheme and dedicated hostel accommodation.

10. Annual Report of the Child Protection Committee

Report No CYP7/08 by Bill Alexander, Head of Integrated Children's Services was circulated seeking Members' endorsement of the annual report of the Highland Child Protection Committee. Copies of the 2006/07 Annual Report had also been circulated.

AGREED to endorse the annual report of the Highland Child Protection Committee.

11. Date of Next Meeting

NOTED that the next meeting would be held in Seminar Rooms 1 and 2, Centre for Health Sciences, Old Perth Road, Inverness on Friday 14 March 2008 at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting ended at 3.55 pm.