**Redesign Board Workshop 19.9.17**

**Action Note**

**Board Members Present:** Cllr Lobban (Chair), Cllr Reiss (Vice Chair), Cllr Baxter, Cllr Caddick, Cllr Cockburn, Cllr Davidson, Cllr Jarvie, Cllr Louden, Cllr MacKenzie, Cllr MacKinnon,Cllr Callum Smith, Cllr Maxine Smith, John Gibson and Paul MacPherson

**Apologies:** Cllr Andrew Sinclair, Cllr Bremner, Cllr Christie and Cllr Wilson

**Other Members present**: Cllr, Boyd, Cllr Adam, Cllr Gray, Cllr Henderson, and Cllr Laird.

**Staff present:** Steve Barron, Carron McDiarmid, Sandra Campbell, Lynnsey Urquhart, Alison Gordon, Matt Bailey, Suzanne Gowdy, Allan Maguire, Allan Gunn, William Gilfillan, Shane Manning, Michael Kelly, Martin MacDonald, Ruth Cleland.

1. **The action note from the workshop on 15th August 2017** was agreed. Members noted The Board’s work plan was agreed at the Council meeting in September 2017.
2. **Children’s Services** 
   1. **Head of Service up-date on peer review:**  Board members listened to Sandra Campbell’s up-date on progress being made across the 12 review recommendations. They had particular interest in the Killen Project, were disappointed in the response to early discussions with NHS Highland on child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and queried whether better economies of scale were possible in residential placements, although noting the constraints of this from the buildings in use and from the level of support required for young people. On total costs and savings from the action plan it was confirmed that the out of Authority placements budget continued to over spend so that any savings made would be needed to off-set that. In 2016/17 £1.6m of costs had been avoided by new practise. Suggestions were made about offering more training and support for foster carers and for entering the market by providing residential care provision in Highland to other authorities. *(Post meeting note: the latter suggestion has been passed to the Director of Finance as lead officer for the Commercial Board)*
   2. **Interim showcase of Lean project on recruiting foster carers and adoptive parents:**Members heard how staff are enthusiastic about the Lean approach in use to help tackle a lack of suitable foster placements for older children. This issue is important because without these placements children will be in residential care which tends to have worse outcomes for them (evidence shows they are more likely to suffer from poor mental health, become homeless, unemployed and involved in the criminal justice system) and far more costly to the Council and other public service providers. Comparative average annual costs per child are £30k for foster care, £80k for independent foster provider, £130k for Council run residential care and £200k for independent/3rd sector residential care. Currently the application process takes 18 months. It is a complex area to tackle because it involves recruiting, supporting and retaining foster carers and it is highly regulated with annual inspections. The Lean process is focusing on 3 processes for improvement:
      1. reducing the high drop-out rate from expression of interest to application (currently 83% drop out);
      2. reducing Social Worker time on administrative tasks;
      3. having better systems and processes for recording carer data to improve reporting and the duty officer role.

Although the Lean review has not yet concluded, some changes had already been identified such as using an on-line enquiry form which would also gather core data and ‘killer questions’ to avoid abortive work. On-line use should also encourage more interest from potential foster carers. PVG (disclosure checking) applications being routed through the Council’s in-house team instead of through NHSH should reduce the timescale from 3 months to 3 weeks. New data management systems are being developed.

Once the three processes above have dealt with a 2nd phase of work is likely and could focus on: fees and allowances to foster carers as they are currently the lowest in Scotland; asking foster carers for their views on improvement; improving the social media presence; developing e-learning modules; reviewing whether recruitment and retention SW roles are split; analysing better data on children’s needs to identify any other trends/issues.

Board Members thanked the staff involved for all of their work and improvements so far.

* 1. **Scope of the new review into commissioned preventative services for children –** Allan Maguire and Cllr Maxine Smith explained the draft scope for the review. It was supported by the Board. Members attached to the review can provide an up-date on progress for the next workshop, with an interim report for discussion at the workshop in November and proposals for discussion in December prior to seeking Board approval.

1. **Programme of reviews**
   1. **Programme of redesign reviews -** Members noted the overall programme and that it will develop further. For feedback on reviews they confirmed ASN should be reported to the November workshop of the Board and dates for the remaining reviews are to be discussed with the Chair and Vice Chair. A way of reporting progress across all reviews together is to be considered. Dates for formal Board meetings are needed beyond 5th December to enable formal consideration of review recommendations and in time to inform the budget setting process. Invites will be circulated, initially for 19th December.
   2. **Scope of the new peer review into music tuition –** Allan Gunn and Cllr Cockburn explained the draft scope of the review. The review would cover all options highlighting the optimum model(s) for change, including commercial approaches as an alternative to cutting the service. Financial and non-financial benefits of the service would be described and some Members were already aware of the benefits for young people. The proposed scope was supported by the Board. Members attached to the review can provide an up-date on progress for the next workshop, with the proposals for discussion expected for the November workshop and final consideration at the Board on 5th December.
   3. **Car parking review –** the Director of Community Services and the Principal Traffic Officer introduced the paper up-dating Members on the work done and underway on car parking. It highlighted the opportunities arising from the decriminalisation of parking and the scope for raising significant additional income of £1m in 2017/18 and potentially for direct local benefit. Members raised issues around By-laws, enforcement, current out-sourced enforcement, impact modelling and linkages with other enforcement activity and discretionary charges. Members confirmed the peer review should be undertaken as it would look wider than tariffs and include processes around charging and collection. They confirmed that a Policy Development Group should deliberate on car parking policy and the choices around differential approaches to charging prior to any changes being considered at a relevant Committee.
2. **Project catalyst -** a presentation on work in progress to develop the business case was made by Michael Kelly. This included a summary of the financial possibilities although further scrutiny of these was planned. The Board supported a wider scope for the project for the business case, seeing this as a very positive development for the Council, noting the Council could meet regulatory requirements. They noted work would continue to completed the business case and this would involve further engagement of senior management and Members, including further Member briefing. Formal governance was likely to be through Council.
3. **Draft Communications Plan -** Ruth Cleland had produced a communications strategy that covered all the issues to consider. Given time constraints it was agreed that Ruth would meet with the Chair, Vice Chair and Carron to complete a draft, including key redesign messages for stakeholder groups for the next workshop.
4. **Face to face communication with staff** – Members are to be invited to participate in the local staff forums. Cllr Louden is closer to the Sutherland sessions and to be invited. Dates and venues will be confirmed.
5. **AOB** - none