

Staff Connections Ceanglaichean Luchd-obrach



Staff Bulletin | May 2020 | Issue 39

Spotlight edition pt2



Your Comments
Keeping staff informed



Message from the Chief Executive

Dear Colleagues

It has been a very challenging few weeks in our communities as more and more families have been impacted by the loss of family members or friends; our thoughts and condolences are with those coming to terms with such a devastating loss. We have had unique challenges, none of us could have predicted or imagined before the last few weeks yet the kindness, support and compassion across Highland families and communities are helping us to cope with these very challenging times.

As a Council many of our staff continue to be simply inspiring in adapting to very different roles and tasks e.g. it was a real privilege to meet the staff team at Lotland Street in Inverness last week who continue to empty the waste of over 7,000 bins with a reduced workforce and to meet the staff who have been re-trained. And it is brilliant to see many of our staff now being valued by the public and recognised for the vital services that they deliver. It is important that we communicate to our friends, relatives, Members and neighbours how much we value this recognition and their support too.

It has also been an opportunity for personal growth and reflection both in our working and personal lives. I have had the first, of what I intend to be a number, of staff forums with small groups of staff from across a variety of services. This has been hugely enlightening and a real pleasure to speak to some of you in person over Skype and a coffee and hear how you have been getting on, what you have been doing, the changes, the challenges and how you have been coping.

In the next Staff Connections, I would like to focus on some of these reflections and to think about what we could learn from this experience and how this will help everyone with the return to our 'new normal'.

Meanwhile, thank you for your continued commitment, resourcefulness and kindness to our communities.

Take care and keep safe,

Donna Manson
Chief Executive



"The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.' One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger-but recognize the opportunity."

— John F. Kennedy

"Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive."

— Dalai Lama XIV, The Art of Happiness

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

What have been your biggest challenges?

What have you learnt?

What have you done differently?

How would you see things working better moving forward?

Please write to:

corporate.communications@highland.gov.uk



Name:

Paul Whitham

Post title:

**Programme Manager -
Improving the Council**

New role:

**Resources & Deployment
Team Manager**

**Facebook Staff Deployment Links:
www.bit.ly/StaffFacebookDeployment**

**Access to Deployment Portal:
www.bit.ly/DeploymentPortal**

Hotline: 01462 702820

Agile approaches enable Resources & Deployment teamwork

In my previous role I was reporting to the senior executive team to help them move forward with 'Improving the Council Programme'. When we recognised that COVID-19 was going to require some agile approaches, I developed the concept of a Resources & Deployment team to quickly react to emergency staffing requirements so that we could sustain critical services and Craig Rankin created the Deployment Portal to enable staff to register their availability for other duties. Supported by my team of Laura Williamson and Tricia MacDonald, we also adopted Saba Amjad (normally a Planning Technician) and our Talent Management team Koreen MacDougall and Vanessa Gunn, as well as liaising daily with Sharon Bailey in Health and Social Care, HR Business Partners, HR Officers, Education and Business Support

colleagues – too many to name! We link in also with Douglas Wilby from High Life Highland (HLH) and Adam Coleman at Eden Court. This wider team has been fantastic, working together across services to solve problems and quickly respond to requirements. I am so proud of their commitment and drive. But of course without the phenomenal response from so many of our staff we would not be able to respond; many of the 2000 plus Council, HLH and Eden Court staff who have registered have re-deployed within hours, re-trained and volunteered in all sorts of new roles – supporting the Council and our communities in this most testing of times. So, while I'm doing something very different from before, I'm blessed with great colleagues and a fab team who have all responded and are really stepping up to the call.



Name:

Kirsty Baird

Former post title:

Active Schools
Coordinator -
Millburn Cluster,
High Life Highland

New role:

Voluntary Facility
Manager -
Nairn Community
Hub

Kirsty commends Nairn 'can do' attitude

Kirsty Baird was employed as an Active Schools Coordinator with High Life Highland and is now volunteering as Facility Manager - Nairn Community Hub during the COVID-19 response.

I have been volunteering to assist the vulnerable community of Nairn. My role involves identifying the needs by responding to residents' requests of support, and either generating the orders requested or signposting them to the fantastic community groups depending on the resident's needs.

I also help to manage the operational process and distribution of goods from our local facility alongside our brilliant Highland volunteers.

As each day is unique, I am very appreciative of the support and 'can do' attitudes from everyone involved to support the local community.

**Anyone
interested in helping
local groups can visit:**

www.highland.gov.uk/coronavirus

**and click
'Apply to Volunteer'**



Name:

Kirsti McIntyre

Former post title:

Leisure Supervisor,
Aviemore Community
and Leisure Centre

New role:

Operative
with the Local
Community Hub
Operations Cell

Kirsti uses leisure time to volunteer for community hub

Kirsti McIntyre was employed as a Leisure Supervisor for High Life Highland at the very busy Aviemore Community and Leisure Centre prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. Since then she has taken on a very different role within the Local Community Hub Operations cell.

Experienced Ward Manager Liz Cowie has worked closely with Kirsti and helped make the transition as smooth as possible.

Kirsti said: "I have been introduced to some of our amazing local volunteer agencies and NHS teams and have learned a great deal about what they do and just how well they deliver services in Badenoch and Strathspey. "My personal understanding of foodbanks has also been kicked right out of the park."

From fitness classes to food distribution. The hub staff have transformed both halls, one of which supports food storage and delivery preparation.

“

Kirsti added: "I am now planning deliveries, driver routes and who knew I'd be doing freezer temperature checks as part of my daily role?"

"I am proud of the furloughed High Life Highland Badenoch and Strathspey Leisure team who have willingly volunteered to engage as delivery drivers, call handlers and really built a rapport with the vulnerable adult community.

It really is a pleasure to be part of the whole Highland Council team effort."

”



Name:

Steven Gibb

Former post title:

Facilities Management
Assistant (Aviemore)

New role:

Facilities Assistant
(Aviemore
Community Hub)

Steven's pivotal COVID-19 role ensures Aviemore Hub is running like clockwork

Steven helps the Area Facilities Team leader to provide an effective facilities management service with regards to property management, building access and egress. He also carries out regular building condition checks on behalf of the head teacher/responsible premises officer and other routine checks which are specified in building risk assessments.

He also has responsibility for health and safety and specific cleaning duties in relation to combating COVID-19. In addition to those roles, Steven works and liaises with external agencies and council staff to meet establishments needs and assists the Community Hub with day to day running. He is also responsible for ensuring that all jobs and tasks undertaken comply with service operational procedures and work instructions in accordance with Council policies.



Name:

John MacLean

Former post title:

Previously
Community Works
/ Amenities Officer
for Nairn, Badenoch
& Strathspey

New role:

Bereavement
Services Manager

Role change in most challenging of times. Since mid-April John MacLean has been appointed to the post of Bereavement Services Manager for the Council. John was previously the Community Works / Amenities Officer for Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey Area.

He is now based at Inverness Crematorium in a very important and challenging new role at this time during the COVID-19 response.

John's key role is to lead the strategy for the Council's Cemeteries and Crematorium to ensure the Council provide a burials and cremations service that is sensitive to the needs of the Highland's communities. John also has overall management responsibilities for the team at Inverness Crematorium and the Inverness area burial team.

The operational aspects of the Council's burial grounds out with the Inverness area are covered by the Council's amenities team. This covers grounds maintenance and burials.

John MacKay covers Caithness, Sutherland, Ross & Cromarty and Skye & Lochalsh, and Debbie Sutton covers Lochaber, Nairn, and Badenoch & Strathspey.

John said: "I am looking forward to working with our dedicated team to deliver this essential service during these challenging times and to develop the Bereavement Service strategy beyond Covid-19."

Latest information during COVID-19 on the burials, cremations and cemeteries services is on our website:

www.bit.ly/FuneralsGravesCremations



Name:

James McCreath

Post title:

Health Safety and Wellbeing Trainer

New role:

Health Safety and Wellbeing Trainer and Temporary Mortuary volunteer.

Jim ensuring health and safety are to the fore

Jim continues in his roles as trainer for the Health Safety and Wellbeing team, looking at the design development and especially delivery of future training with current constraints. "Delivery of training and travelling for training has always been costly for the Council, this situation has focussed our minds on how we need to do a lot of things differently" he said.

As Mental Health Representative Facilitator, Jim continues to support the Councils mental health reps and colleagues throughout this difficult time.

Jim has been helping Gregor at Environmental Health in training volunteers for the

Temporary Mortuary in safe handling and infection control and has volunteered to work there if required. In his role as foster carer

for The Highland Council Jim and his family continue to look after young people in care through this challenging period. Jim is also a volunteer with the Medical Emergency

Response Team Highland and is on call to support emergency services where required.

Employee Assistance Programme:
www.bit.ly/Discover-Spectrum-Life

My Online Learning for training.

HC Mental Health Toolkit for information:
www.highland.gov.uk/coronavirus

Logo amnesty

Are you using the correct version of The Highland Council logo?

Yes! There is a difference and if you don't know what that is – here's what they look like:



In 2008, for accessible reading (for people with visual impairments) and Gaelic language compliance we introduced an updated version of the logo with Myriad Pro font and altered the layout, colour and size of the lettering. We also stopped using the circular version of the logo.

If you have files, templates, websites, blogs or any other sources within which you use the Council's logo please make sure that you are using the correct version.

Please delete all old versions of the logo on your files and replace them with the correct logo which can be downloaded from the guidance on our website at the link below.

Please note that where existing signage or historical documents exist that use the old logo these should not be amended if any cost is incurred – just all current and new applications of the logo going forward.

The logo is available in a variety of file formats to suit your requirements; as well as a black version and white version.

For Microsoft Office you will need JPEG or PNG (transparent).

Websites require a low resolution JPEG, PNG, or GIF.

For printing, vector formats are available in EPS, SVG or PDF.

For AutoCAD users we have a DWG format.

If you require any alternative format please contact the Council's Graphic Designer: Kirsty.Foster@highland.gov.uk

www.bit.ly/TheHighlandCouncilLogo

Your Comments



Teacher's opinion on Free School Meals e-vouchers

This has been a roaring success and, as a teacher of pupils with special needs, I have received messages of appreciation from several parents. Thank you 😊

Free school meals and assistance with clothing

APPLY

During the current COVID-19 emergency, to receive free school meals (vouchers) and assistance with school clothing your household must be in receipt of any one of the following:

- Income Support
- Universal Credit (where the monthly earned income does not exceed £670)
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, but not in receipt of Working Tax Credit, and your income is less than £16,105 (as assessed by the HMRC)
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and an income below £6,300 (as assessed by the HMRC)
- If you are 16 to 18 yrs old and receive any of these benefits in your own right then you can claim for yourself
- If you are an asylum seeker receiving support
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit

If you think your household is eligible and has not already received your free school meal vouchers or school clothing grant please use the online application available above. Alternatively, the council's Welfare Support Team can be contacted at welfare.support@highland.gov.uk for advice and assistance in making an application.



**COVID-19
Free Helpline
0300 303 1362**

Compliment received about the Shielding Helpline



'I am a council employee working from home. I am not allowed out of my home as I am high vulnerability with my health. All my family are also shielding. I phoned 03003031362 for shielding help with collecting a prescription. I can't praise the lady that answered my call enough. She was efficient, friendly, interested in what I had to say and provided me with lots of information as to what I could receive to help me. She organised what I needed fast. As a council employee I know we often don't hear it when we do good work from the public. In this instance I wasn't doing work related things. What an absolute gem this woman was, just can't praise her enough!!!!'



I don't know who helped get these Council staff examples together in Saturday's Ross-shire Journal article but I think it is very good. Hats off to whoever did it!



www.bit.ly/Ross-shireJournal-Spotlight

 "Hi – many thanks for providing this very useful summary – it is much appreciated, I do catch up with bits and pieces along the way but this is an excellent snapshot."

An opinion on our UK and Scottish Daily Updates on COVID-19



 "What a brilliant edition of Staff Connections – this really highlights the flexibility and willingness of all our staff to roll their sleeves up and just get on with it!
Love the look of the publication too – very fun layout in a dark time – really uplifting to read.
Thanks"

Putting the spotlight on volunteers



Keeping staff informed

The Highland Council @HighlandCouncil

Do your bit - help the fight against coronavirus! @RoSPA can help you stay out of A&E so frontline workers can concentrate on helping those with COVID-19
#AccidentFreeAvoidAandE #StaySafeAtHome #StayHomeStaySafe rospa.com/AccidentFree



Help the NHS
rospa.com/AccidentFree



 "Hi there,
I just wanted to say a massive thank you to you all for the incredible job you're doing on keeping staff updated on all aspects of this crisis. The information coming out is fantastic, and we very much appreciate all the hard work you're all doing right now. We are very grateful indeed.
Stay safe all, and thanks again"

An opinion on our staff guidance



The Highland Council @HighlandCouncil - Mar 26

Our helpline is to help those most in need of assistance, so we are asking people to use our on-line forms & resources as much as possible. To make a payment: highland.gov.uk/pay report a problem: highland.gov.uk/report request a service: highland.gov.uk/request



COVID-19 Freephone Helpline
0300 303 1362
Providing assistance, and to collect details of individuals and community groups looking to volunteer.
Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm

Replying to @HighlandCouncil

Thank you @HighlandCouncil for reaching out today to vulnerable and frail family members this morning. A lovely and sensitive telephone call was very much appreciated. Your patience in encouraging them to write down this number & place by their phone worked well.
@NHSHighland

Occupational Health & Social Work (OHSW) Advice

1. Maintaining Health and Safety Standards

In these unprecedented times, when there are only essential staff at work, it is important that health and safety standards are maintained especially for the 5 elements listed below:

- Risk Assessments
- Information
- Instruction
- Training
- Supervision

Risk assessments (RAs) are the foundation of ensuring and maintaining a healthy and safety workplace. Existing RAs should be reviewed to ensure that they include any new risks relating to Covid-19 and the risks any new/inexperienced workers may bring. The review should be undertaken by competent persons and the local Trade Union health and safety rep consulted BEFORE the findings are communicated to staff.

In terms of public health, social distancing should be put in place before all other protective measures which should be considered in light of the hierarchy of controls.

- Elimination;
- Substitution;
- Engineering controls;
- Signage/warnings and/or administrative controls;
- Personal protective equipment (PPE).

PPE is the last in the hierarchy and should never be considered as the first, or only, solution. Unless delivering personal/medical care - gloves and masks are not required. Social distancing, regular handwashing/use of 60% alcohol hand gel and reminders not to touch your face should be followed. Supervisors should ensure that this advice is being followed. The HSE now has emergency enforcement powers to take enforcement action on organisations where social distancing is not being maintained.

Additional risk assessments will also be required where staff are lone working – existing controls for lone workers (such as phoning into the office) may have to be reviewed, recorded and communicated.

Prior to undertaking tasks, staff should be briefed with local and specific information and instructions – even if they are workers for another Council workplace/site, in case things are done differently where they have previously worked. This should include information on what to do in an emergency, and how to report accidents. We have had to suspend the accident reporting line for the time being, so staff should be informed of local arrangements for reporting accidents.

Occupational Health & Social Work (OHSW) Advice

Competent supervision is key. Supervisors should:

- be competent to supervise the workers, and know the critical safety aspects of the job;
- have access to sufficient resources (including PPE) to deal with health and safety issues as part of 'getting the job done';
- be included in assessing risks and managing the effects of any changes;
- identify any training needs required for the job to be done safely;
- have a positive attitude to health and safety - they should lead by example and encourage safe systems of work;
- make sure that a good example is being set for other workers;
- involve workers and their TU/staff reps in the development of risk assessments and discussions about changes in the job.

All the above also applies to volunteers – we owe at least the same duty of care to them as we do to our other staff.

Health and safety training must be delivered by a competent person. The OHSW team can continue to provide essential training, as required, whilst still respecting social distancing requirements.

2. Accident/Incident Reporting

Cases of Covid-19 which can be attributable to work processes/environments must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

It should be noted that if guidance around risk assessments, working from home, social distancing, cleaning and good personal hygiene are followed, along with the HR advice to stay at home if feeling unwell, then the overall risk will be low. Please feel free to contact the health and safety team if you need any assistance in this.

You must only make a report under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when:

- an unintended incident at work has led to someone's possible or actual exposure to coronavirus. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.
- a worker has been diagnosed as having COVID 19 and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work. This must be reported as a case of disease.

Dangerous occurrences

If something happens at work which results in (or could result in) the release or escape of coronavirus you must report this as a dangerous occurrence. An example of a

Occupational Health & Social Work (OHSW) Advice

dangerous occurrence would be a lab worker accidentally smashing a glass vial containing coronavirus, leading to people being exposed.

Report a dangerous occurrence:

www.bit.ly/Report-of-a-dangerous-occurrence

Cases of disease: exposure to a biological agent

If there is reasonable evidence that someone diagnosed with COVID-19 was likely exposed because of their work, then you must report this as an exposure to a biological agent using the case of disease report. An example of a work-related exposure to coronavirus would be a health care professional who is diagnosed with COVID-19 after treating patients with COVID-19.

Report a case of disease:

www.bit.ly/Report-a-case-of-disease

A copy of the e-form (see link above) must be saved and emailed to: **healthsafety.andwellbeing@highland.gov.uk**

The team will ensure that a copy is shared with the Trade Union health and safety rep.

3. Building Security and Safety

Where buildings are still open, but there is a reduced number of people working there, including staff who have relocated there temporarily, it is very important that the following advice is followed. The Responsible Premises Officer (RPO) may not be available, so other managers should take on this responsibility.

Sign in arrangements

A central sign-in area should be set up for staff to sign in/out (bearing in mind the advice not to share pens).

Fire safety

A senior member of staff should be responsible for liaising with the Scottish Fires and Rescue Services (SFRS) in the event of the fire alarm being activated. Where there is a fire panel, they should be able to interpret it. The sign in sheet should be used to ascertain that everyone has safely evacuated (there may not be enough fire marshals).

Senior management should be aware of whether the alarm is linked to a monitoring station/SFRS or whether a phone call to the SFRS is required. Conversely, a phone call will be required in the case of a false alarm activation.

A quick brief should be constructed on how to deal with fire alarm activations and how to reset the fire alarm system, (codes or keys etc) to allow for resuming operations after

Occupational Health & Social Work (OHSW) Advice

fire brigade investigation as they will not reset alarm fully.) If the RPO is not available, the Maintenance Officer or property Team may be able to assist. All staff should make themselves aware of available emergency exits and know at least 2 escape routes from where they are.

Good housekeeping

All staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- doors and windows are closed and secure before they leave,
- rubbish is not left to accumulate,
- fire doors are not wedged open,
- electrical equipment is switched off at the end of the day, where possible.

(Separate Fire Safety advice has been issued to Hubs.)

4. Occupational Health

Attendance management referrals

Iqarus, the occupational health provider, is still accepting referrals but appointments will be by telephone call only. This is to ensure that advice can still be given, while staying safe. The processes for referral requests, confirmation of appointments and issue of medical reports remain the same, currently. Physiotherapy by telephone is still available (Tuesdays and Thursdays).

Health surveillance

This statutory service will continue, with some amendments. Where health surveillance appointments are due, paper screening will be the normal process.

Managers/team leaders should contact occupational health (highlandcouncil.gbr@iqarus.com) and they will be sent the necessary paperwork which should then be completed by individual staff and returned to occupational health. It is understandable that not all staff will be available at the same time, but by issuing the paperwork we will not get into the situation where we have a backlog and maybe fall foul of the HSE.

The HSE is advocating this approach. HSE has advised occupational staff that the above approach is the correct one. Where problems are identified from the paper review, the HSE is advocating telephone reviews at which a judgement will be made on whether to see individuals face to face and, if so, how to do so safely. This will be a medical decision.

We are currently sourcing alternative arrangements for HGV/PSV driver medicals.

Managers should contact the Health and Safety team at:

healthsafety.andwellbeing@highland.gov.uk if staff fall into this category and require D4 medicals in the next two months.

Staff who are self-isolating can defer this medical until they are able to return to work.

Register with our Staff Deployment Portal

The Highland Council is no longer operating under business as usual in order to focus on delivery of priority and statutory services during the Covid-19 Emergency.

Priority Services are now as follows:

- ✓ Adult Social Care - Residential (NHS)
- ✓ Adult Social Care - Care at Home (NHS)
- ✓ Allied Health Professionals
- ✓ Benefits
- ✓ Burials and cremations
- ✓ Business Support dealing with burials administration
- ✓ Call handling, including service centre
- ✓ Children's Residential Units
- ✓ Children's Social work and Child Protection
- ✓ Children's looked after and Accommodated
- ✓ City and Ward Managers and policy team
- ✓ Cleaning Services
- ✓ Communications and Resilience
- ✓ Community Children's Nursing Services
- ✓ Council Tax / Rates
- ✓ Criminal Justice Social Work
- ✓ Creditors
- ✓ Death registration
- ✓ Domestic Abuse Workers (Women's Aid)
- ✓ Emergency Housing Repairs
- ✓ Emergency Out of Hours Social Work (children & adult social care)
- ✓ Emergency response teams to deal with floods/oil spills etc
- ✓ Emergency, resilience and communications staff
- ✓ Environmental Health
- ✓ Facilities Management
- ✓ Family Nurse Partnership
- ✓ Fleet
- ✓ Fostering and Adoption
- ✓ Harbour and Ferry staff
- ✓ Health Visiting
- ✓ Homelessness staff
- ✓ Household and commercial waste – kerbside collection
- ✓ ICT
- ✓ Infant Feeding Services
- ✓ Key worker Childcare Hubs
- ✓ Mental Health Officer Service
- ✓ Panel/Hearings (Scottish Children's Reporter Administration)
- ✓ Payroll/Pensions
- ✓ Property Maintenance
- ✓ Social work and child protection (out of hours)
- ✓ Trading standards (limited resource)
- ✓ Treasury Management
- ✓ Urgent Road repairs
- ✓ Welfare, Benefits and Payments team

Should I register with our Staff Deployment Portal?

Thank you to all those who have registered so far but in order to keep these services running over the coming weeks and months we need more staff to register their ability to assist. We are expecting staff who are able to re-direct their skills and experience away from non-essential work and contribute to services that will help us protect vulnerable people, deliver care and support recovery during the current environment we are facing together, to do so. There are many other emerging tasks that will be required to support the delivery of the Council's critical duties at this time and as we move into the first phase of Recovery and any easing of lockdown arrangements over the medium and longer term. The working week may need to change to support the delivery of essential Services as required.

Line managers are requested to consider the work of all their staff and any capacity for staff to be deployed to a role focusing on the emergency response.

Please check the table below to determine if you should register:

Which category of staff am I?	Should I Register?
1 Staff who are unable to work because they are ill and off sick – They should not register.	No
2 Staff who are currently away from the work place and are unable to come in due to caring responsibilities, self-isolation or health or shielding reasons.	Yes
3 Staff who are key workers should remain delivering essential Services – Some examples of key workers within the council are staff working on Burials, Health and Social Care staff, Homeless prevention, Trades workers e.g. Plumbers, Joiners, Electricians, ICT – See priority services above for more.	No
4 Staff that do not fall into any of the categories above, are available to work and are not currently delivering essential service should complete the form and be deployed into essential service delivery.	Yes

Before registering, please ensure you confirm with your line manager and have checked your health status by following the national guidance on coronavirus (Covid-19) at:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

Please note that although some roles may include delivering a front-line service to the community, the health and wellbeing of our staff will remain a priority.

How to register with the Staff Deployment Portal

How can I register?

You can register through an easy to complete application, access is provided via the links below. This is a simplified form asking for your contact details, skills, and your availability with some key questions to answer so you can be matched to a suitable role.

Individuals who have health and social care skills are encouraged to apply through the Health and Social Care skills application: www.bit.ly/HSCdeployment This may include staff from other areas of the Council such as Education, who may have related skills and experience.

We are now trying to identify and prepare a separate list of staff who are willing to work if required in our existing residential children's units and we are also planning for additional resources for two further units in order that we are prepared if we see an increase in demand for accommodating Children and Young People. In order to provide those vital services, we require additional staff to help support the existing staff within those establishments. We would achieve

this by matching up appropriate staff with appropriate duties. The experience of additional support staff are as follows;

- who either have experience of looked after children;
- other child care roles or would be keen to get some experience;
- are able to help out in other various capacities not mentioned.

Any employee with appropriate experience, such as Pupil Support Assistants or Early Years staff who are able to provide childcare for key workers at our childcare hubs should use the Key Workers for Childcare Hubs Form:

www.bit.ly/KeyWorkersforChildcareHubs

A map showing the location of childcare hubs can be accessed here:

www.bit.ly/MapofChildcareHubs

List of form links mentioned above are below:

- Health and Social Care – Registration Form www.bit.ly/HSCdeployment
- Highland Council Staff Deployment – Registration Form www.bit.ly/StaffDeploymentForm

- High Life Highland Staff Deployment - Registration Form

www.bit.ly/HLHstaffdeployment

- Key Workers for Childcare Hubs – Registration Form

www.bit.ly/KeyWorkersforChildcareHubs

I am unsure about registering?

If you are able to register but would like some advice or assistance before doing so, then you can contact our Resources and Deployment office for guidance and advice. You can do this by:

- Calling us on **01463 702820**
- Emailing us at: TransitionsProgramme@highland.gov.uk

What happens next?

This is an evolving situation and we will continue to monitor national guidance as it is received. After the submission of your application, the team will be in contact with you as soon as they are able.

We are all working in unprecedented times and your flexibility and willingness to assist are much appreciated.

Thanks to our staff working in Key Worker Childcare Hubs

On 25th March senior staff met in 7 locations across the Highlands to set up Keyworker Childcare Hubs. We had eight hours to get the Hubs up and running to enable workers in vital jobs, for example NHS, Emergency and care services, to continue their work.

The aim of the Hubs is to provide safe childcare and the volunteers are there to support the pupils throughout the day with their schoolwork and play activities whilst maintaining social distancing! Hubs aren't schools so volunteers don't prepare work or deliver lessons but they do help the pupils with the work set by their own schools and make sure they enjoy breaks, lunch and craft activities. However, Hubs do have similar administration procedures for registration, emergency contacts, fire safety and other aspects of school life which all need to be taken care of. We also needed to ensure that pupils with additional support needs had appropriate support in place.

The Inverness Rainbow Hub has pupils and staff who came from 32 different schools and there was initially some anxiety about not working with familiar people, being in a strange setting, and also the stress which we all feel being in lockdown. Now it is a buzzing environment where pupils happily run to their classrooms.

A great example of the dedicated work being carried out is staff member Jordan Tillier, a secondary school teacher, who is currently working in a hub in Wick. Jordan always goes above and beyond for the hub and is quick to provide cover anytime there is an absence of staff.

"Working in the hub has been a definite change. Interests, topics of conversation, approaches to learning and social skills were really quite different and I had to embrace a very quick learning curve.



Jordan Tillier

But fundamentally children are children, whether they are eight or eighteen and during such strained times they all need the same thing. To feel safe, to feel listened to and to be able to learn and participate. The Care Hub is fantastically well organised and staffed by some amazing volunteers from across the community."

We are thankful to all of our staff members who are working hard to keep these hubs running. If we want to increase the number of children in the Hubs then we're going to need more volunteers to see how rewarding it can be.

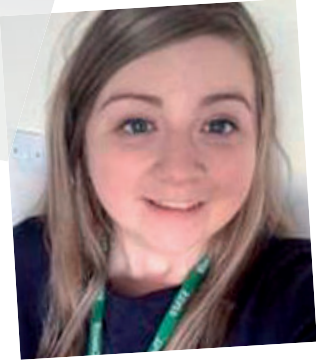
Learn from more of our wonderful staff members who have shared their experiences on the next page



VIEWS ON CHILDCARE HUBS

ABBIE ANDERSON

EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONER



"It's been so amazing meeting lots of new families and children and being able to offer them support and lift the stress of school work for these busy parents working the front line who are doing such an amazing thing for our country - I really do think they are such amazing people!"

OLIVIER BREMNER

TEACHER



"I thought that the risk assessments and all of the guidelines that were in place were very reassuring. The rotas were clear and sent out in plenty of time. It was however, very difficult to social distance, especially when the children were very young."

LIZ PARTRIDGE

EARLY YEARS SUPPORT WORKER



STAFF AT BROADFORD HUB GARDENING OUTSIDE

"I feel a loss of role and structure to my days at the moment due to the circumstances we all find ourselves in, volunteering for Broadford hub helps address these issues for me and means I am contributing to the community effort by being there for the children of key workers to attend which allows their parents to work. It is really a rewarding thing to do."

TRACY TAYLOR
EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONER

"As an EYP I very much support sensory play experiences and that is made more complicated now by keeping everyone safe. We are lucky to have such fantastic settled, friendly children and a huge outdoor area to explore. I am getting to meet new people (the other volunteers) and work with a wider age range of children."



ARTS AND CRAFTS AT THE INVERNESS RAINBOW HUB



Clear Your Head Campaign



These are worrying and uncertain times.

The coronavirus outbreak has changed daily life for us all in Scotland and has had a real impact on how many of us are feeling. It's ok to not feel yourself right now, and we have some great tips to help get you through it.

'Clear Your Head' highlights the practical things people can do to look after themselves whilst staying at home.

Find tips on how to stay positive and feel better at:
www.clearyourhead.scot





spectrum

.life  is

the Council's new Employee
Assistance Programme.

Discover Spectrum.Life,
our new online health and
wellbeing service, by
watching the video here:

www.bit.ly/Discover-Spectrum-Life

and signing up using our
organisation code.

Organisation Code

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