

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Education, Children and Adult Services Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday 18 May 2016 at 10.05 am.

Present:

Highland Council:

Mrs C Caddick	Mrs D Mackay
Mrs I Campbell (Vice Chair)	Mr D Mackay
Miss J Campbell (Substitute)	Mr G MacKenzie
Mr A Christie	Mrs B McAllister
Mrs M Davidson	Mr D Millar (Chair)
Mr M Finlayson	Mrs M Paterson
Mr H Fraser	Mrs F Robertson (Vice Chair)
Mr S Fuller	Mr G Ross
Mr K Gowans	Ms J Slater
Mr A Graham	Ms K Stephen

NHS Highland:

Mrs M Duncan
Dr M Foxley
Dr H van Woerden

Religious Representatives:

Dr A Fraser
Mr G Smith

Youth Convener:

Ms K Bateson

Non-Members also present:

Mrs J Barclay	Mr J Rosie
Ms J Douglas	Mr R Saxon
Mr R Greene	Mr J Stone
Ms L Munro	

In attendance:

Mr B Alexander, Director of Care and Learning
Ms S Campbell, Head of Children's Services, Care and Learning Service
Mr B Porter, Head of Resources, Care and Learning Service
Mr R Campbell, Estate Strategy Manager, Care and Learning Service
Ms M Stewart, Education Officer, Care and Learning Service
Ms K Murray, Principal Officer - Allied Health Professionals, Care and Learning Service
Mr E Foster, Finance Manager, Finance Service
Ms S Bruce, Care and Learning Alliance (Third Sector)
Ms G Newman, Highland Children's Forum (Third Sector)
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Corporate Development Service
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Corporate Development Service

Also in attendance:

Ms I Grigor, Chief Executive, Calman Trust
Mr I Murray, Chief Executive, High Life Highland
Ms J MacDonald, Director of Adult Social Care, NHS Highland
Mr G Reid, Highlands and Islands Partnership Manager, **sportscotland**
Mrs J McCormack, Pupil Support Assistant, Smithton Primary School
Mrs J Aitken, Pupil Support Assistant, Smithton Primary School
Pupils from Smithton Primary School, Alness Academy and Kingussie High School

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.

Mr D Millar in the Chair

Business

Prelininaries

The Chair highlighted the following:-

- a briefing on Care Homes would take place in the Council Chamber between 1.30 pm and 2.00 pm. The Committee would break for lunch at 1.00 pm and reconvene at 2.15 pm;
- it was the end of Dr A Fraser's term as a religious representative on the Committee. Thanks were expressed to Dr Fraser for his contribution; and
- the Council had agreed that the November Committee be brought forward to Wednesday 26 October 2016.

In addition, the Chair extended the best wishes of the Committee to Stephanie Inglis, Commonwealth Games judo silver medallist and former pupil of Millburn Academy, who was in hospital in Vietnam following a serious accident.

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr B Gormley, Mr W Mackay, Mr M Rattray and Mrs M McCulloch.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

The Committee **NOTED** the following declarations of interest:-

Item 3 – Ms J Douglas (non-financial) and Mr K Gowans (financial and non-financial)
Item 6 – Ms K Bateson (non-financial), Ms J Douglas (non-financial), Mr K Gowans (financial and non-financial) and Mr G Ross (non-financial)
Item 11 – Ms J Douglas (non-financial) and Mr K Gowans (financial and non-financial)
Item 16 – Mr A Graham (financial)

3. Highland Play Strategy 2016-2020 Ro-innleachd Cluiche na Gàidhealtachd 2016-2020

Declarations of Interest:

Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item as Directors of High Life Highland and but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.

In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/30/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which outlined the content of the Highland Play Strategy 2016–2020, updated Members on the progress of the Play Improvement Group/Play Highland and introduced the winners of the 2016 Highland Council/Play Highland Community Play Award.

Mrs J McCormack and Mrs J Aitken, Pupil Support Assistants, together with pupils from Smithton Primary School, presented a short film on Smithton Outdoor Explorers After School Club and Green Leaf Garden. Thereafter, the Chair presented them with their award.

During discussion, Members supported the Highland Play Strategy and looked forward to the forthcoming Community Guidance. It was not necessary to spend a lot of money to encourage play and it was a vital part of a child's development. The importance of joining up learning and teaching was emphasised.

The Chair highlighted the planned play event in Inverness and suggested that the Play Improvement Group could work with communities that wished to establish play areas and help them to apply for lottery funding etc.

Thereafter, having commended the winners of the 2016 Highland Council/Play Highland Community Play Award, the Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the content of the Highland Play Strategy 2016-2020;
- ii. **NOTED** the progress of the Play Improvement Group/Play Highland; and
- iii. **AGREED** to sign up to the Play Highland Newsletter.

4. Presentation: Calman Trust Taisbeanadh: Urras Calman

Ms Isobel Grigor, Chief Executive of the Calman Trust, gave a presentation during which it was explained that the Calman Trust was founded in the Highlands in 1998 to help young people and young adults at risk of homelessness. It supported young people with a range of issues, offering housing support and accredited training and providing employment opportunities through social enterprise. The presentation focussed on the needs and experiences of vulnerable young adults across the area, including in the context of welfare reform.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- Members thanked Ms Grigor for her thought-provoking and interesting presentation and commended the Calman Trust for the quality of service it provided for disadvantaged young people;
- there were no immediate solutions but rather it was necessary to look for improvements. The redesign of the Council, in particular, presented an opportunity to improve services and it was essential to focus on preventative work so that there were less people entering the emerging underclass referred to in the presentation;

- the majority of people presenting as homeless were young men under 30 years of age. It was necessary to speak to them about their experiences to find out what might help and the Calman Trust could facilitate those conversations;
- the importance of peer support was emphasised;
- employment was key but competition was fierce and it had never been more difficult for young people to get a quality job. Several partners, including the Council, were involved in employability and there was a considerable amount of Government funding available. However, there was a need for more joined-up working to ensure that targets were met. Direct mentoring was effective but it was also expensive to provide due to the small caseloads. In addition, it was highlighted that many young people were not ready for employment and there was work to be done in that regard;
- circumstances were forcing the young people in question to be older than their years and take on responsibilities they did not have the life skills for such as budgeting and managing a tenancy. It was essential to support them on to a more stable footing and change the system so they did not have to lead adult lives before they were ready;
- society did not like to face the issues in the presentation and many young people were being left by the wayside. It was necessary to break the cycle of hopelessness, unlock young people's potential and help them to thrive on their own terms;
- housing was the foundation for everything else – for example, it was not possible for apply for jobs without an address for application responses;
- in relation to early diagnosis of additional support needs, there was a need for caution as labelling someone too young could prevent them from branching out and developing;
- in areas of deprivation, a small setback could escalate and become catastrophic without positive intervention;
- well qualified young people also had difficulties keeping work and there was a societal deficit in terms of responsibility and connection;
- information was sought on how the Council could help the Calman Trust achieve more;
- vulnerable young people were visible in pre-school/school and the importance of early intervention, as well as a Named Person, was emphasised;
- a lot of attachment behaviour was formed by the age of three and the early years were critical; and
- parenting skills did not just come from parents but from the professionals who were engaging with children and young people.

Thereafter, Ms Grigor having responded to the issues raised, the Committee **NOTED** the presentation.

5. Outstanding Achievements Coileanaidhean Air Leth

There had been tabled a list of outstanding achievements by people and groups.

The Committee **NOTED** the outstanding achievements and **AGREED** that the Director write to all those involved in recognition of their success.

6. Revenue and Capital Budgets 2016/17 Teachd-a-steach agus Buidseatan Calpa 2016/17

Declarations of Interest:

Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item as Directors of High Life Highland and but, having applied the test outlined in

Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.

In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

Ms K Bateson declared a non-financial interest in this item as a relative was involved with a MUGA project at Culloden Academy but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.

Mr G Ross declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Board Member of the Highland Football Academy but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/31/16 dated 10 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the Care and Learning Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and investment priorities for Inverness Schools.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

Third Sector and Voluntary Organisations Funding

- information was sought on the criteria to be used to score applications. In addition, concern was expressed regarding the proposed timescales and the formation of a Sub-Group. It was suggested that applications should be debated by the Committee and that the process be reviewed and brought back to the next meeting. In response, it was explained that, as the Committee did not meet again until August, this would give organisations less time to make provision in advance of any reduction in funding. The proposed Sub-Group would be established following today's meeting and nominations would be sought from political groups. However, the Chair noted the Liberal Democrat Group's intention not to take part. A letter had been issued to Third Sector and voluntary organisations and this would be circulated to Members of the Committee for information.

Energy Efficiency Savings

- further to previous requests, information was sought regarding schools energy incentives, particularly the measures to be implemented and how the incentive element worked. The Chair explained that this was a matter for the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee and undertook to ask the relevant Director to contact Mr A Christie and provide the information requested.

Vacancies

- vacant Head Teacher posts caused anxiety for both staff and parents and an assurance was sought that they were being filled without delay, with an adequate handover wherever possible;
- where posts were being held vacant, an assurance was sought, and provided, that the impact on the remaining staff was taken into consideration;
- in relation to the teaching posts in Appendix 1 of the report, confirmation was requested that they were all in schools where there was an established surplus;

- information was sought on how long the post of Child Protection Adviser for Skye, Lochalsh, Wester Ross and Assynt would be held for and how cover was and would continue to be provided, particularly given that the Lead Child Protection Adviser post remained vacant and the reductions in full-time equivalent children's social workers in the area; and
- an update was sought regarding the vacancies at Merkinch Primary and Drummond Schools.

Major Capital Projects

- in relation to the Tain 3-18 Campus, concern was expressed regarding the expected increase in costs and an assurance was sought, and provided, that this would not affect the schedule of works; and
- with regard to the newly refurbished Elgin Hostel in Portree, Members commended the contractors for their work on what was now an excellent facility.

Alness and Invergordon Schools

- the explanation regarding the potential collaboration with other North Councils was welcomed. However, a firmer assurance was sought that the projects would not extend beyond 2020; and
- Members questioned whether the increase in costs in relation to the Tain 3-18 campus would impact on Alness and Invergordon schools and whether the Alness Academy safety works were on target.

Regional Sports Facility

- given that the proposed Regional Sports Facility did not form part of the City-Region Deal, Members questioned how the project would be funded and if it was prudent to continue with it at this stage. In response, the Chair explained that it was a matter for full Council and there would be a report to the June meeting.

School and Community Synthetic Pitches

- concern was expressed regarding the issue of seagulls nesting on the Tain all-weather pitch, particularly in terms of loss of High Life Highland revenue, the impact on the school sports curriculum, the significant cost of clearing the pitch and ongoing expenditure on ineffective deterrents. It was essential that the pitch was cleared within the current week and that, thereafter, more effective properly funded preventative measures were explored, such as netting etc. The Chair suggested that the Head of Resources liaise with Ward Members outwith the meeting;
- it was essential that Gairloch High School synthetic pitch was attended to as a matter of urgency, particularly given that the grass pitch was unusable due to flooding and rocks. In relation Ullapool High School, whilst not as urgent, the school roll was bigger therefore demand on the pitch was greater;
- concern was expressed regarding the condition of the synthetic pitch at Charleston Academy, which formed part of the Highland Football Academy and could not be used by the elite players for its intended purpose. It was requested that consideration be given to including it in the capital programme as a matter of urgency. The Head of Resources undertook to look in to the matter and revert to Mr G Ross outwith the meeting; and
- information was sought on the timeline for the proposed synthetic playing field at Culloden Academy.

New Projects

- information was requested on the budget for the Park Primary – Nursery Alterations project. The Estate Strategy Manager undertook to respond to Mr K Gowans outwith the meeting.

Inverness Leisure

- an assurance was sought, and provided, that there would be no reduction in the future refurbishment programme as a result of bringing forward an additional £50k from 2018/19 to carry out remedial works.

School Capacity Modelling/Inverness Schools – Roll Pressures and Future Investment Priorities

- thanks were expressed to the Head of Resources for the report and the briefings that had taken place for Inverness Members;
- concern was expressed regarding the poor condition of Charleston Academy and that no capital investment in secondary schools was scheduled until the second half of the capital programme. Many areas of the school, particularly the science block, were not fit for purpose and it was requested that the proposed feasibility study be brought forward as a matter of urgency, the capital programme be revised to include investment in Charleston Academy at an early stage and the Committee be advised of timescales;
- in relation to potential alternative sites for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, Members questioned whether a report by the Council's Gaelic Development Team had been brought to officers' attention. In addition, most of the current pupils lived in the Hilton, Cauldeen, Lochardil and Milton of Leys catchment areas and concern was expressed regarding the impact on families if a replacement school was built on the other side of Inverness;
- Members welcomed the assurance that officers were working closely with Planning colleagues. However, there was concern amongst residents regarding the capping of school rolls, particularly in Inverness South, and the pressure on existing schools until such time as expansion was sufficient to trigger the building of a new school. In relation to the Ness Castle development in particular, it was understood that the trigger was 380 houses but developers might only build 345 houses leading to significant additional pressure with no new school to alleviate it. The Head of Resources undertook to update Inverness Members in relation to the Ness Castle development outwith the meeting;
- concern was expressed that the funding allocation of £48m was insufficient, particularly given the Scottish Government Guidance on Determining Primary School Capacity which recommended a minimum of 1.7m² per pupil. Approximately £80m was required to fund the projects in years one to ten of the capital programme and it was suggested that this be the subject of the next briefing;
- concern was expressed in relation to the anticipated requirement for 25 additional classrooms as well as 20 to 25 nursery classrooms and the impact on families if children were not able to be accommodated in their catchment area school/nursery. In addition, information was sought on how it was proposed to address the increased pressure on common areas, such as gym halls, if additional classrooms were provided;
- the holistic approach being taken by officers was welcomed;
- the new approach to calculating primary school roll projections was welcomed. Alongside that, it was necessary to develop strategies for the medium and longer term;
- in relation to early learning and childcare, it was important to obtain as much funding as possible from the Scottish Government to cover everything that needed to be done, not just in Inverness but throughout Highland;

- Inverness High School had suffered from neglect and the capital investment of £10m was welcomed; and
- whilst recognising that it was not a matter for this Committee, concern was expressed regarding the planning process in that there were no legal reasons to object to developers increasing their planning applications, despite the impact they might have on school capacity. It was suggested that there was need to modernise the Masterplan process, taking into account the impact on schools and communities, and the Leader undertook to liaise with the relevant Chair and Director in that regard.

The Chair acknowledged that Inverness Schools was an area of significant pressure and emphasised the importance of the briefings for Inverness Members. It was suggested that the issues raised be discussed in detail at the next briefing which would be arranged in early course.

Asset Management Issues

- Members welcomed the release of the Clachnaharry building and suggested that all possible options for its future use be explored e.g. social housing or a new building for the Sea Scouts.

Other issues

- there was no reference in the report to the longstanding need for refurbishment of the Toy Box nursery in Gairloch and a similar unit in Ullapool. The Chair undertook to update Mr R Greene following the meeting;
- concern was expressed regarding the poor condition of Broadford Primary School and the health and safety issues it presented for pupils. There was a need for it to be included in the capital programme and it was requested that the feasibility study be progressed as a matter of urgency; and
- concern was expressed about the breadth of business the Committee covered. In relation to the current item in particular, it was suggested it should have been subdivided to allow sufficient time to debate the recommendations. In addition, concern was expressed regarding the Council's capacity to manage the significant number of capital projects.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the actions taken in relation to the new Project Management Governance Policy as outlined in Section 2 of the report;
- ii. **NOTED** the update in relation to funding for voluntary organisations, as set out at paragraph 3.3, including the establishment of a small sub-group of ECAS Members to consider submitted applications;
- iii. **NOTED** the update provided in relation to vacancies (paragraph 3.5), as requested at the last Committee meeting;
- iv. **AGREED** the new post of ICTiL Implementation Project Manager, as set out at paragraph 3.8;
- v. **NOTED** the status of the Major Capital Projects listed in Section 4 and Appendix 2;
- vi. **NOTED** the current position with regard to the Alness and Invergordon Schools as outlined in Section 5.1;
- vii. **AGREED** the proposals with regard to the future maintenance of synthetic playing fields in Section 5.5.2;
- viii. **NOTED** the position regarding the Community and Leisure budget in paragraph 5.6.1;
- ix. **APPROVED** the recommended action in relation to the Grantown Grammar/Craig MacLean Centre, Refurbishment of Swimming Pool as detailed in paragraph 5.6.3, namely that the Director of Care and Learning, in consultation with the Chair and Vice

- Chair of this Committee, be authorised to approve the final cost of the project when available and that this would be homologated at the next meeting of the Committee;
- x. **AGREED** that an additional £50,000 be brought forward for the remedial works at Inverness Leisure as set out in paragraph 5.6.4;
 - xi. **NOTED** the current position on Acharacle Primary School Playing Field as set out in paragraph 5.7;
 - xii. **APPROVED** the New Projects as detailed in paragraph 5.6.2 and Appendix 3;
 - xiii. **NOTED** the actions taken following the issues at Edinburgh Schools as set out in Section 6.1;
 - xiv. **APPROVED** the proposed changes in respect of Primary School Capacity Modelling as set out in Section 6.2.1 to 6.2.4 and **NOTED** the position with regard to Secondary Schools as set out in paragraph 6.2.5;
 - xv. **NOTED** the current position with Inverness Schools as outlined in Section 7 and **AGREED** the recommendation set out in paragraph 7.10;
 - xvi. **NOTED** the current position with the ongoing School Estate Review as outlined in Section 8;
 - xvii. **APPROVED** the recommended actions relating to Asset Management Issues detailed in Section 9;
 - xviii. **AGREED** that the letter issued to Third Sector and voluntary organisations regarding the impact of funding reductions be circulated to Members of the Committee for information; and
 - xix. **AGREED** that, in considering its disposal, all possible options for the future use of the Clachnaharry building be explored.

In terms of Standing Order 18, the Committee **AGREED** that agenda item 11 be considered at this juncture.

11. High Life Highland Performance Report **Aithisg Choileanaidh High Life na Gàidhealtachd**

Declarations of Interest:

Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item as Directors of High Life Highland and, in relation to Ms Douglas, also as her husband was a volunteer junior shinty coach and she herself was a Leader with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.

In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/36/16 dated 20 April 2016 by the Chief Executive, High Life Highland (HLH), which presented information on the performance of High Life Highland during the operating period April 2015 to March 2016; provided general updates since the last report in November 2015 and; provided information on the Active Schools programme and the volunteering Leadership Programme for young people.

In amplification of the report, a presentation was provided during which Members were informed of attendance performance figures over the range of services the company provided. In total, HLH had 5,330,265 visits in 2015/16, continuing the upward trend experienced since its inception. Having also provided some general updates, particularly in relation to the amalgamation of HLH and Inverness Leisure, an overview was also given of the Active Schools Network, whose aim was to increase physical activity before school,

during lunchtimes and after school. Much of this was delivered by volunteers and, to encourage young people to lead activities, HLH had developed a Volunteering Leadership Programme. To illustrate the enormous benefit this could bring to individuals, Nicolle Larnach from Alness Academy and Ian Davidson, Kingussie High School each spoke to Members explaining how the Programme had helped to turn their lives around.

Having warmly congratulated the young people on their achievements, Members made the following comments:-

- appreciation was expressed that a Gaelic Medium sports and dance course was planned for summer 2016 and that this would result in 30 young leaders being deployed to Gaelic Medium settings to lead activities to their peers;
- reference was also made that the Carers Allowance had been one of a few unrecognised benefits that prevented claimants getting access to the High Life card scheme. Connecting Carers had successfully campaigned for the Carers Allowance to be treated as equal to allow carers to gain access to the High Life card scheme. Now, unpaid carers who contacted Connecting Carers and had a full Carer Support Plan carried out, would have a letter issued which, on presentation to their local facility, would result in a membership card being issued;
- tribute was paid to the work HLH did with youth services. HLH facilitated the Highland Youth Parliament and through its work with this, and the Leadership Programme, it had made a huge difference to individuals;
- tribute was also paid to the work HLH did to interact with communities. Staff were encouraging, committed, enthusiastic and seemed to genuinely care about the wellbeing of communities and this could not be underestimated;
- appreciation was also expressed at the enthusiasm and commitment displayed by HLH's Disability Sports Team;
- support for the development of a new outdoor centre at Glenmore was voiced and it was hoped that momentum would continue;
- the number of young people using sports centres was welcomed and it was particularly satisfying to see some of these young people moving on from the Leadership Programme to eventually being employed at the centres;
- leadership skills would benefit young people in the future and would help to build confidence. It also meant that there would be a supply of leaders into the future;
- the impact young leaders had on the lives of others was acknowledged; and
- appreciation was expressed to the Board of Directors of HLH, particularly the volunteer Directors.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. that High Life Highland had met or exceeded the outcomes expected in the Service Delivery Contract with the Council for the period April 2015 to March 2016;
- ii. the general updates since the last report in November 2015; and
- iii. the work delivered by High Life Highland through the Active Schools programme and the volunteering leadership programme for young people.

7. Additional Support Needs Review Update Cunntas às Ùr mu Ath-sgrùdadh air Feumalachdan Taic a Bharrachd

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/32/16 dated 25 April 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which explained that a detailed process of consultation and review of Additional Support Needs (ASN) in Highland had been completed during 2013/14 and reported to Committee in May 2014. The review had made 26 recommendations for improvements to structures and practices, with the aim of achieving better outcomes for children and young people, that had been remitted to the ASN Improvement Group to

implement and monitor. The report provided the second annual update of the work following this review. For ease of reporting, recommendations relating to a single theme were grouped together. It also took account of the revised 2016/17 budget, set at the Special Council on 25 February.

Prior to discussion, the Director clarified that work was ongoing to identify an industrial unit in Easter Ross as a potential site for the Intensive Support and Vocational Centre for the Mid Area and not solely in Alness, as had been detailed in the report.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the focus on quality of plans for pupils with needs at all levels was welcomed;
- in recognising that there would be changes to the allocations to schools on a greater scale than had previously been anticipated, it was feared that some Pupil Support Assistant (PSA) posts, helping children with identified needs, would be affected. With a little early support from PSAs many pupils went on to successfully cope with school but, without this early intervention, there was a danger in the long term that it could have a negative impact and could lead to some disengaging with education;
- a workshop, where the experiences of Members and officers surrounding the impact of the implementation of the Additional Support Needs Allocation model on schools could be explored in detail, was requested. The implications of the reallocation went beyond the pupils themselves but would affect the whole school community;
- it was hoped that it would be possible to identify additional resources, recognising that it would be preventative spend. This would form part of discussion in terms of the redesign of the Council;
- in session 2016/17 29% of the school population had ASN, a rise from previous years;
- the ASN allocation model had been agreed in September 2012 and, while the report referred to the need to reassess it as a result of factors such as Voluntary Redundancy etc, details as to specific changes were requested;
- clarification was sought in terms of the wording suggesting the need to retain the spread of support from teaching staff and to target the majority of PSA time to those pupils where there was a clearly identified need. This suggested that, in the past, pupils with no need had been given PSA time. In response it was explained that, previously PSAs had provided support across the board but the proposal was that they now concentrate on those with high needs – levels 3 and 4;
- it was disappointing that Levels 1 and 2 would now not get dedicated PSA support but it was pointed out that, since the ASN model had been agreed in September 2012, other resources were now available, such as the increase in nursery provision, and these would go some way towards meeting the needs of these pupils;
- a consequence of the £0.6m budget saving was that there would be a reduced level of support and that there was a danger that not all needs would be fully met and it was queried if Members had been fully aware of this when making the cut;
- whilst recognising no one wanted a reduction in service, Members expressed confidence that officers had thoroughly worked through the implications;
- it was requested that Tain also be considered as a potential site for the Intensive Support and Vocational Centre for the Mid Area given its proximity to the Seaboard villages and the problems encountered by these villages in terms of transport;
- it was suggested that there was a case to return to the situation where schools could argue for increased allocation where they felt they had a specific need; and
- confirmation was sought, and received, that schools still had a pre-set allocation, allowing them to plan for additional support.

The Committee **NOTED** the progress to date in relation to the implementation of the recommendations from the ASN Review and, in particular:-

- i. **NOTED** the work concluded in the West Area with respect to the review of An Cala and **AGREED** the proposals set out in the report;
- ii. **AGREED** the recommendations for the refocusing of the Resource Allocation Model to ensure support for those pupils with greatest need and to refocus more of the support from ASN Teachers to capacity building and professional development;
- iii. **AGREED** the recommendations for service redesign in the South Area around SEBN support;
- iv. **AGREED** that a workshop exploring the issues surrounding the Additional Support Needs Allocation model be held in June 2016; and
- v. **AGREED** that Tain also be considered as a potential site for the Intensive Support and Vocational Centre for the Mid Area.

8. Children's Services – Performance Report Seirbheisean Chloinne – Aithisg Coileanaidh

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/33/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the performance framework for Children's Services.

The Committee **NOTED** the performance information.

9. Children's Services – Assurance Report Seirbheisean Chloinne – Aithisg Barantais

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/34/16 dated 5 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning, the purpose of which was to provide assurance to NHS Highland in relation to services commissioned and delivered through Highland Council. The content of each assurance report was informed by the Highland Health and Social Care Committee and discussion with the Child Health Commissioner.

It was explained that a new format showing health spend only would be available for future reports but an example of this was provided detailing expenditure to September 2015. This would be produced half yearly and an outturn for 2015/16 would be available for Members in due course. In addition, clarification was also sought around the School Nursing Review and how it was proposed to address the problems surrounding the archiving of child health records.

The Committee **NOTED** the issues raised in the report and that Members' comments would be incorporated into a report to NHS Highland as part of the revised governance arrangements.

10. Update on the Implementation of the Refreshed Universal Pathway for Health Visiting Cunntas às Ùr mu Bhuileachadh Slighe Choitcheann Ùraichte airson Tadhail Slàinte

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/35/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which explained that the revised Universal Pathway for Health Visiting had been published in October 2015. Since then, Health Boards had been working with the Scottish Government to compile their plans for implementation. The report provided an update on the current progress within Highland Council, as Health Visitors began to deliver the enhanced home visiting programme.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- in recognising the comprehensive visiting regime, it was accepted that not every single child and family would have every visit. However, this could have a detrimental impact on the Council's developmental check records. The situation could arise, for example,

- where there where a Health Visitor was satisfied that a child was safe and well cared for but, as a result of a visit being missed, this was consequently flagged as a concern;
- assurance was sought, and received, that the additional recurring resource required from the Scottish Government to deliver this pathway would be ongoing; and
 - an update was sought, and received, regarding the current position of the filling of vacant Health Visitor posts.

The Committee **NOTED** the implementation of the enhanced health visiting pathway.

12. Black Isle Education Centre - Proposal to Proceed to Statutory Consultation on Closure

Ionad Foghlaim an Eilein Duibh – Moladh Dol air Adhart gu Co-chomhairle Reachdail a thaobh Dùnadh

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/37/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which sought agreement to proceed to a statutory consultation, under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, on a proposal to discontinue the provision of education at the Black Isle Education Centre. The appendices to the report had been circulated separately as Booklet A.

Having considered the report and the proposal contained in Booklet A, the Committee **AGREED** to proceed to statutory consultation, per the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, on a proposal to discontinue the provision of education at the Black Isle Education Centre.

13. Kinbrace Primary School - Proposal to Proceed to Statutory Consultation for Formal Closure

Bun-Sgoil Cheann a' Bhràiste – Moladh Dol air Adhart gu Co-chomhairle Reachdail airson Dùnadh Oifigeil

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/38/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which explained that Kinbrace Primary School was currently mothballed and had been since the end of session 2012/13. The report sought agreement to proceed to a statutory consultation, under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, for formal closure of the school. The appendices to the report had been circulated separately as Booklet B.

Having considered the report and the proposal contained in Booklet B, the Committee **AGREED** to proceed to statutory consultation, per the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, regarding the proposal for formal closure of Kinbrace Primary School and the re-assignment of its catchment area between Helmsdale and Melvich Primary Schools.

14. Management of Schools Rianachd Sgoiltean

i. Introduction Ro-ràdh

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/39/16 by the Director of Care and Learning which explained that the following reports updated Members on aspects of the management of schools programme and sought approval for developments in relation to the organisation of schools and the curriculum and early years services.

The Committee **NOTED** the introductory report.

**ii. Structure of Schools and Curriculum
Structair Sgoiltean agus Curraicealaim**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/40/16 dated 10 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the progress being made around workstreams 1 and 2: the delivery of the curriculum; and the organisation of schools and management structures.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- reference was made to the Member/officer visit to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to look at their virtual learning developments and opportunities for collaboration and shared service. This partnership had been very informative and beneficial for both authorities and would continue;
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar had raised a lot of funding from organisations such as the Scottish Government and Bòrd na Gàidhlig and it was hoped that Highland too could pursue similar funding opportunities;
- clarification was sought as to whether the two secondments would only be tasked with progressing work on distance learning and support to staff or if they would be able to consider issues including the lack of infrastructure in schools which, it was believed, would hinder progress. In this regard, the Chair informed Members that he had received positive reassurances that the necessary infrastructure would be in place for schools, on time;
- the timeline for the organisation of schools and management structures across Associated School Groups (ASGs) was ambitious but it was important that attention was focused on the project;
- while embracing distance learning there would always be a need for some personal interaction and a degree of blended learning. Time would also be required for on-line resources to be developed but, in the long term, there were significant savings which could be achieved; and
- discussions had taken place with the Head Teachers and Parent Councils of the Tain and Plockton ASGs and it would be beneficial for Members to have sight, if possible, of the minutes of these meetings.

The Committee **NOTED** the progress on workstreams 1 and 2 and **AGREED**:-

- i. the work being taken forward on developing the online provision in 2016/17; and
- ii. the programme of work and timeline set out for the organisation of schools and management structures across Associated School Groups.

**iii. Further developments in Early Learning and Childcare
Leasachaidhean a bharrachd ann an Tràth-Ionnsachadh agus Cùram-Chloinne**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/41/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which outlined the progress to date in taking forward the strategic plan for the further expansion of flexible delivery of Early Learning and Childcare from August 2016.

In discussion, clarification was sought, and received, that variation of times and models on offer would be explored to determine what was viable and possible to deliver early learning and childcare. This would be challenging for staff but the requirement was to deliver flexibility.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to continue to support the flexible approach in determining the model of delivery adopted by each school setting;
- ii. **AGREED** the negotiated approach to the allocation of management time depending on the level of flexibility being implemented from August 2016;
- iii. **APPROVED** the change to the staffing structure of school nursery settings of removing posts of Out of School Care Assistant and Auxiliary from the provision for 3 and 4 year olds but retaining them for the childcare for school age children; and
- iv. **AGREED** to support, in principle, the further refinement of the staffing structure to create a clear structure to support future expansion and career development opportunities.

15. National Improvement Framework for Education Frèam Leasachaidh Nàiseanta airson Foghlam

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/42/16 dated 10 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which introduced the National Improvement Framework. The report set out the initial work that had begun in Highland to deliver the priorities set out within the Framework and provided an update on the Scottish Attainment Challenge within Highland and ongoing links with other northern authorities.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- clarification was sought as to the evaluation methodology which would be used to ascertain that progress on being made;
- the work of the Highland Parent Forum Partnership was commended and it was suggested that it would be beneficial for their minutes to be considered by the Committee as this would highlight any concerns the Partnership might have. Their feedback on consultations too would be welcomed and it was reported that they were keen to work proactively with the Committee to highlight the views of parents; and
- it was important to report back timeously to parents about issues they had raised during consultations or regarding actions they may have requested.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the key priorities set out in the report and scrutinised the progress being made; and
- ii. **AGREED** to explore the possibility of the minutes of the meetings of the Highland Parent Forum Partnership being submitted, for information, to the Committee.

16. Review of School Transport Policy Ath-sgrùdadh air Poileasaidh Còmhdhail Sgoile

Declaration of Interest:

Mr A Graham declared a financial interest in this item on the grounds of being an employee of Bòrd na Gàidhlig and left the room.

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/43/16 dated 6 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which described proposed changes to the Council's school transport policy and recommended adoption of an updated policy document.

In welcoming the clarity the review brought in regards to the relative responsibilities of parents etc, Members also welcomed the change in policy to reflect modern family structures where, in cases where parents lived apart, free transport could be provided from/to both parents' addresses. In addition, with regards to supervision on transport, it

was hoped that a degree of training could be provided to bus drivers as to how to effectively deal with incidents of misbehaviour.

The Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the school transport policy document appended to the report;
- ii. **APPROVED** the changes to charges for privilege places;
- iii. **NOTED** the intention to introduce defined travel entitlement areas for Gaelic Medium and denominational education, with a further report to come back to the Committee; and
- iv. **NOTED** the work done with Millburn Academy on a code of conduct.

17. Transitions Update Cunntas às Ùr mu Eadar-ghluasadan

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/44/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the management of transitions and developments involving NHS Highland and Council.

In response to a query the Director confirmed that the scoping of the options would look at the advantages and disadvantages of having a joint health and care transitions team, together with the evidence, benefits and challenges. It was not a scoping exercise intended to examine its implementation.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- whilst welcoming the involvement, between the ages of 14-18, of NHS Highland in planning for these young people's future care needs, it was important that this message was disseminated to the areas as, at present, there appeared to be a lack of awareness of this proposal by those who would be involved in implementing it;
- the expansion of managing transitions up to 25 years of age was welcomed;
- the clarification about the co-ordinating role, case management and financial responsibilities was recognised as being of importance; and
- in acknowledging that transition periods could be particularly stressful for all those involved, it was important that the consultation included the parents of the young people.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the report; and
- ii. **AGREED** to support the scoping of options regarding a joint health and care transitions team.

18. Employee Survey Action Plan Plana-gnìomh Suirbhidh Luchd-obrach

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/45/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which outlined the proposed improvement actions for the Care and Learning Service in response to the views expressed by staff within the Service in the seventh Highland Council Employee Survey 2015.

The Committee **AGREED** to support the Service Improvement Action Plan for the Care and Learning Service and the process of monitoring progress.

19. Internal Audit Reports Aithisgean In-Sgrùdaidh

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/46/16 dated 9 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an overview and update in relation to three internal audit reports which had been considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee:-

- Information Security in Schools
- Family Teams – Management of Staffing Establishment
- Off Site Excursions (follow up)

The Committee **NOTED** the report and the progress in relation to the agreed management action arising from the internal audit reports.

20. Complaints Review Committee Outcomes **Toraidhean Comataidh Ath-sgrùdaidh nan Gearanan**

- i. There had been circulated joint Report No ECAS/47/16 dated 6 May 2016 by the Depute Chief Executive and the Director of Care and Learning which set out the findings and recommendations following a Complaints Review Committee held on 17 March 2016. The report also provided an overview of the complaints process and highlighted the requirement for decisions of the Complaints Review Committee to be reported to the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee.

The Committee **NOTED** that:-

- i. the Complaints Review Committee met to consider the case, and the findings;
and
 - ii. no recommendations were made by the Complaints Review Committee.
- ii. There had been circulated joint Report No ECAS/48/16 dated 6 May 2016 by the Depute Chief Executive and the Director of Care and Learning which set out the findings and recommendations following a Complaints Review Committee held in February 2016. The report also provided an overview of the complaints process and highlighted the requirement for decisions of the Complaints Review Committee to be reported to the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. that the Complaints Review Committee met to consider the case, and the findings; and
- ii. the recommendations made by the Complaints Review Committee.

21. Minutes **Geàrr-chunntas**

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the Minutes of the FHC4 Leadership Group on 20 April 2016; and
- ii. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Adult Services Development and Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 22 April 2016.

The meeting concluded at 4.20 pm.