

The Highland Council

Health and Social Care Working Group

Minutes of the first meeting of the **Health and Social Care Working Group** held in the Leader's Meeting Room, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday, 19 April 2018 at 2.00pm.

**Present:**

Mrs M Davidson	Mr R Laird (Substitute)
Mr R MacDonald (V/C)	Mrs M Cockburn
Ms N Sinclair	Mr R Bremner (V/C)
Miss J Campbell	Mr R MacWilliam
Mrs J Barclay	Ms K Stephen
Mr D Macpherson	Mr R Gale

**Officials in attendance:**

Mr B Alexander, Director of Care & Learning  
Ms I Murray, Commissioning Officer, Care & Learning  
Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager

**Business**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms M Smith, Mr C Smith, Mr A Sinclair and Mr D MacLeod.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest at the meeting.

**3. Appointment of Chair**

It was **AGREED** to appoint Mrs M Davidson as Chair of the Working Group.

**4. Proposed Terms of Reference**

The proposed Terms of Reference for the Working Group – which had been agreed by the full Council at the meeting on 26 October 2017 – had been circulated and were **NOTED** as follows:-

- to lobby for appropriate health care funding in the area;
- to assess and examine the ongoing redesign of health and social care by NHS Highland; and
- mindful of the current plans and activity across health and social care, to engage with NHS Highland and others to ensure that there is appropriate democratic involvement that is driven by both sustainability of funding and sustainability of care.

## 5. Current Issues

In relation to current issues, and with specific reference to the Partnership Agreement with NHS Highland, it was confirmed that a review of current arrangements was currently being undertaken and a report would be submitted to the Joint Monitoring Committee in the following week. In this regard, a draft of the report was tabled at the meeting – on the understanding that it might still require to be further updated before final presentation to the Committee.

During a summary, the Director of Care & Learning confirmed that it was clear that a more developed service and financial framework was now required, including a new approach to the governance and management arrangements across and within both organisations, in order to meet future challenges. Accordingly, the report presented proposals for a strategic plan, financial framework and enhanced clarity in governance and liaison arrangements. Whilst the focus was on adult services, it was noted that (if agreed) the principles could also be applied to children's services in future.

As such, the proposed features of the reviewed arrangements were summarised at the meeting and included:-

- (i) single governance of integrated services for adults through assurance of service delivery at the NHS Highland Health & Social Care Committee and NHS Highland Board (with further detail to follow on the appropriate duty of care);
- (ii) scrutiny of the above arrangements at the Adult Services Scrutiny & Development Sub Committee – with key items to be identified for presentation at the Care, Learning & Housing Committee, including in relation to the strategic plan and funding;
- (iii) a review of the membership and organisation of the Highland Health & Social Care Committee and Adult Services Scrutiny & Development Sub Committee;
- (iv) a Joint Officer Group to consider and agree the strategy for presentation to Committee – involving a joint strategic plan for integrated adult services and including the finance and cash flow to deliver that plan. Also, to ensure that strategic reports were referenced and within the terms of the strategic plan and to support and service regular planned meetings of the Chief Executives, senior Members of the Council Administration and Health Board Non-Executives;
- (v) each organisation to commit to public statements which reflected the agreed strategic plan and to keep each other apprised of management and organisational changes at strategic, area and district levels; and
- (vi) NHS Managers to have direct and regular contact with Members concerning local matters in the Districts/Wards, including a local community planning partnerships and at Ward Meetings – with Managers and Members taking account of the strategic priorities when developing and taking forward the local plans for adults.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- it would be important, as part of the new arrangements, to build on existing and established relationships with NHS Officers wherever possible in order to establish a level of continuity (as opposed to dealing

- with someone different each time) as this would help to establish and drive forward progress on individual issues as and when they arose;
- there had to be a recognition of trust and respect in place for Officers from both organisations in terms of the services being delivered;
  - the proposed review of governance, which would include the NHS Highland Health and Social Care Committee, was welcomed;
  - consideration had to be given to different arrangements for different areas/communities where necessary;
  - it would be helpful if Local Members could be made aware at an early date of any current issues in relation to integrated services in their respective areas;
  - the ambitious timeline which had been set within the report was welcomed and in this respect it was noted that the aim was to finalise the strategic plan and financial framework by the end of the year if possible;
  - there were often issues with the understanding of the current financial reports and it was suggested that a different mechanism should be put in place for future presentation of financial reports;
  - consideration should be given to the reporting of performance information/outcomes in future and also proposals to cover succession planning at a senior management level in particular;
  - joint ownership of issues by both organisations in future was the ideal and in this respect it was considered that there could be a role for this Group in enabling this to be achieved;
  - a 'modified' lead agency model was suggested as a possible way forward, with monthly/regular meetings and strenuous efforts taken to involve all relevant Officers and Members;
  - communication with local communities, and reconciliation where necessary, would be vital to ensure future success in service delivery across the Highlands and in this regard it would be necessary to ensure that a plan was in place to turn theory into practice under joint ownership;
  - as part of future proposals, it would be necessary to make the distinction between the role of a Local Member and the role of the Council as a whole;
  - it should be recognised that the issues being considered formed part of a national debate in many cases and that consultation/discussion might be required with the Scottish Government at some point in the future;
  - there were both positive and negative cases of adult social care across communities and any concerns could be addressed through the Adult Services Development Sub Committee if necessary; and
  - there would be a need for a new 'shared language' in future whilst acknowledging the cultural differences between both organisations.

In summary, and in terms of the main issues surrounding future communication, the following areas were highlighted –

- attendance by NHS Officers at Local Committees and/or Ward Business Meetings as appropriate locally;
- advance notification for Local Members of issues in regard to integrated services in their respective areas to avoid any misunderstandings;
- a modified arrangement for Council Committees if needed to address future proposals;
- productive and efficient joint partnership working in future, encompassing the highest levels of respect, trust and confidentiality where required, with

positive distinctions being made between the role of Local Members and that of the whole Council;

- recognition of the potential opportunities for improvement collectively across the Highlands, including technological advances and issues arising from workforce planning for the area in future; and
- the need for a list of named contact Officers within NHS Highland to be made available for all Members of the Council in order that local cases/concerns could be taken forward quickly and effectively, whilst also recognising the boundaries of patient confidentiality and operational issues.

Thereafter, and in noting the terms of the update, it was **AGREED** that this should be a standing item on all future agendas.

## 6. Update Reports

In line with the Terms of Reference, verbal updates were provided at the meeting as follows:-

Mr R MacDonald – confirmed that, in relation to out of hours cover and the redesign of health/social care services in Skye, constructive meetings had been held with Professor Sir Lewis Ritchie and his report was awaited. In this regard, it was considered that this had been a very positive process and it was hoped that the trust of the community could be restored in terms of future developments.

Ms N Sinclair – confirmed that the redesign of services in Caithness had been paused at the moment but that a strong view had emerged from a recent stakeholders meeting that there was a need for change in relation to how current services were being delivered, with specific concern in terms of maternity services. However, a positive development had been the setting up of a video-conference clinic which had been welcomed and had complemented other services in the area.

Thereafter, and in noting the terms of the updates which had been provided, it was **AGREED** that this should be a standing item on all future agendas.

It was also **AGREED** that in relation to the forthcoming Joint Planning Event with NHS Highland on Care at Home Services which was to be held on 26 April, contact should be made with the organisers to check as to whether places could be made available for Members of the Working Group. In this regard, it was considered that attendance could be extremely helpful in terms of accessing contact information and liaising with NHS Highland Officers on local/area issues of concern.

## 7. Dates of Future Meetings

It was **AGREED** that future meetings should be held on a quarterly basis although initially there might be a need for additional meetings.

In this regard, it was **AGREED** that the next meeting should be held in advance of the Summer Recess if possible – with the date to be notified in due course.

The meeting ended at 4.10pm.