

Highland Community Planning Partnership

Community Planning Board

Minutes of Meeting of the Community Planning Board held in the Main Conference Room, Police Scotland Divisional Headquarters, Old Perth Road, Inverness on Thursday 21 March 2019 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Representing the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA):

Mr X McDade

Representing the Highland Council (HC):

Mr A Mackinnon
Mr B Boyd (Substitute)
Ms D Manson
Mr S Black
Mr I Kyle
Ms A Clark
Mr P Mascarenhas
Ms E Johnston

Representing Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE):

Mr D Oxley
Mr J Gibbs

Representing the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI):

Ms I Grigor
Ms M Wylie

Representing NHS Highland (NHSH):

Prof B Robertson
Ms C Steer

In attendance:

Ms M Cameron, Head of Universities, Education and Skills, HIE
Ms A Carlin, Chief Executive Officer, Wasps
Mr J Mackenzie-Blackman, Chief Executive, Eden Court Theatre
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Highland Council

Ch Supt G Macdonald in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr G Moir, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Christie, Mr B Lobban, Ms M Smith, Mr D Yule, Ms S Campbell, Mr W Gilfillan, Ms E

Leitch, Mr D McLachlan, Mr I Murray, Dr D Mackinnon, Mr G Hogg, Mr D MacBeath, Ch Insp I Maclelland and Ms A Clark.

2. Minutes of Meetings

The Board:

- i. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Community Planning Board – 19 December 2018;
- ii. **NOTED** the Note of the Chief Officers Group – 23 January 2019; and
- iii. **NOTED** the draft Note of the Chief Officers Group – 8 March 2019.

3. Talent Attraction and Retention

i. Presentation: A Regional Approach to Talent Attraction

Morven Cameron, Head of Universities, Education and Skills, HIE, gave a presentation on the work being undertaken in relation to talent attraction and retention, during which detailed information was provided on the national and regional context; the Regional Talent Attraction Strategy; HIE's activities; the regional discussion through the Convention of the Highlands and Islands (CoHI); the key priorities identified; and the focus on regional marketing.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- The Chief Executive, Highland Council, provided an update on discussions with Scottish Ministers regarding the state of the public sector workforce in the Highlands and Islands, explaining that there was now political agreement nationally to tackle some of the barriers in the system. In particular, it was proposed to develop a generic public sector modern apprenticeship, alongside a strategy for housing entitlement and the holistic work being undertaken by Western Isles Council. In terms of specific fields such as teaching or social work, it was necessary to provide access routes to degree courses in local communities so that young people did not have to move away and incur significant student debt. Reference was made to a recent Access to Teaching event and the barriers to people changing career, as well as the limitations of the "grow your own" approach. The need to quickly respond to government was emphasised, and it was suggested that additional time be dedicated to the matter as soon as possible in order to collectively produce a proposal to Scottish Ministers in advance of August. It was added that it was an opportunity to carry out public sector reform and there was support for research. The Council had a Change Fund that could potentially be used to support some initial development work. The status quo was costing partners money and it was imperative it was addressed;
- it was necessary to make a strong case for reviewing the current education system across Scotland;
- the need to look at retraining was emphasised, and it was necessary to explore opportunities in terms of individuals who were not currently part of the workforce but theoretically could be with appropriate support and training – eg those with some form of criminal record;
- the need for cross-agency engagement was recognised, and the Chair of NHS Highland Board voiced his commitment in that regard;
- it was clear that there were blockages to recruitment and retention, particularly in the housing sector. It was important to explore opportunities to use vacant public

sector properties for housing for key workers, and to look at innovative solutions that could be implemented in a short timescale, such as fast kit houses on Forestry Commission land. In response, it was explained that a significant amount of work was taking place, both within the CPP, which had a workstream on Community Asset Reviews, and in individual partner organisations. From a Police Scotland perspective, there was an appreciation of the challenges in rural areas, particularly in terms of housing and the higher cost of living, and work was taking place to explore innovative estate strategies. It was suggested that a taskforce was needed to join up the various workstreams and drive them forward;

- the importance of retaining young people in Highland was emphasised, particularly given the impact of the vote to leave the European Union on the availability of migrant workers;
- in relation to social enterprise models, it could be difficult to identify quality staff who understood how the business and social impact aspects could be joined up, and the development of teaching in that regard would be helpful. In addition, it was important to consider social benefit when making procurement choices. In response, it was highlighted that the government was currently funding a social enterprise company that worked with staff to empower them. If statutory partners invested in the model, Third Sector partners could be involved free of charge, and it was suggested that this be explored by the proposed taskforce;
- it was necessary to work as a collective with the islands authorities, and there was a lot that could be learned from them in terms of marketing; and
- the importance of communication between the various groups and agencies was emphasised.

Following further discussion on the next steps, the Board:

- i. **NOTED** the presentation, and the update by the Chief Executive, Highland Council; and
- ii. **AGREED** that the Chief Executive, Highland Council, would liaise with the Head of Universities, Education and Skills, HIE, as a matter of urgency with a view to formulating a timeline of activity and presenting a solution paper to Scottish Ministers by autumn 2019, and would feed back to partners in that regard.

ii. **Presentation: Building Cultural Infrastructure and Talent**

The Director of Development and Infrastructure, Highland Council, introduced the presentation, explaining that one of the issues in relation to talent attraction was how to attract people to live and work in the area. It was believed that the three creative industries projects that were the subject of the presentation would help in that regard, and this was supported by the work of Richard Florida, an American economic geographer who had looked at the fastest growing cities in America, all of which were places with strong creative sectors/investment in cultural industries. He emphasised the importance of the projects, explaining that although they were based in Inverness they very much had a regional outlook.

The Chief Executive Officer, Wasps, the Director of Development and Infrastructure, Highland Council, and the Chief Executive, Eden Court Theatre, lead officers for the Creative Academy, Inverness Castle, and Eden Court Theatre respectively, then gave a presentation during which detailed information was provided on each of the projects.

The Chair having recognised the synergy with the preceding presentation and thanked the officers involved, the Board **NOTED** the presentation.

4. Impacts on Highland of the vote to leave the European Union

Partners provided verbal updates on preparations for exiting the European Union. From a resilience planning perspective, work continued at pace to deliver the structure discussed at the Chief Officers Group on 8 March 2019, and the multi-agency coordination centre would be formally up and running week beginning 25 March 2019. From a business perspective, the focus was on three main areas, namely, food, drink and rural; transport and logistics; and business support. In relation to business support in particular, information was provided on grant and loan funding, and attention was drawn to the Prepare for Brexit website (www.prepareforbrexit.scot) which local businesses were being encouraged to look at. Updates would continue to be provided as matters progressed.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

5. Community Asset Reviews

The Community and Democratic Engagement Manager, Highland Council, provided a verbal update, during which he summarised the Community Asset Review approach and the three models previously discussed. He explained that he and the Council's Director of Development and Infrastructure had attended a recent meeting of the Highland Public Sector Property Group, discussions at which had included a focus on Uig, North Skye, where the Council was proposing to invest £30m redeveloping the harbour; and the geographical spread of the proposed Community Asset Review pilot areas. With regard to the latter he suggested that whilst a strategic framework was necessary it needed to be sufficiently flexible to allow the extent of the pilot areas to be shaped by the localities as work progressed. He also provided an update on Community Asset Transfers and potential community interest in the five mothballed schools in Lochaber. In conclusion, he asked the Board to agree that the initial focus of the Community Asset Review approach should be in Caithness and Skye, and that statutory and other relevant partners in those localities nominate senior officers to engage in the review process.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- in relation to the proposed pilot areas, it was suggested that, as well as a geographic focus, there might be an opportunity for a thematic focus – eg health and wellbeing. Ch Supt Macdonald added that this fitted in with discussions at the Highland Public Protection Chief Officers Group regarding joining up services that were essentially dealing with the same people. In addition, the Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland, referred to discussions at the Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Group regarding single agencies delivering staff health and wellbeing initiatives in rural areas where there might only be two or three staff, and the potential to bring public sector staff together and share such initiatives;
- reference was made to the principles underpinning the Community Empowerment Act and the need for partners to use their resources in a more collaborative coordinated way, thereby saving money in the long term and providing better outcomes for communities;
- the Director of Development and Infrastructure elaborated on the thinking behind the proposed pilot areas, explaining that there was new investment from NHS Highland in both locations and the potential to share office space/implement joint working

initiatives. He added that there were good examples of joint working initiatives in other areas – Golspie and Kingussie, for instance;

- in relation to Community Asset Transfers, there was an issue in that communities did not want to take on buildings with big liabilities, and a number of potential transfers had fallen through as the cost of refurbishment, including VAT, was considerably greater than the cost of a new build or alternative property;
- discussions had taken place regarding the potential to implement hot-desking across all public agencies. However, incompatibility of IT networks was a barrier. The Chief Officer, HTSI, added that hot-desking opportunities should not be restricted to public sector staff, and that any in-kind support that could be offered to the Third Sector, which was in a precarious position in the current financial climate, would be welcomed;
- where it was proposed to change the use of buildings or move staff to different locations, it was important that access to public transport was taken into consideration;
- the proposals fit with Police Scotland's 10-year strategy in that there was a more flexible approach to desk space and a less risk-averse approach to barriers in terms of IT etc. There was a clear focus on enhancing services whilst simultaneously making efficiency savings by rationalising buildings and assets that were not cost effective; and
- there was a strong sense, in some areas, of services being centralised to Inverness and it was important to demonstrate that projects were taking place further afield.

Thereafter, the Board:

- i. **NOTED** the update;
- ii. **AGREED** that the initial focus of the Community Asset Review approach should be in Caithness and Skye; and
- iii. **AGREED**, further to ii. above, that statutory and other relevant partners in said localities nominate senior officers to engage in the review process and notify the Council's Community and Democratic Engagement Manager accordingly.

6. **Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP): Interim Partnership Performance Report**

There had been circulated Report No CPB/01/19 by the Corporate Audit and Performance Manager, Highland Council, on behalf of the Chief Officers Group.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- with regard to fuel poverty, Highland was considerably below the national average and it was necessary to consider whether the data could be used to address the issue. Reference was made to work being led by housing associations in relation to affordable heating and accessing funding to improve insulation, and Ms M Ross-Grey, Scottish Government, undertook to seek an update and report back to partners on the local work that had been undertaken in relation to the Fuel Poverty Bill. It was highlighted that funding had not been renewed for a fuel poverty advice service provided by one of the larger social enterprises in Sutherland, and concern was expressed in that regard. It was suggested that an update be sought from the Highland Affordable Warmth Group, which had a plan in respect of fuel poverty and which had previously reported to the CPP through the Health Inequalities Theme Group. In that regard, it was explained that reducing fuel poverty was one of the priorities under the HOIP Poverty Reduction outcome. The Affordable Warmth Group lead sat on the associated Delivery Group and a number of the Affordable Warmth Group's actions had been included within the Poverty Reduction Delivery Plan, so the CPP would have oversight. The Affordable

Warmth Group had been doing a lot of work but it was an opportune time to review the position and take stock;

- concern was expressed that the report did not delve in to the areas that had been prioritised by the CPP, and that the data lag was too great to know whether any of the actions that had been put in place were having an effect. With regard to the latter, it was explained that, for some indicators, more recent data could be calculated locally with the caveat that it was subject to national verification;
- going forward, it was necessary to identify indicators and set targets against individual priorities at delivery plan level to enable effective monitoring to take place and changes to be implemented where necessary;
- in relation to early mortality, the fact that the CPP consistently performed better than Scotland as a whole was welcomed. However, it was important to bear in mind that there were still significant health inequalities in Highland, the difference in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas being 16 years for men and 9 years for women;
- to collectively try and effect change it was suggested that it was necessary to select a small number of indicators on which to focus and break them down to area or ward level to understand where there were positive trends;
- there might already be key areas where Community Partnerships could evidence that they had affected change;
- in relation to public protection, it was necessary to consider where to focus prevention activity;
- one of the most concerning indicators was the increasingly high fragility index. The links with the earlier discussions on talent attraction and retention were emphasised, and it was suggested that it should be an area of focus;
- the lower than average crime rate showed that Highland was a safe place to live and raise a family, and it was necessary to use that as a selling point to attract people to the area;
- it having been queried whether there would be an opportunity to suggest additional performance indicators, it was explained that the indicators in the report were high-level national indicators and that more granular indicators on the HOIP outcomes would be developed by the various Delivery Groups and reported back to the Board; and
- the need to make connections between the HOIP and the priorities being identified in locality plans was emphasised.

Thereafter, the Board:

- i. scrutinised and **NOTED** the Highland Community Planning Partnership's performance in relation to the key national performance indicators; and
- ii. **AGREED** that information on the local work that had been undertaken in relation to the Fuel Poverty Bill be provided to partners.

7. **Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) of Highland Council - Partnership Self-Assessment**

There had been circulated Report No CPB/02/19 by the Corporate Audit and Performance Manager, Highland Council, on behalf of the Chief Officers Group.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- in relation to the suggested areas for improvement set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report, the need for dedicated resources at Community Partnership level was

emphasised. In response, it was explained that chief officers from statutory partner organisations had discussed the matter at a meeting on 8 March 2019, and it had been agreed that it was necessary to focus on the people resourcing aspect. Each organisation had committed to exploring what that might look like from their perspective, and to report back to the Chief Officers Group on 15 May 2019. The Chair added that there had been a collective agreement that it was a priority, and that all statutory partners would provide resources in some capacity. The Partnerships that had been supported with resources were the ones that were making significant progress in terms of outcomes, and he emphasised the need for support for all Partnerships to be realised in the coming financial year;

- in response to a question, it was confirmed that the external assessors would be on site for eight to ten weeks commencing on 15 April 2019;
- with regard to community engagement, it was important that those with the loudest voices were not the only ones heard, and it was suggested that there was scope for a strategic piece of work in terms of engaging hard to reach groups. It was added that this affected the Board as well as Community Partnerships, and Members might want to consider it as a potential development area;
- the report highlighted that there were mixed views on whether effective governance arrangements were in place in relation to scrutiny and accountability, and this linked to the discussions about target-setting under the previous item. It was suggested that it might be helpful for partners to come together outwith the formal Board structure to explore the matter, and other potential development opportunities highlighted in the report, in more detail; and
- it was emphasised that there was only an eight-week window from 1 April 2019 to seek to continue Aspiring Communities funding, if partners were minded to do so.

The Board otherwise **NOTED**:

- i. the findings, and the potential development opportunities raised during discussion;
- ii. that the survey helped prepare Board Members and officers for any request by the Highland Council's external auditors to interview partners; and
- iii. that external scrutiny of the partnership arrangements of all statutory community planning partners was a growing area of interest.

8. Developing Community Partnerships

i. Updates from Chairs

There had been circulated updates from Community Partnership Chairs as follows:

- a. Caithness (Eann Sinclair, HIE)
- b. Sutherland (Iain Maclelland, Police Scotland)
- c. East Ross (Ricky Dibble, SFRS)
- d. Mid Ross (Ann Clark, NHS Highland)
- e. Skye, Lochalsh and West Ross (Robert Muir, HIE)
- f. Lochaber (vacant – no update available)
- g. Nairn (Brian Mackay, Police Scotland)
- h. Badenoch and Strathspey (Fraser Nixon, SFRS)
- i. Inverness (Graham Ross, Highland Council)

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- attention was drawn to the challenges being experienced in some areas in terms of engaging communities in the locality plan process;
- it was highlighted that the inaugural meeting of the Community Learning, Development and Engagement Network in Mid Ross had taken place on 6 March 2019, and thanks were expressed to Di Agnew, Ward Manager, and Fiona Richardson, Community Learning and Development Support Officer, Highland Council; Val Macdonald, Senior Health Improvement Specialist, NHS Highland; and James Turner, Community Engagement Officer. The meeting had been successful and would help to inform the Action Plan arising from the recent CLD inspection;
- as discussed under item 7, resourcing and capacity continued to be issues, and it was necessary to be realistic about what Community Partnerships could achieve with the resources available to them;
- the need to identify new Community Partnership Chairs was emphasised;
- the support being provided by Community Engagement Officers was welcomed;
- in relation to Lochaber Community Partnership, the Interim Chair of NHS Highland Board explained that the Board was currently two Members short and it was hoped to recruit during the summer. In the interim it might be necessary to deploy an Executive Member to Chair the Community Partnership and he undertook to liaise with the Chief Executive, NHS Highland, in that regard. Ch Supt Macdonald added that it was recognised that the Partnership needed some assistance and, once a Chair had been identified, there would be a commitment from partner agencies to provide support to try and make some progress; and
- the Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland, expressed thanks to all Community Partnerships, explaining that they had undertaken some mapping of green health activity on behalf of the Green Health Partnership. This had allowed the mapping exercise to be carried out quickly and, it was hoped, had been a positive experience for Community Partnerships in terms of increasing their understanding of the green health opportunities that existed in their areas.

The Chair having emphasised the need for Community Partnership resourcing to be agreed at the next Chief Officers Group and ratified at the June Board, the Board **NOTED** the updates.

ii. Update from Chief Officers Group

Most issues having been covered under previous items, the Acting Head of Policy, Highland Council, provided a brief verbal update on the most recent Community Partnerships Development Day, explaining that there had been a good discussion on the opportunities presented by the Community Engagement Worker posts, with the caveat that they were for a 12-month period. As highlighted under item 7, there was a potential opportunity to extend the Aspiring Communities funding and it was suggested that the matter be discussed at the Community Partnership Chairs' meeting following the Board.

There had also been a useful discussion on the wider needs of the Partnerships, not only in terms of resourcing but in terms of skills, knowledge, training and development, and the opportunities in that regard would also be discussed at the Chairs' meeting following the Board.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

9. Highland Community Justice Partnership – Chair Proposal

There had been circulated Report No CPB/03/19 by the Chief Officer, Highland Third Sector Interface, on behalf of the Community Justice Partnership (CJP).

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- in relation to the proposal that the CJP Chair be added to the Chief Officers Group/Community Planning Board membership, it was suggested that, in terms of providing an overview of governance, membership of the Chief Officers Group was sufficient, with attendance at the Board on an exceptional basis;
- on the point being raised, the Chief Officer, HTSI, confirmed that the timetable in the report was the previous timetable for Chairing the Chief Officers Group and Board, and the CJP Terms of Reference would be updated to reflect the current timetable; and
- the Chief Officer, HTSI, referred to the success of the CJP participatory budgeting event in 2017 and highlighted that a catch-up event was scheduled to take place on Friday 22 March 2019, the format of which was explained. Spaces were still available if partners wished to attend.

Thereafter, the Board **AGREED**:

- i. that the Community Justice Partnership Chair be added to the Chief Officers Group membership and that their attendance at the Community Planning Board take place on an exceptional basis;
- ii. to remit to the Chief Officers Group a review of the Community Justice Partnership Chair beyond 2020; and
- iii. further to ii. above, to include, as part of the review, proposals for reporting and assurance provision around the Community Justice Plan.

10. Change of Lead Agency

The Board **NOTED** that, in accordance with the agreed schedule, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service would have lead agency responsibility for the Community Planning Board, for a period of one year, with effect from 1 April 2019.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The Board **NOTED** that the next meeting would be held at 10.00 am on Thursday 20 June 2019 in the Council Chamber, Highland Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness.

12. Any Other Business

The Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland, provided a verbal update on the Community Planning Partnership's breakthrough achievement in relation to suicide prevention, one aspect of which was to provide Suicide Intervention and Prevention Programme training to 500 members of staff across the partnership. To date, fifteen courses had been delivered to a total of 164 staff. A further nineteen courses, the dates of which had been circulated, had been scheduled between now and September 2019, and 119 staff had signed up. Positive feedback had been received on the training and partners were encouraged to promote the opportunity within their organisations with a view to reaching the target of 500.

Group Manager Nixon, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, highlighted that whole-time firefighter recruitment was now open, information on which was available on www.myjobscotland.gov.uk and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service social media pages.

It was highlighted that a partnership approach to the recruitment of retained firefighters had been a previous breakthrough achievement, and it was suggested that information be circulated to partners for promotion within their organisations.

Thereafter, the Board **AGREED**:

- i. that the latest Suicide Intervention and Prevention Programme training dates be re-circulated to partners for distribution, and that staff be encouraged to attend; and
- ii. that information on firefighter recruitment be provided to partners for promotion within their organisations.

The meeting ended at 12.20 pm.