Agenda Item	9.
Report No	CPPB/3/25



Com-pàirteachas Dealbhadh Coimhearsnachd

na Gàidhealtachd

Highland Community Planning Partnership Board – 21 February 2025

Creating Hope in Highland Together - Interim Update

Report by: Jen Valentine, Police Scotland

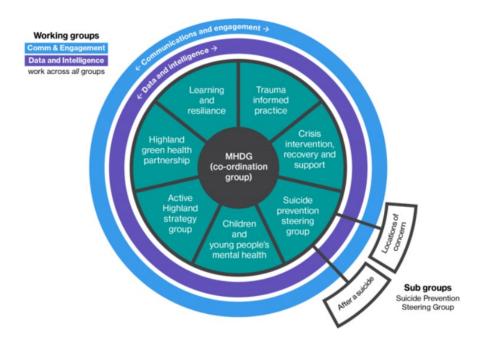
Summary

In October 2023 the Creating Hope in Highland Together Action Plan was launched. This plan set out the objectives for the 3 year period. This paper seeks to provide board members with an update on the work undertaken to date.

1. Background

- 1.1 Creating Hope in Highland Together is the local suicide prevention plan for Highland. The plan was developed following an eight-month period of engagement with partners and stakeholders to review the priorities and organisation of the Highland Community Planning Partnership work on mental health improvement and suicide prevention. This consultative period allowed stakeholders to consider and identify priorities for suicide prevention, review the key people, organisations and services required to support delivery of action to prevent suicide and refresh the remit of the Suicide Prevention Steering Group.
- 1.2 The plan was launched in October 2023, and outlined 8 objectives for the 3 year period of the plan.
 - 1. We will identify groups most at risk of suicide and seek to work to reduce the risk.
 - 2. We will ensure timely and effective intervention/assessment of people expressing suicidal thoughts.
 - 3. We will ensure that people in Highland have consistent access to crisis services.
 - 4. We will identify places of concern and develop actions to make them safer.
 - 5. We will ensure that people bereaved by suicide in Highland have opportunities to access timely support.
 - 6. We will ensure Highland workforces and communities are suicide aware and can respond appropriately.
 - 7. We will develop communications work to inform and to increase public knowledge on suicide and distress.
 - 8. We will work collaboratively with media outlets to provide guidance, information, sources of support, and stories of hope and recovery.
- 1.3 It was recognised in setting these objectives that it would not be solely within the remit of the Suicide Prevention Steering Group to deliver these but would rely on the wider structures developed under the Mental Health Delivery Group.

Mental Health Delivery Group (MHDG) Structure



- 1.4 The Suicide Prevention Steering group has two sub groups which have responsibilities around priority actions.
 - Location of concern- This group is responsible for objective 4.
 - After a suicide- This group is responsible for objective 5.

The other steering groups within the MHDG structure with overlapping responsibilities around some of the suicide actions plans are,

- Data and Intelligence group has some responsibility for delivering objective 1.
- Crisis Intervention Recovery and Support group has some responsibility for objectives 2 and 3.
- Learning and Resilience group has some responsibility for priority action 6.
- Communication and Engagement group has some responsibility for priority actions 7 and 8.
- Children and young people subgroup has input across all 8 objectives

2. Action Plan Update

2.1 Appendix 1 provides an update on the progress under each of the 8 objectives.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the progress of the action plan.

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Date: 21 February 2025

Appendices: 1. Creating Hope in Highland Together Action Plan – Interim Update

Appendix 1	Creating Hope in Highland Together Action Plan
Objectives:	Interim Update February 2025
Identify those groups most at risk of suicide and seek to work to reduce the risk	The group has developed a Suicide Cluster Response Framework which has been tested and is due to be published by April 2025. This allow early assessment of potential contagion and early recognition of clusters. From this it then brings together relevant partners to make an assessment of the necessary actions to mitigate the risk of further suicides.
	Police Scotland have introduced an information sharing standard template which will be used to dhare data timeously of all suicides in Highland with partner agencies. Processes are in development for how this data will be managed and used, how it can inform prevention, through identification of locations, demographics and methods.
Identify places of concern and develop actions to make them safer	Significant work has been undertaken in regards the Kessock Bridge since September 2022. This has reduced the number of presentations on the bridge over time. This work continues under the chair of Highland Council.
	The Locations of Concern sub group now has a wider remit in how we approach locations of concern, and links in with the Cluster Response Framework.
Ensure that people bereaved by suicide in Highland have opportunities to access timely support	The After a Suicide Group has recently successfully bid for funding to develop resources for the training of police officers in supporting those bereaved by suicide.
	Building on the 'After a Suicide' resource which is provided to those bereaved, the group is now looking at support mechanisms for those who discover such a tragedy but are not directly associated with the deceased.
	The group noted the excellent work undertaken in the Black Isle following a suicide cluster in September 2025, with a number of events undertaken, led by Highlife Highland and Fortrose Academy. This work has been shared nationally as
Ensure timely and effective intervention/assessment of people expressing suicidal thoughts	The Cluster Response Framework includes a vulnerability matrix and toolkit to seek to identify those at risk of contagion and establish active means of support and referral.
Ensure that people in Highland have consistent access to crisis services	The Crisis Intervention Group has undertaken a mapping exercise of services in the Highland area, working alongside the Children and Young Sub Group. This mapping has then been tested against lived experience stories, allowing gaps to be identified, and actions to be taken.

	This process identified a gap in service provision for those in crisis, and the group is now exploring services that could bridge this gap, considering services in Dundee and Angus. These community wellbeing centres could provide a vital service.
Ensure the Highland workforces and communities are informed and skilled in suicide prevention	Partners work together, developing and promoting the training prospectus that outlines all the mental health and suicide prevention training available in Highland to partners, employers and communities.
	The Highland Prevent Suicide App is routinely promoted by all agencies.
	The steering group has continued in its commitment to deliver bi-annual development days with the wider Suicide Prevention Forum, providing opportunities for networking, sharing of practice and includes professional development.
Develop communications work to inform and to increase public knowledge on suicide and distress.	The continue to develop partnership communications for campaigns and promote the Prevent Suicide Highland App and Highland mental wellbeing website
Work collaboratively with media outlets to provide guidance, information, sources of support, and stories of hope and recovery.	The Communication and Engagement Group have arranged delivery of media training for elected members and local media outlets on responsible reporting on suicides.