

Agenda Item	13.
Report No	CPPB/22/25



**Highland**  
Community  
Planning  
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas  
Dealbhadh  
Coimhearsnachd

**na Gàidhealtachd**

**Highland Community Planning Partnership Board – 19 September 2025**

**Partnership Development Team  
Year 2 Report  
Quarterly Update: June to August 2025**

**Report by: Partnership Development Manager and CPP Senior Officers**

### **Summary**

This paper outlines the continued progress of the Partnership Development Team in supporting the delivery of the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan and strengthening Community Planning across Highland. The paper is split into two sections:

- Year 2 Report
- Quarterly Update: June to August 2025

Section 4 focuses on the Scottish Community Planning Network and 5 on Next Steps.

The Board is asked to:

- i) Consider the Year 2 Report at Appendix 1
- ii) Review the 2025 Third Sector Engagement Outline Plan at Appendix 2
- iii) Review the updated Year 2 Milestones at Appendix 3

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 At the December 2021 Board, a new approach and financial model for resourcing the Community Planning Partnership was agreed. This would involve the appointment of a full time Partnership Development Manager and a team of Partnership Officers who could be appointed on a funded or secondment basis.
- 1.2 At the April 2022 Board a Community Planning Development Update was discussed. The Board agreed to establish a core central team with the purpose of supporting local partnership working. The rationale for this approach is a central team to support shared learning and develop consistent approaches across Highland. Further to this, a central team would enable mutual aid across partnerships whilst also providing peer support. The size of team proposed balances the level of support required by partnerships with what is considered to be deliverable.

1.3 The aim of the new approach to resourcing was to support the above but embedding the approach to community planning is required across each partner organisation to improve the effectiveness of community planning.

## 2. Year 2 Report

- 2.1 The Partnership Development Team took up post in June 2023. The Team consists of:
- 1 x full time Development Manager
  - 2 x full-time Partnership Officers (contracted to May 2027)
- 2.2 The size of the team has decreased during Year 2, the Partnership Officer on secondment from Police Scotland returned to their substantive post at the end of March 2025.
- 2.3 The Partnership Development Team is hosted by Highland Council but works across the Partnership and the Manager reports to the Senior Officer's Group.
- 2.4 The allocation of the nine Community Partnerships in Highland is split across the team with the Partnership Officers now being allocated four Community Partnerships each and the Partnership Development Manager taking one.
- 2.5 Another significant change during Year 2 is the completion of funding for Project Officer support for Caithness and Sutherland Community Partnerships. The funding for these posts came to an end in March 2025. The level of support allocated to these two Partnership from the core Partnership Team has therefore increased significantly since April 2025.
- 2.6 During Year 2, the Partnership Development Team concentrated on strengthening the delivery of the 2024 – 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, supporting all nine Community Partnerships, including providing additional support to Community Partnerships transitioning from external funding. The team launched a comprehensive Guidance and Toolkit, advanced frameworks, and coordinated national engagement including responses to key consultations and participation in strategic working groups. They also delivered the second annual CPP Conference, directly supported the existing Delivery Groups, and supported the establishment of Short Life Working Groups, expanded communications, and began preparations for the 2024 – 2025 HOIP Annual Report.
- 2.7 A report summarising the Year 2 highlights and key achievements can be found at Appendix 1.

## 3. Quarterly Update: June to August 2025

This quarterly update outlines the continued progress of the Partnership Development Team, between June and August 2025, the team has:

- **Community Partnerships:** Continued to support all nine, including delivering full meetings, arranging external speakers, covering administrative responsibilities and facilitating workshops. The team has begun to co-ordinate the organisation of the 2025 Community Networking Events.

- **Community Partnership Plans:** Advanced the development of the Plans, with a planned launch in Summer/Autumn 2025 incorporating information gathered through the Health Inequalities Short Life Working Group.
- **Caithness and Sutherland Community Partnerships:** Managed the transition of support following the end of Project Support Officer funding, with additional resource applied to progress Priority setting and Action Tracker establishment.
- **CPP Website:** Reviewed the structure and content, including adding additional sections and pages.
- **HOIP Annual Report:** Undertook engagement in preparation for drafting the Report.
- **Community Planning Induction Module:** Completed the Module with a pilot taking place in October 2025 with Elected Members.
- **Short Life Working Groups:** Supported the establishment of the Natural Capital group and continued engagement with the Health Inequalities group.
- **Scottish Government Place Director:** Organised and facilitated a meeting with the Place Director, where partners and colleagues were able to discuss developments and highlight challenges with regards Single Care Model, Highland Property Partnership, Community Wealth Building and the Social Value Charter.
- **Strategic Risk Register:** Following agreement by the Board to establish a sub-group, the nominated representatives from partners will oversee a full review of the Register. The first meeting has been scheduled for October 2025.
- **Board Development:** A further session on the National Community Planning Self-Assessment Improvement Plan was held in August 2025. As part of this discussion it was agreed to hold an in-person Board Development Session which will take place in November 2025.
- **2025 Third Sector Engagement:** Following discussion at the June CPP Board meeting the Partnership Development Manager has drafted an Outline Plan for 2025 Third Sector Engagement to take place. This has been proposed to understand and improve how the third sector experiences and contributes to the CPP, ensuring their voices shape future strategies and lead to meaningful action. A copy of the Outline Plan can be found at Appendix 2.
- **Age-Friendly Communities:** Research underway across SCPN network and with relevant agencies leading the implementation of the World Health Organisations Age Friendly Communities activity to inform Highland's approach.
- **Community Wealth Building:** Supporting the development of the Strategic Investment Plan following the consultation sessions delivered by Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES).
- **Heat in the Highlands: Demystifying and Inspiring Heat Decarbonisation Event -Trust and Community Panel Member:** Brought together stakeholders from across sectors to explore coordinated solutions to the unique challenges of heat decarbonisation in the Highlands and Islands, highlighting a shared commitment to collaboration and progress toward net zero targets.

3.1 A copy of the updated Year 2 Milestones for the Partnership Development Team can be found at Appendix 3.

3.2 While the Partnership Development Team has made significant progress, Year 2 has also presented notable challenges. The reduction in team capacity following the end of secondment and external funding particularly affecting support for Caithness and Sutherland Community Partnerships has required a reallocation of resources and increased workload for remaining staff. To mitigate this, the team has prioritised strategic support, streamlined coordination efforts, and strengthened collaboration across partners locally. These adjustments aim to maintain continuity and ensure that partnership working remains effective and responsive despite resource constraints.

#### 4. **Scottish Community Planning Network Update**

The Partnership Development Manager attended two quarterly meetings during this reporting period.

##### 4.1 June 2025 – Safer Communities

Updates received from Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland; Scottish Ambulance Service; Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; Scottish Community Safety Network.

##### 4.2 September 2025

Updates received from Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan Refresh, COSLA; Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy from Scottish Government; Homelessness Prevention Provisions in the Housing (Scotland) Bill from Scottish Government. CPPs from across Scotland were invited to contribute to the agenda with a Local Housing Focus, with the Chief Officer for Housing and Communities presenting on Highland's behalf.

#### 5. **Next Steps**

- Pilot Community Planning Induction Module.
- Launch Community Partnership Plans.
- Deliver 2025 Third Sector Engagement.
- Support Strategic Risk Register Review.
- Organise Board Development session for November 2025.
- Finalise and publish the 2024 – 2025 HOIP Annual Report.

#### **Recommendation**

The Board is asked to:

- i) Consider and note the Year 2 Report at Appendix 1
- ii) Review and approve the 2025 Third Sector Engagement Outline Plan at Appendix 2
- iii) Review and note the updated Year 2 Milestones at Appendix 3

**Author:** Gail Prince, Partnership Development Manager

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> September 2025

**Appendices:** Year 2 Report; 2025 Third Sector Engagement Outline Plan; Year 2 Milestones

# Partnership Development Team Year 2 Report

## Overview

Year 2 marked a period of strategic delivery and consolidation for the Partnership Development Team, following a successful establishment phase in Year 1. The team continued to strengthen Community Partnerships, embed the 2024 - 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, and enhance governance, communications, and national Community Planning engagement.

## Year 1 Foundations

- **Team Establishment:** Formed in June 2023, comprising a full-time Development Manager and three Partnership Officers.
- **Baseline Mapping:** Initial work focused on understanding the Community Planning and Community Partnership landscape and developing tools such as the Minimum Standards Model, Partner Contacts Database, and Priority Action Trackers.
- **Branding & Communications:** New Highland Community Planning Partnership branding and launched the CPP website as a central resource; Communications Strategy developed.
- **Engagement:** Delivered workshops, coordinated Partnership Coordinating Groups, and organised the first Community Planning Partnership Annual Conference.
- **HOIP Review:** Led engagement sessions with stakeholders and supported drafting of the revised Highland Outcome Improvement Plan and Delivery Plan.
- **Minimum Standards Model:** Developed and implemented across all Community Partnerships, with compliance checklists completed.

## Key Achievements in Year 2

### Team Structure

- New Partnership Officer joined in August 2024, replacing the one who successfully gained full-time permanent employment within Highland Council, prompting a review of team responsibilities.
- Partnership Officer on secondment from Police Scotland returned to substantive post end March 2025. With no replacement the team has reduced to two Partnership Officers.

### Community Partnerships

- **Support Across All Nine Partnerships:** Delivered two full rounds of meetings and facilitated workshops focused on Priority Action Trackers, survey reviews, and structural development.
- **Priority Action Trackers:** 100% of Community Partnerships now have Trackers in place. Workshops were held to review and update these.
- **Community Networking Events:** Successfully delivered in-person events for five Community Partnerships, with strong local partner engagement and demand for continuation. Helped strengthen local collaboration and visibility of local Community Partnership priorities.
- **Guidance and Toolkit:** Officially launched in February 2025, now adopted across several Partnerships. Includes templates for Terms of Reference, Communications Plans, and Role Descriptors.
- **Community Partnership Plans:** Template nearly complete, with data sections being updated. Plans are scheduled for launch in Summer 2025.

- **Support for Caithness and Sutherland:** Additional resource allocated following the end of Project Support Officer funding.

## Strategic Planning & Governance

- **HOIP Delivery Plan and Performance Framework:** Finalised and presented to the Board. Indicators are being adapted for Community Partnership Plans.
- **Strategic Risk Register:** Reviewed quarterly, with updates presented to the Board.
- **CPP Reporting Schedule:** Drafted and under review.
- **Community Planning Induction Module:** Developed and ready for pilot with Elected Members.
- **HOIP Annual Report:** Preparation underway for draft to be presented to September 2026 Board.

## Communications & Digital Infrastructure

- **CPP Website:** Ongoing updates with a full review completed Summer 2025.
- **Shared Virtual Space:** Platform identified (Egress); business case drafted.
- **Community Briefing:** Expanded circulation and content, plus scope and circulation, enhancing partner communications.

## National Engagement & Policy Influence

- **Whole Family Support Working Group:** Represented Highland CPP nationally, contributing to a Shared Vision and Implementation Plan.
- **Your Police Stakeholder Engagement Forum:** Participation to ensure community planning perspectives are reflected in national policing strategies.
- **Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Review:** Input provided on future service delivery, particularly in rural areas.
- **Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill:** Coordinated CPP response advocating for strategic, inclusive economic development.
- **Net Zero Energy Developments:** Submitted a CPP statement supporting equitable benefit distribution and alignment with the Highland Social Value Charter.
- **National Islands Plan:** Contributed to discussions on planning coherence across Highland's diverse geographies.

## Events & Engagement

- **Annual CPP Conference (April 2025):** Attended by over 100 delegates. Strong feedback highlighted networking, strategic insights, and the need for broader third sector representation.
- **Elected Member Updates:** Delivered across Ward Business Meetings.
- **Calendar of Engagement Events:** Developed and published for August 2024 – May 2025.

## Challenges

- **Transition of Support:** Caithness and Sutherland Community Partnerships required additional support following the end of Project Support Officer funding.
- **Digital Switchover:** Supported dissemination of information and coordination with partners including NHS Highland and Age Scotland.
- **Team capacity:** Reduction due to end of secondment.
- **Resource pressures:** Increased support demands.
- **Engagement fatigue:** With additional barriers in some areas.
- **Digital infrastructure delays:** Egress platform not yet implemented.



## Year 2 Reflections

Year 2 has reinforced the importance of flexibility, collaboration, and clear communication in delivering effective community planning support. The team has learned that adapting to changing capacity and local needs is essential to maintaining momentum. Learning across Community Partnerships has proven invaluable, enabling shared solutions and mutual support. Additionally, the need for consistent and transparent communication both internally and with partners has emerged as a key factor in building trust and sustaining engagement.

## Next Steps

- Launch Community Partnership Plans.
- Pilot the Community Planning Induction Module.
- Organise Board Development Session.
- Finalise HOIP Annual Report.
- Continue national engagement and support for thematic working groups.
- Integration of feedback from the 2025 Third Sector Engagement.



# 2025 Third Sector Engagement Outline Plan

Following discussion at the June Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board meeting, it was agreed to circulate the 2019 SWOT analysis report from Highland Third Sector Interface. This Outline Plan follows up on that action by outlining the proposed approach for Third Sector Engagement in 2025, led by the Partnership Development Team.

The aim is to:

- Gather insights from third sector partners on their experiences with the CPP over the last two years and since the pandemic.
- Inform the development of the 2026 engagement for the 2027–2037 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan.
- Explore the role of Community Partnerships and thematic groups in championing the third sector and ensuring its presence and recognition at local tables.

The aim is to gather insights from third sector partners on their experiences across the CPP over the last two years, and since the pandemic, and to inform the development of the 2026 engagement ahead of developing the 2027 - 2037 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan.

## **Intended Audience:**

Third sector representatives who sit across the CPP structure at a Highland level, including Delivery Groups, Steering Groups, and Delivery Partnerships (e.g. Poverty Reduction Delivery Group, Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Community Learning and Development).

Note: Consideration will be given to widening participation beyond current representatives to include a broader range of third sector voices if required.

## Goals for the 2025 Engagement

- Understand how third sector representatives have experienced engagement with the CPP at Highland level over the last two years, and since the pandemic.
- Identify improvements or challenges in engagement over the last two years, and since the pandemic.
- Explore how engagement translates into action and tangible outcomes.
- Gather ideas for improving engagement locally and at Highland level.
- Test perceptions of the CPP's value, particularly around relationship-building and influence.
- Inform the 2026 engagement for the 2027–2037 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan.



## Suggested Engagement Questions

### Section 1: Experience and Impact

- On a scale of 0–5, please rate your experience with the Highland CPP.
- What are your reasons for the score you gave?
- Has your experience improved or worsened since 2023, and the pandemic? Why?
- Have you seen any tangible outcomes or changes because of your organisation’s involvement with the CPP?
- Do you feel your organisation’s voice is heard and valued within the CPP? Why or why not?

### Section 2: Role and Representation

- How is your organisation currently involved in the CPP?
- What role do you believe the third sector plays in delivering CPP priorities?
- How do Community Partnerships and thematic groups champion the third sector’s work and ensure its presence at local tables?
- Are there examples of good practice or collaboration you'd like to highlight?

### Section 3: Communication and Influence

- Do you feel there is sufficient communication and feedback from the area of the CPP you are involved in to your organisation?
- What support or resources would help your organisation engage more effectively?
- What advice would you give the CPP to build trust and collaboration with the third sector?

### Section 4: Perceptions of Value

Please rate your agreement (1–10) with the following statements:

- “The Highland CPP has value as a place to grow relationships.”
- “The CPP influences change within individual organisations.”
- “Engaging with the CPP is worthwhile for my organisation.”

### Section 5: Looking Ahead

- What would meaningful engagement look like during the development of the 2027–2037 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan?
- What methods of engagement would work best for your organisation and the wider third sector?
- How can engagement be inclusive of smaller or rural third sector organisations?



## Proposed Timeline for 2025 Engagement

Phase	Timeline	Activities
<b>Planning</b>	August	Finalise questions, identify participants, design survey
<b>Engagement Launch</b>	September	Distribute survey, set closing date
<b>Follow-Up</b>	October	Analysis of responses, identify key insights
<b>Reporting</b>	December	Share findings with CPP Board
<b>Preparation for 2026</b>	January	Use insights/findings to shape 2026 engagement for the development of the 2027 – 2037 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan

## Engagement Format Ideas

### Online Survey (Microsoft Forms)

- Anonymous to encourage honesty
- Mix of scaled, multiple choice, and open-ended questions
- Streamlined question set

### Workshops (if required)

- Especially if engagement is limited to current representatives
- Allows deeper exploration of themes and shared experiences

## Partnership Development Team Milestones Year 2

■ On Track  
■ Underway  
■ No Progress



Milestone	Measures for Success at end of Year 2	Measures for Success Lead	Status	Status Update
Circulate quarterly HCPP Board updates to Community Partnerships	Quarterly updates circulated within 4 weeks of meetings	Partnership Development Manager		Last update circulated July 2025
Complete National Community Planning Self-Assessment	Board members complete and submit individual CCP checklists when circulated Organise a Board Development Session to review the Highland CPP checklist report once available from Improvement Service to identify actions	Highland Community Planning Partnership Board		Further workshop session took place August 2025, updates to Improvement Plan to be circulated Board Development Session to be organised November 2025
Continue to review HCPP Governance: Terms of Reference; Strategic Risk Register; Action Tracker	Strategic Risk Register reviewed quarterly ahead of Board meetings Action Tracker monitored and progressed ahead of Board meetings Terms of Reference updated to reflect new HOIP Delivery Structure	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers		Strategic Risk Register - agreed to establish Sub-Group, first meeting October 2025
Coordinate involvement in Place Standard Tool for Community Safety	Participate in Information Sessions and work with Senior Community Development Manager and Police Scotland Senior Officer to assess opportunities for identified communities in Highland - Spring 2025	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers		Finished tool due to be launched at the SCSN Annual Conference in March 2026
Create & implement Performance Monitoring & Reporting Framework	HOIP Delivery Framework and Indicators implemented Framework adapted and implemented for Community Partnerships	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers		Performance Framework indicators being adapted for Community Partnership Plans with priority localities identified.
Create Community Planning Induction Module	Induction Module created and shared across partners Potential to pilot with Elected Members	Partnership Development Team		Module being finalised with pilot for Communities and Place Committee Members organised for October 2025
Create National/Highland/Local Plans/Policies/Strategies central resource for HCPP Website	Resource created and uploaded to CPP website	Partnership Development Team		Website review completed, Directories and Resources sections updated
Create Quarterly / Annual Reporting schedule for HCPP Board meetings	Schedule to be drafted based on new HOIP Delivery Structure for discussion at December 2024 Board meeting	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers		Draft schedule prepared, to be reviewed by Senior Officers
Deliver first round of Community Networking Events: October/November 2024	Partnership Officers coordinating organisation of in person events Minimum 50% Community Partnerships will deliver events	Partnership Development Team		Successful events delivered for 5 Community Partnerships: Easter Ross, Lochaber, Mid Ross, Nairn & Nairnshire and Badenoch & Strathspey. Excellent local partner engagement, demand expressed for annual events to continue
Deliver HCPP annual update to Elected Members business meetings	Aim to deliver an annual CPP update to all Service Support Business Meetings between October and December 2024	Partnership Development Team		
Develop shared virtual space for CPP network (Aligning Partnership Practices HOIP Cross-cutting Theme)	Platform identified - with support through Highland Council Content developed and use implemented	Partnership Development Team		Potential platform identified - Egress. Business Case drafted, to be reviewed prior to submission to Chief Officer
Finalise Community Partnership Plans: including priority locality areas - thematic community of interest and/or geography	Plans finalised and presented to Community Partnerships January to March 2025	Partnership Development Team		Template almost complete. Data section will be updated to include potential data sets resulting from the work of the Health Inequalities Short Life Working Group. As a result of a number of Community Partnerships reviewing and updating their priorities this section will be updated once this work is complete. The template will be completed and the Partnership Development Team aims to launch the Plans with individual Community Partnerships during the Summer of 2025.
Finalise HOIP Delivery Plan, HOIP Delivery Framework, Indicators	2024 - 2027 HOIP officially published New governance arrangements identified	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers		Presented to December 2024 meeting
Identify opportunities to engage seldom heard voices in Community Partnerships: Gypsy / Travellers communities	Ongoing Initial discussions with Gypsy / Travellers communities contacts in Highland Council and NHS Highland	Partnership Development Team		Initial discussion with Gypsy/Travellers communities undertaken
Implement HCPP Communications Strategy	Following agreement of Strategy at September 2024 Board meeting Communication from the CPP will be increased	Highland Community Planning Partnership Board		Agreement in place, Strategy has been adapted for Community Partnerships

Investigate Age-Friendly Communities framework, including alignment with existing Partnership work	Identified opportunities to include framework in Highland - consider all ages	Partnership Development Team & Senior Officers		Researching across CPPs in the SCPN network their approaches to develop Age Friendly Communities work
Launch Community Partnerships Guidance & Toolkit	On completion of the HOIP Delivery structure incorporate into document and launch October 2024	Partnership Development Team		Officially launched in February 2025, A number of Community Partnerships have reviewed and signed the template Terms of Reference, for transparency these will be uploaded to their individual webpages.
Manage, develop & maintain HCPP Website	Ongoing management of CPP website as main point of contact for all community planning information	Partnership Development Team		A full review of the website completed Summer 2025
Organise Annual CPP Conference: April 2025	Delivery second annual Conference and continue engagement across all partners and the region	Partnership Development Team & Senior Officers		Second annual Conference took place on Friday 25th April 2025, with 100 delegates attending from across Highland representing a number of partner and groups working within the wider Community Planning Partnership.
Participate in National CPP network & feedback to HCPP Board	Partnership Development Manager to attend quarterly meetings and include updates in quarterly reports	Partnership Development Manager		Scottish Government Whole Family Support Short Life Working Group; Your Police Stakeholder Engagement Forum; online SCPN sessions
Report on Community Partnerships progress against Minimum Standards Model to HCPP Board	Monitor progression and include updates in quarterly reports	Partnership Development Manager		Included in PDT quarterly update report December 2024
Report Partnership Development Team Year 1 activity to HCPP Board: September 2024	Report submitted to September 2024 Board meeting	Partnership Development Manager		Completed - September 2024
Schedule Calendar of Partnership Engagement Events: August 2024 - May 2025	Calendar developed for September 2024 to May 2025	Partnership Development Team		Calendar included with Partnership Development Team report June 2025
Support development of proposals for Highland Alcohol & Drugs Partnership grants across Community Partnerships	Engage with HADP Coordinator to progress Partnership Officers support development of proposals locally	Partnership Development Team & HADP Coordinator		Fund will be managed internally in HADP with applications welcomed from statutory and third sector organisations across Highland. The Fund aims to provide grants for one off funding for small – scale projects up to a value £2500 whose outcomes align with one or more of the National Drugs Mission Outcomes
Support development of service delivery mapping (Connecting People & Places HOIP Cross-cutting Theme)	Engage with HTSI/NHS re Highland Directory of Services development	Partnership Development Team & Senior Officers		Directories section created on CPP website
Publish HCPP Annual Report	June 2025 - develop and publish Annual Report - to be presented to Board, and Full Council and published on the CPP website	Partnership Development Manager & Senior Officers & Highland Community Planning Partnership Board		Draft Annual Report submitted to September 2025 Board meeting