

Agenda Item	6.
Report No	CPPB/17/26



Highland
Community
Planning
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas
Dealbhadh
Coimhearsnachd

na Gàidhealtachd

Highland Community Planning Partnership Board – 11 September 2026

Title of report – Update on the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme and Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund

Report by – Ian Kyle, Chair of the Integrated Children's Services Board

Report Classification (tick as appropriate):

Strategic Priority: ☒ People ☒ Place ☒ Prosperity

Cross-Cutting Theme (tick all that apply):

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☒ Connecting People and Places | ☒ Employment / Employability |
| ☒ Whole Family and Community-Based Approaches | ☐ Housing |
| ☒ Shared Approaches to Commissioning | ☐ Community Wealth Building |
| ☒ Aligning Partnership Practices | |

Report Purpose (tick as appropriate):

☐ For Noting ☒ For Approval ☐ For Decision ☐ For Comment

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- i. **Note** the progress and impact delivered through the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme and the Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund across Highland, including the contribution made to prevention, early intervention, family support and community capacity building.
- ii. **Note** that both programmes are delivered through Community Planning Partnership and Integrated Children's Services Planning governance arrangements and support shared delivery of The Promise, GIRFEC, UNCRC and child poverty priorities.
- iii. **Endorse** the continued partnership approach to the design, delivery and evaluation of whole family support and community mental health and wellbeing services across Highland.

iv. **Support** a review of governance, accountability and delivery arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose and enable the next phase of transformational change across Highland,

v. **Agree** that future programme development should continue to be informed by evidence, evaluation findings, lived experience and locality priorities, ensuring resources are targeted towards reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for children, young people and families.

vi. **Request** a further update on the outcomes of the governance review and priorities for the next phase of programme delivery be presented to the CPP Board during 2027.

Executive Summary

This report provides the Highland Community Planning Partnership Board with an update on the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme (WFWP) and the Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, both of which are funded by the Scottish Government and delivered through partnership arrangements led by the Community Planning Partnership and Integrated Children's Services Planning structures.

Since 2022, Highland has received £7.403 million through the WFWP to support transformational change in how children, young people and families access support. Investment has focused on prevention, early intervention, community capacity building, workforce development and the development of more holistic, family-centred approaches. The programme has funded 56 community-led projects, supported the establishment of locality-based partnership networks and directly supported 1,195 families through major funded initiatives, with an estimated further 1,500 to 2,500 families benefiting through community-based grant programmes.

The report highlights the contribution of both programmes to delivering The Promise, GIRFEC, UNCRC commitments and child poverty priorities. Highland has also been selected as one of seven national case study areas within the Scottish Government's independent evaluation of the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme.

The Board is asked to note progress to date, endorse the continued partnership approach and support a review of governance and delivery arrangements to inform the next phase of programme development.

1.	Whole Family Wellbeing Programme
1.1	The Whole Family Wellbeing Programme (WFWP) is a Scottish Government investment programme established to support transformational change in how children, young people and families access support. The programme seeks to

	deliver earlier intervention, prevention and holistic whole family support, ensuring families can access help at the earliest opportunity and reducing the need for crisis intervention.
1.2	A core principle of the programme is that funding should be used to test, develop and embed new approaches rather than replace existing funding streams or statutory services. In Highland, partners have used the investment to strengthen collaborative working, build community capacity, support innovation and develop sustainable models of family support aligned to The Promise, GIRFEC, UNCRC and national child poverty priorities
1.3	Between 2022/2023 and 2026/2027 Highland received £7.403m through the Programme. As governance arrangements, partnerships and delivery infrastructure matured, annual expenditure increased from £0.392m in 2023/2024 to £2.377m in 2025/2026, reflecting the Programme's transition from establishment to delivery at scale.
1.4	Investment through the programme supports innovative community-based services, strengthens partnership working, builds community capacity and promotes earlier intervention. Activity is aligned to Scottish Government principles of holistic whole family support and contributes to wider local and national priorities including The Promise, GIRFEC, Best Starts Bright Futures, Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-2026 and Bringing Hope, Building Futures: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2026-2031 . This approach is consistent with the approach approved by the Community Planning Partnership in 2023. Information is provided by the Scottish Government which outlines the fund criteria and sets out options to implement the Programme with an emphasis on building more holistic approaches and reducing Poverty inequalities. One of those options is to implement a team to deliver, which was approved as the approach in Highland. The funding strategy supports that delivery and the criteria by focussing in on families who are at risk of Poverty, which encompasses families with a child or adult with disability, families where the mother is under 25, lone parents, larger families, minority ethnic families and families with a child under 1. The criteria looks also at a focus on care experienced families, particularly Kinship families to drive change to meet the aspirations of the Promise.
2.	Governance Arrangements
2.1	The Whole Family Wellbeing Programme is a partnership programme governed through Highland's Community Planning Partnership and Integrated Children's Services Planning arrangements. Strategic oversight is provided by the Integrated Children's Services Planning Board, with financial operational oversight provided through the multi-agency Change Leadership Group. These arrangements ensure investment decisions remain transparent, evidence-based and aligned to local and national priorities.
2.2	The authority for these arrangements arises from Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and Community Planning arrangements established through the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Accountability for the Programme therefore sits within established partnership structures rather than with any individual agency.

2.3	As the Programme enters its next phase of development, there is an opportunity for the Community Planning Partnership to review governance, accountability and delivery arrangements to ensure they remain effective and support long-term sustainability.			
3.	Locality Coordinators			
3.1	A distinctive feature of the Highland model has been the establishment of three Locality Coordinator posts. These are partnership posts funded through the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme and hosted by The Highland Council on behalf of Community Planning Partnership partners.			
3.2	The coordinators support partnership development across Highland, connecting services, communities and families, strengthening locality-based planning and ensuring investment decisions are informed by local need and lived experience. They have played a key role in developing local partnership networks and supporting community-led projects and innovation.			
4.	Programme Achievements and Impact			
4.1	The Programme has made significant progress since its establishment and is now delivering investment and activity across every Community Partnership area in Highland. Key achievements include: • £7.403m secured from Scottish Government between 2022 and 2027. • 56 community-led projects funded through the Element 1 Small Grants Programme. • More than £2.3m invested in collaborative partnership projects and transformational activity. • Establishment of locality-based partnership networks across Highland. • Investment in workforce development supporting delivery of holistic whole family support. • Development of innovative approaches including Family Links, Home-Start expansion, autism and neurodiversity support, contextual safeguarding, infant feeding support and family hub models.			
4.2	The Programme has strengthened collaboration between public services, third sector organisations and communities, helping develop more joined-up and preventative approaches to supporting children, young people and families. It has created opportunities to test new approaches, generate learning and build evidence of what works in Highland communities.			
4.3	Across the major Whole Family Wellbeing Fund projects, a total of 1,195 families have been supported as illustrated in the table below. A number of the listed projects are relatively new and there is an expectation that numbers will increase in the near future. <table><tr><th>Organisation / Lead Partner</th><th>Project</th><th>Families Supported</th></tr></table>	Organisation / Lead Partner	Project	Families Supported
Organisation / Lead Partner	Project	Families Supported		

	Autism and Neurodivergence Scotland	Stay, Play and Connect Sessions	102
	Barnardo's	Contextual Safeguarding Project	36
	Family Links Partnership (The Care and Learning Alliance, Home-Start East Highland and Thriving Families)	Family Links	68
	Highland Action for Little Ones (HALO)	Infant Food Insecurity Pathway	89
	Home-Start Caithness	Family Support Services	619
	Home-Start East Highland	Family Support Services	127
	Lochbroom and Ullapool Community Trust	Stepping Stones	18
	Thriving Families	Family Support Services	133
	Thriving Families	Drummond School Family Links	3
	Total		1,195
In addition, the Community-Based Small Grants Programme (56 projects) have supported between 1,500 and 2,500 families across Highland communities.			
4.4	Recognition of Highland's progress is reflected in its selection as one of only seven national case study areas within the Scottish Government's independent Years 3 and 4 evaluation of the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme.		
5	Programme Monitoring and Evaluation		
5.1	Monitoring and evaluation remain central to the Programme's approach. Outcome data is gathered across funded activity to assess impact, inform future investment decisions and identify successful models that may contribute to longer-term system change.		
5.2	A growing evidence base is now emerging through funded projects, locality activity and whole-system initiatives, providing valuable insight into how preventative and family-centred approaches can improve outcomes for children, young people and families.		
6	Finance		
6.1	Since 2022, Highland has received £7.403m through the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme. Funding allocations are shown below:		

	Financial Year	Funding
	2022/23	£1.420m
	2023/24	£1.420m
	2024/25	£1.353m
	2025/26	£1.605m
	2026/27	£1.605m
	Total Funding to date: £7.403M	
6.2	Programme expenditure has increased significantly as delivery has accelerated, reaching £2.377m during 2025/2026. This reflects the Programme's continued transition from programme establishment to delivery and investment.	
6.3	At the commencement of 2026/2027, total available funding amounted to approximately £3.216m. After allowing for existing commitments, approximately £1.466m remains available to support future transformational activity and investment.	
7	National Evaluation and Future Direction	
7.1	Highland has been selected as one of seven national case study areas within the Scottish Government's independent Years 3 and 4 evaluation of the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme. The evaluation will assess progress towards national outcomes and identify emerging learning and effective practice across Scotland.	
7.2	The next phase of the Programme presents an opportunity to consolidate learning, strengthen governance arrangements, maximise the impact of future investment and continue the transition towards a more preventative, family-centred system of support across Highland.	
8	Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund	
8.1	The Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund provides Scottish Government investment to support community-based mental health and wellbeing activity, focusing on prevention, early intervention and reducing the need for more specialist services. The fund supports activities that improve wellbeing, reduce inequalities and strengthen community support for children, young people and families.	
8.2	Highland has developed a funding framework that supports investment across three levels: Small Partnership Grants, Locality Partnership Grants and Strategic/Thematic Grants. This approach enables investment in local innovation while also supporting wider system development and collaboration across partners. The Funding Framework has been developed from the outcome data gathered from the activity during FY 2025/2026, which is provided in the CYP-MHWP-Thematic-and-Quantitative-Analysis-Report.pdf	
8.3	As with the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme, governance of the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund is undertaken through partnership structures. Strategic oversight is now provided by the Children and Young People's Mental	

	Health and Wellbeing Steering Group, a multi-agency partnership responsible for coordinating improvement activity across Highland.
8.4	The fund also sits within the wider governance framework of the Integrated Children's Services Planning Board, providing alignment with children's services planning priorities and ensuring investment decisions are informed by evidence, identified need and agreed outcomes.
8.5	These arrangements provide accountability, transparency and collective decision making across partners. They ensure resources are directed towards priority areas, learning informs future service development, and investment remains aligned with the strategic aims of improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people. Governance responsibility rests with the partnership structures established under children's services planning arrangements.
8.6	Finance - The Scottish Government CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing fund allocation to Highland for Financial Year 2026/2027 is £566,000, carrying forward an underspend from Financial Year 2025/2026 provides and overall budget of £732,9555.
9.	Risks and Mitigations
9.1	The Whole Family Wellbeing Programme and Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund are supported through Scottish Government funding which is allocated on a time-limited basis. Whilst these programmes have enabled significant investment in prevention, early intervention and community-based support, there remains a risk that successful initiatives may face sustainability challenges if future funding levels reduce or change. This risk is mitigated through ongoing evaluation, investment in capacity building, and a focus on testing and embedding approaches that can influence wider system redesign and long-term service delivery.
9.2	The programmes operate through multi-agency governance arrangements involving Community Planning Partnership partners and children's services planning structures. As both programmes continue to evolve, there is a risk that governance and accountability arrangements may not fully reflect future delivery requirements. This risk will be mitigated through a planned review of governance, accountability and decision-making arrangements to ensure they remain effective, transparent and aligned with strategic priorities.
9.3	There is a risk that the intended long-term outcomes associated with prevention, family support and improved wellbeing are not fully realised or evidenced. This is mitigated through established monitoring and evaluation arrangements, partnership oversight, collection of outcome data and participation in the Scottish Government's national evaluation of the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme.
10.	Resource Implications

10.1	The Whole Family Wellbeing Programme and Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund are funded through Scottish Government allocations administered through partnership governance arrangements. Since 2022, Highland has received £7.403 million through the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme to support transformational change in family support services, community capacity building and preventative approaches.
10.2	Funding has supported locality coordination, programme management, workforce development and a range of community and third-sector delivery partners. Decisions regarding investment are made through agreed partnership governance arrangements to ensure resources are aligned with evidence of need, Scottish Government guidance and local priorities.
10.3	The programmes do not create any additional direct resource commitments for CPP partners as a consequence of this report. However, partners should note that consideration will be required in future years regarding the sustainability and mainstreaming of successful approaches developed through these programmes.

Impact Assessment

The Whole Family Wellbeing Programme and Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund make a positive contribution to outcomes for children, young people and families across Highland. Investment is targeted towards prevention, early intervention and reducing inequalities, with particular benefits for families experiencing poverty, disability, care experience and other forms of disadvantage. The programmes support delivery of The Promise, GIRFEC, UNCRC commitments and national child poverty priorities.

Investment has been delivered across all Highland communities through locality-based approaches, helping strengthen community capacity, partnership working and access to support within both urban and rural areas. The role of locality partnerships and community-led projects has helped ensure activity is informed by local need and lived experience.

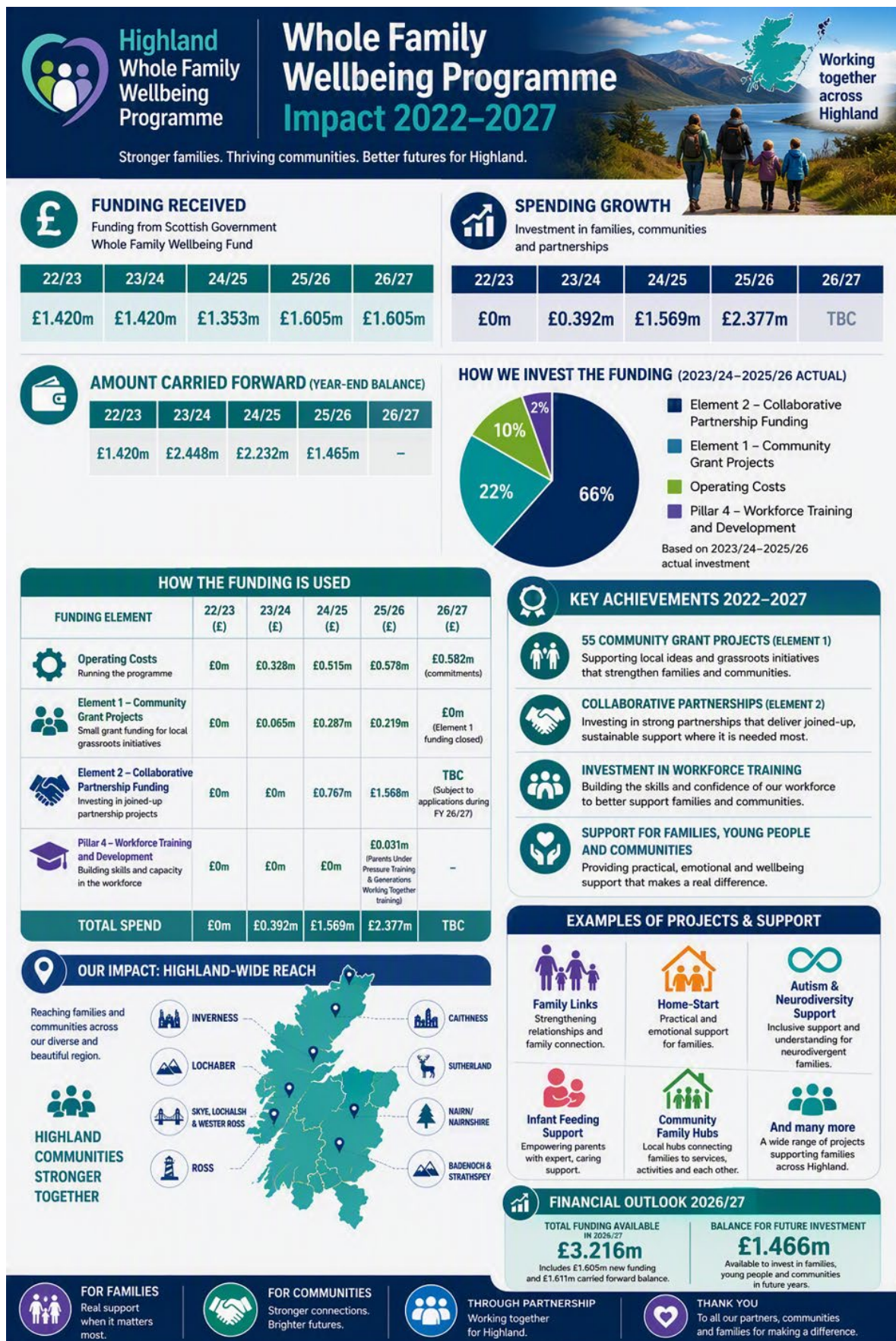
The programmes are primarily focused on service improvement and community development and therefore have no significant direct environmental or climate impacts. No significant negative impacts have been identified through the preparation of this report. Continued monitoring, evaluation and partnership oversight will help ensure that the benefits of investment are maximised and any emerging impacts are appropriately addressed.

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Date: September 2026

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Update on Whole Family Wellbeing
Programme and Children and Young People’s Community
Mental Health and Wellbeing
Appendix 2 - Whole Family Wellbeing Programme
Analysis of Family Support per Project

Appendix 1



WFWP Element 2 (Whole System Approach and Locality Projects) - <£50K and >£50K

[illegible]

CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund (46 Projects in Total) - <£10K

Various	Various	0	2,936	9012	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2025	2026
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