

## The Highland Council

### Highland Public Services Partnership

Minutes of Meeting of the Highland Public Services Partnership held in Committee Room 1, Council Headquarters, Inverness, on Friday, 3 December 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

#### Present

##### Highland Council:

Convener  
Dr M E M Foxley  
(by video-conference)

Mr A B Dodds  
Ms C McDiarmid  
Ms E Johnston

##### Highlands & Islands

##### Enterprise:

Ms C Wright

##### NHS Highland:

Dr R Gibbins  
Ms M Paton  
Mr G Coutts  
Dr M Somerville (item 4(i))

##### SNH:

Mr G Hogg

##### Northern Constabulary:

Mr I Ross (NJ Police Board)  
Mr B Duncan

##### Highland and Islands Fire and Rescue Service (HIFRS):

Mr R Durham (H&I Fire Board)  
Mr D Wynne

##### UHI:

Mr J Fraser  
Mr J Howarth

##### Scottish Government:

Mr P Russell (by video-conference – part of meeting only)

##### In Attendance:

Mrs R Moir, Principal Administrator, Highland Council

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr D Alston, Mr J Gray and Mr I Latimer.

#### 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (September)

There had been circulated Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 3 September 2010, the terms of which were **NOTED**.

#### 3. Single Outcome Agreement – SOA2 Annual Performance Report

There had been circulated Report No. HPSP/5/10 dated 10 November 2010 by the Head of Policy and Performance, Highland Council, confirming that the SOA2 Annual Performance Report had been submitted to the Scottish Government on 30 September 2010. An overview of progress against each of

the national and local outcomes evidenced that 82% of indicators showed improvement or sustained performance across the Partnership where data had been reported.

The report highlighted notable areas of achievement and decline. Areas of notable improvement were identified as: Economy, Employment and Skills; Education, Families and Health; Tackling Inequality; Community Safety and Environment; and Consumption and Efficiency. Based on performance data and analysis, areas of notable decline were identified as: Economy; Education; and Managing Staff Sickness and Absence.

The report suggested that the most effective approach to ongoing review would be for the relevant partnership forum – e.g. the Economic Forum – or working group to take responsibility for improvement.

Comments made during discussion included:

- there could be merit in future in reducing the overall number of indicators and in having a greater focus on outcomes rather than inputs/outputs
- there were no Scottish Government plans to alter the SOA arrangements prior to the May 2011 election.

After discussion, the Partnership **AGREED:**

- i. that the relevant partnership forum consider what more could be done in areas of declining performance, with a view to improving results, with a report back to the Performance Board;
- ii. that future changes of indicators be driven through the relevant forum or working group and its associated governance arrangements and thereafter reported back to this Board; and
- iii. to examine current SOA targets and indicators to identify any potential scope for their further refining/streamlining, with particular reference in the shorter term to those targets not currently being met or affected by any budget savings

#### **4. Reviewing Partnership Arrangements to Deliver Outcomes**

- (i) Dr Margaret Somerville, Director of Public Health, gave a presentation on the role of all public bodies in achieving the Local Outcome: 'The Health and Independence of Older People is maximised', with particular reference to the implications of public sector funding reductions.

Dr Somerville highlighted:

- the implications for the delivery of health care for an ageing population
- the numbers of frail elderly with long-term conditions requiring significant health/care intervention
- the importance of increasing the proportion of the "elderly well", and the role for partner agencies in helping to encourage healthy lifestyles, improve wellbeing and provide a supportive community environment to assist in maintaining independent living and self-management of health issues
- the potential role of new technology such as Telecare as a factor in health/care delivery, while recognising the need to maintain an appropriate level of human interaction.

Comments made during discussion included:

- the focus should be on actual need, rather than an age label, and on a holistic multi-agency approach
- service delivery should be designed to address protection and prevention as well as intervention
- the potential role of older people themselves in healthy ageing and of the third sector should be recognised, as should the health benefits to be drawn from the natural environment
- the role of the family support network had seen a decline due to greater mobility and dispersal.

After discussion, the Partnership **NOTED**:

- i. factors identified relevant to maintaining good physical and mental health;
- ii. the key challenges to address; and
- iii. the potential for and limits to an increasing role for technology in delivering elderly care.

The Partnership **AGREED** that the Head of Policy and Performance (HOPP), the Highland Council, would facilitate further partnership discussion of the key challenges to achieving the outcome, with a view to all partners considering what more could be done to encourage healthy ageing. A meeting between the HOPP and the Director of Public Health would be arranged to take this forward.

- (ii) Mr James Fraser and Mr James Howarth, UHI, gave a presentation on the Local Outcome 8: 'Growth in the Knowledge Economy is supported by achieving University title for UHI in 3 years'.

Mr Fraser outlined the process and anticipated timescale for the award of University title to UHI, explaining that this should be completed early in 2011. Mr Howarth highlighted the importance of impacting on the knowledge economy and drew attention to the outcomes of an economic impact assessment (EIA) carried out by Biggar Economics.

The EIA had estimated that, in summary, in terms of gross value added (GVA), UHI contributed £353m to the economy of the UHI area and £393m to Scotland as a whole. UHI contributions to its area included:

- direct impact, supplier impact, staff and student spending
- labour market impact through the supply of graduates attracted from outside the area or retained from within and from part-time working by students
- business and key sector development through business start-up and development; attraction and retention of companies; knowledge transfer and commercialisation; contribution to tourism activities
- individual development through added wellbeing and professional development
- sustainable development through local capital investment, workforce education, social capital (volunteering)
- facilitating the attraction and retention of people.

In terms of educational contribution, Mr Fraser provided a range of figures demonstrating a steady growth in student numbers and illustrating student distribution in terms of home and educational base.

Mr Howarth drew attention to a range of statistics on UHI research activity, which outperformed many other Scottish institutions, ranking seventh in terms of the level of knowledge exchange, and illustrated the diversity of disciplines and programmes involved, together with examples of related capital development.

Mr Fraser outlined future challenges facing UHI in the short to medium term in maintaining current provision, let alone progressing further development. It would be vital to secure both academic leadership and sufficient funding, and to this end to identify both additional income streams and internal efficiencies.

Comments made during discussion included:

- UHI would be happy to be considered as a service supplier to partner agencies
- strong links should be forged with the business sector and with agencies promoting economic and employment growth
- it was vital to the area's economy to identify and improve relevant knowledge and skills levels; information was essential as to where the demand/gaps were and where education and training effort would realise the greatest benefit
- a single portal for further and higher education (FHE) enquiries/information could be of assistance in providing an overview and co-ordination of the education and training effort.

After discussion, the Partnership **NOTED**:

- i. the anticipated award of university title in 2011, and the consequent promotional opportunities;
- ii. the need to raise public awareness of the relatively high ranking of the UHI in terms of research capacity;
- iii. the importance of analysing the outputs from the knowledge economy and of identifying priorities for translating these into economic and industrial activity, with a focus on positive outcomes; and
- iv. an offer by the Highland Council Convener to invite UHI to make a presentation at a future Council meeting, following the outcome of the assessment by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) of UHI's application for university title, expected in December 2010

**(iii)** The Partnership **AGREED** to **DEFER** a presentation by Mr George Hogg, SNH, on the Local Outcome: 'Carbon Emissions are reduced and communities are protected from the consequences of changing weather patterns', to permit challenge to be led by Mr Peter Russell, Scottish Government, with whom electronic contact had been lost.

## **5. Partnership Responses to Public Sector Funding Reductions from 2011-13**

**(i)** Ms Charlotte Wright, HIE, gave an update on the economic impact of public sector funding reductions in the Highlands following the information provided by public sector organisations. The comment was made that every effort should be pursued to ensure that Highland companies were positioned to compete within public procurement processes.

The Partnership **NOTED** that the outcome of the study into 'The economic impact of the public sector funding reductions in the Highlands', by Mr Steve Westbrook, would be reported back to the Board, and that in the interim copies of the draft report would be distributed to all Board members, and **AGREED** that a Special Meeting of the Board be held to take forward discussion on shared services options to maintain local services delivery and community sustainability

- (ii) The Director of Planning and Development, Highland Council, gave a presentation on the potential cumulative impact of proposed changes to a range of public services in communities across Highland; however, figures on potential jobs impact were not currently available.

Comments made during discussion included:

- it was important to identify opportunities for shared services to help ensure retention of facilities within communities
- it would be important to avoid creating clusters of disproportionate impact in remote rural communities
- the addition of further agencies' services and information, e.g. FHE, SNH, would further enhance the usefulness of the maps/data presented and facilitate the identification of sharing opportunities, for example through a form of "clearing house" mechanism
- due account should be taken of service delivery and community impact as well as financial considerations
- public consultation responses would be factored in to Council budget decision-making

The Partnership **NOTED** the presentation and **AGREED** that a colour version of the maps used in the Director of Planning and Development's presentation be distributed electronically to all Board members.

- (iii) There had been circulated Report No. HPSP/6/10 dated 24 November 2010 by the Head of Policy and Performance, the Highland Council, providing an update on the work undertaken since the previous Board meeting to respond to the reduction in public sector funding in terms of developing alternative governance and operational models for public sector services.

The report set out the conclusions and outcomes of three meetings scheduled in September 2010, summarising agreement on:

- the purpose of the discussions
- values for designing service delivery arrangements
- practical considerations to be taken into account in developing options for service delivery.

It also outlined a number of propositions identified as potentially leading to a more unified public sector:

- one public sector authority for the Highlands and Islands
- joint arrangements for police and fire services/boards
- joining emergency services in terms of geographical scale rather than across sectors
- joint board for current Council activities across local authorities in the Highlands and Islands
- joining Health and Social Care
- joining tertiary education and economic development

While time had not permitted exploration of all the options identified, particular attention had been given to the proposal to examine joining up the emergency services, which had subsequently been given support by the Highland Council and had been raised in other forums.

The report also highlighted subsequent relevant national developments:

- the Scottish Parliament's Economy, energy and Tourism Committee's Enterprise Networks Inquiry
- the establishment of the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services, chaired by Dr Campbell Christie (the Christie Commission)

Mr David Wynne, HIFRS, gave an update on the Fire Spending Review and discussions within the Ministerial Advisory Group and advised that a Ministerial announcement was anticipated, setting out three options for further study:

- retention of all 8 existing fire and rescue services, with enhanced partnership/collaboration
- a single fire and rescue service for Scotland
- a regionalised model of three or four services.

There was tabled during discussion a proposal that the Board scope and prepare the case for a Highlands and Islands "blue light" service by better and closer integration of the Fire and Rescue Service, the Ambulance Service, NHS Highland and the Police to improve service delivery, with a view to submission of the case to the Christie Commission.

In presenting the proposal, Mr Wynne highlighted that:

- the government focus appeared to be on identifying potential savings rather than building a fire and rescue service fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- there was no proposal to examine further the "blue light" service option put forward by the Highland Council
- the Highland and Islands Fire Board had agreed to support further work on this proposal and to seek the support of the four constituent authority community planning partnerships.

Comments made during discussion included:

- it was important to keep the Islands authorities fully engaged
- the difficulty of engaging on this issue with the Scottish Ambulance Service, already structured as a national body, was recognised
- the quality of the current emergency service delivery in responding to the area's particular needs needed to be emphasised
- Government was taking a similar approach to police reform
- it was important to link the police and fire reform agenda with the work of the Christie Commission
- as the anticipated Ministerial options paper would not include the "blue light" service option, the partnership should support the development of an Outline Business Case for submission direct to the Christie Commission
- the Commission was likely to favour solutions that could be applied Scotland-wide.

After discussion, the Partnership **AGREED**:

- i. the tabled proposal on scoping the case for a Highlands and Islands “blue light service”; and
- ii. in determining how best to present the submission of this case to the Christie Commission, to discuss the proposals in the first instance with the community planning partnerships and Chairs of NHS Boards in the islands authorities.

## 6. Working with the Third Sector

There had been circulated Report No. HPSP/7/10 dated 24 November 2010 by the Head of Policy and Performance, Highland Council, providing an update on national and regional developments in working with the Third Sector, in particular the developments at a national level for supporting a single coherent ‘interface’ for the Third Sector in each community planning partnership area; and the proposal submitted by the new third sector ‘interface’ in Highland, the Highland Third Sector Limited Liability Partnership (HSTLLP), as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The criteria and requirements to which a recognised third sector interface body would be subject were outlined, as were responses received to a consultation exercise carried out in Highland to gather views on how best to develop the new organisation.

There was also tabled Report No. HPSP/8/10 dated 1 December 2010 by the Director of Social Work on the Scottish Government’s Reshaping Care for Older People Change Fund, established to enable health and social care partners to implement local plans for making better use of their combined resources for older people’s services; to provide bridging finance to facilitate shifts in the balance of care from institutional to primary and community settings; and to influence decisions taken with respect to the totality of partnership spend on older people’s care.

This report advised that, to access the Fund, each partnership had to submit to the Scottish Government a short Change Plan agreed by all partners, requiring coordination of a wide range of groups. The report recommended that, to address this, a stakeholder event be held before the end of the year, reflecting the broad interests set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

Comments made during discussion included:

- the establishment of a successful Third Sector interface would have benefits for inter-agency working
- the co-ordination of the sector in Highland was particularly challenging, given the diversity and large number of third sector organisations
- the lack of clear budget information from the Scottish Government had made it difficult for the HSTLLP to devise proposals demonstrating any significant organisational change and that any subsequent funding reductions could affect sustainability of the model proposed
- Government expected such interface bodies to participate in formal community planning structures

After discussion, the Partnership **NOTED** the information given on developments at a national level for supporting a single coherent ‘interface’ for the Third Sector in each community planning partnership area, the proposal submitted by the Highland Third Sector Limited Liability Partnership (HSTLLP), and the extent of partnership working with the sector in Highland and **AGREED**:

- i. to invite the HSTLLP, once confirmed and supported by the Scottish Government, to be represented on the Partnership Board, with the next meeting to be arranged for March 2011;
- ii. to invite the HSTLLP also to participate in the Economic Forum and the Environment Forum;
- iii. that a stakeholder event be held before the end of the year, reflecting the broad interests set out in paragraph 3.2 of the Director of Social Work's report;
- iv. that the stakeholder event involve a range of Third and Independent Sector representatives, including the HSTLLP, to identify nominated representatives to be involved in the final agreement and submission of the Change Plan to the Scottish Government ; and
- v. that the potential for the continued use of this framework be considered by the Highland Community Care Partnership, to support ongoing consultation with the sector regarding community care services in Highland.

## **7. Future Meetings**

It was **NOTED** that a schedule of meeting dates for 2011 would be drawn up and circulated to all Board Members.

The meeting ended at 4.50 p.m.