

The Highland Council

Highland Public Services Partnership Performance Board

Minutes of Meeting of the Highland Public Services Partnership Performance Board held in Committee Room 1, Highland Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday 1 July 2011 at 2.00pm.

Present Highland Council:

Mr S Park
Dr D Alston

Mr A B Dodds
Ms C McDiarmid
Ms E Johnston

Highlands & Islands Enterprise:
Ms C Wright

NHS Highland:
Ms E Mead (Arrived 2.40pm)
Ms M Paton

Scottish Government:
Mr J Pryce

SNH:
Mr G Hogg

Representing the Third Sector Interface:
Ms H Whiteside
Ms S Ward

UHI:
Mr M Wright

Northern Constabulary:
Mr G Graham
Mr T Ogilvie

Highland and Islands Fire and Rescue Service:
Mr M Holme
Mr R Durham (H&I Fire Board)

In Attendance:

Ms A Macrae, Committee Administrator, Highland Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr M E M Foxley, Mr G Coutts, Mr J Howarth, Mr J Fraser, Mr I Ross, Mr J S Gray.

2. Minutes of Meeting – 25 March 2011

There had been and circulated were **NOTED** Minutes of Meeting held on 25 March 2011.

3. Actions arising from the March meeting (verbal/written reports)

Public Sector Employment Employee Study

There was circulated report by Ms C Wright, HIE Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) concerning the public sector employment employee study commissioned to assess the impact of tighter public sector budget settlements on the wider Highland economy. The report noted that the findings of the study were currently in draft form with the final report expected in July 2011. The report also provided an overview of the key findings of the study and the key actions proposed. The Board was invited to review the draft summary report and to consider the implications for the economy from reduced public budgets, and the proposed approach to mitigating these impacts and promoting key messages.

In discussion it was reported that the Council had agreed a capital programme of £60m in each of the next the three years, and that in addition the Housing Capital Programme for the year was £18m. It was also anticipated that a flat rate settlement would be confirmed by the Scottish Government in regard to the revenue budget and that if this was the case further savings would not be required on the budget in 2012/13. It was suggested, therefore, that this level of spend by the Council would provide an element of stability in regard to the wider economy. In response Ms C Wright confirmed that the Council's sending proposals had been factored into the study.

It was also confirmed that the Council was in the process of developing a sustainable procurement policy and that the policy would encourage localism.

Discussion followed on the significant level of positive publicity generated following the announcement that Castle Stuart Golf Club would host the Scottish Open event from 2011-2013, and in regard to the opportunities to leverage more out of event in the coming years in terms of inward investment.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

Principles of a service delivery for remote and rural areas

Arising from this item and on hearing from Ms M Paton, NHS Highland, the Board **AGREED** that there would be value in a report on the principles of service delivery for remote and rural areas being presented to a future meeting.

Partnership action to promote healthy ageing - feedback from forums

There was tabled paper by Ms M Paton, NHS Highland, on behalf of Dr M Somerville, which provided a summary of the common and specific themes which had been emerged through discussion at the sessions held involving the Community Safety Task Group, Highland Environment Forum and the Highland Economic Forum on the subject of promoting healthy ageing. She reported that all parties involved had been keen to contribute

towards this agenda and had identified practical opportunities by which this could be achieved. She also suggested that it was important to link in with the strategic level particularly in regard to planning for integration.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

Growth in the Knowledge Economy

Mr M Wright, UHI gave a presentation on this item during which he welcomed the fact that the UHI had been awarded university status in February 2011. He reported that a major celebratory event would be held to mark the achievement in Eden Court, Inverness on 25 August 2011.

Mr Wright further reported that the UHI had produced a new strategic plan which would be subject to wider consultation. He also noted that the intake of Scottish and EU students was effectively capped through the current funding arrangements, and that the UHI was lobbying the Government for additional funding support to grow the number of students from these areas. In contrast and following on from the Government's recent funding announcement there was an opportunity to grow the number of students in the rest of the UK. He also reported on further opportunities for growth in relation to international, postgraduate and CPD students.

In regard to research work Mr Wright reported that the major areas of development were in life sciences and particularly in renewable energy, and advised that the UHI was keen to work with partners to achieve the optimum benefit to the Highlands and Islands arising from the investment in this sector through developing a skilled workforce and establishing a knowledge base in research and development which could also be exported world wide.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

Climate Change Outcomes

Mr G Hogg, Scottish Natural Heritage, provided a verbal update in regard to climate change outcomes advising that the development of an updated Single Outcome Agreement 3 which was to follow later in the year would determine whether there would be one or more outcomes for climate change and the precise wording for the future.

He reported that work was ongoing on a new set of indicators which would provide more genuine feedback as to whether the outcomes were being achieved. He advised that the draft set of indicators would be circulated around the partner organisations with comments being sought by end of September to coincide with the preparation of the performance report.

In regard to the Climate Change Declaration being led by Highland Environment Forum he confirmed that work was ongoing to promote the declaration to other organisations in the Highlands. He further reported that those organisations who had signed up to the declaration had been asked to provide information on their performance in relation to the

outcomes. Mr Hogg further reported that the Highland Environment Network were also developing a parallel declaration that could be used at a personal level.

In discussion it was reported that while the timetable for updating the SOAs had not been confirmed it could be that there would be more focus on transparency in regard to performance. It was also noted that the draft performance report for the previous year would be available by the end of September and that SOA 3 would have to be aligned to the Government's priorities once these had been announced.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

3. Improving Partnership Approach to Asset Management

Mr Steve Barron, Director of Housing and Property, Highland Council gave a detailed presentation on improving a partnership approach to asset management during which he outlined the benefits that would be associated with this approach, the reasons for prioritising this agenda, and the fact that it was aligned to the from the Christie Commission in regard to integrated service provision, improving performance and saving money, consistent data gathering, utilising all available resources and better long term strategic planning. He advised that the asset management partnership objectives would be to:

- build on previous work and good practice
- stimulate collaborative working
- identify opportunities for office rationalisation, co-location and shared services
- develop protocols on communication and surplus property
- develop an integrated property strategy
- develop opportunities for joint projects
- share information and map assets.

Thereafter and in terms of actions the Director of Housing and Property proposed that the Board agree to:

- give a top level commitment to an asset management partnership for the public sector in the Highlands
- establish a property group and commit decision makers to be involved in that group
- agree to share information on capital programmes and resources
- agree to support information sharing, including mapping
- seek co-location opportunities
- consider the potential for sharing services

Further to the above Director of Housing and Property advised the Board that the Scottish Government considered a partnership approach to asset management to be priority. He also outlined the opportunities for action through the Scottish Futures hub initiative. He further reported that an excellent model of a partnership working existed in the North East of Scotland in the form of the North East of Scotland Public Sector Property Group.

In discussion the representatives of the partner organisations welcomed the proposals to have a partnership approach to asset management as the way forward. Reference was made to the need to effect a change in the culture and attitudes on this issue at a strategic level and to drive this message down to tactical management level so that there was a willingness to contribute and to deliver a partnership approach at all levels.

Further to the above there was a consensus that that the Director of Housing and Property take the lead in developing a partnership approach

The Board **AGREED** to (i) give a top level commitment to an asset management partnership for the public sector in the Highlands, (ii) the proposed actions set out by the in the presentation and detailed above (iii) that the Director of Housing and Property, Highland Council take the lead role on this issue, (iii) it being delegated to Chief Executive, Highland Council and Director of Housing and Property, Highland Council to draw up the terms of reference for the Property Group, in consultation with the partner organisations, and (iv) that an update on progress be provided to the next meeting.

4. Reviewing Partnership Arrangements to Deliver Outcomes

There had been circulated report by the Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (HADP) in relation to the review of the national/single outcome agreement *'attitudes and behaviours towards alcohol and other drugs are changed and those in need are supported by better prevention and treatment services'*.

Mr G Graham, Chief Constable, gave a presentation in regard to this item during which he outlined the funding arrangements for the Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and advised that further work was required to ensure that the link between the allocation of funding against the agreed Partnership's priorities was more clearly defined/transparent. He reported on ongoing issues in regard to pressures on HADP funding, reviewing the staffing and role of the HADP support team, developing recovery pathways and diversionary activities, and promoting multi agency training and effective partnership working.

Thereafter the Board was circulated with the lead challenge by Dr M Foxley who emphasised the need to have an effective HADP support team; expressing concern at effectiveness of both regional and local drugs and alcohol forums and suggesting that their work be transferred to either the Local Health Partnerships or Local Community Safety Forums; agreeing that there was a need to develop effective recovery pathways across the Highlands and for drug and alcohol monies to be directed towards this activity rather than what he regarded as other ineffective activities; noting that the Lochaber pub watch was operating well, and; advising of his concern that drunk teenagers were arriving at A&E, while they and their families seemed oblivious to the serious risks they faced.

In responding to the lead challenge the Chief Constable reported on the difficulties of measuring the success/outcomes of preventative measures given that they tended to produce results in the longer term and the fact that there had to be an element certainty that the measure would achieve the desired result. He expressed the view that it was important that funding was invested into both tackling the symptoms and preventative work. He also confirmed that he would

arrange to have a meeting with Dr M Foxley to discuss the issues raised in his challenge.

In terms of preventative measures discussion followed on the need to direct more resources into primary schools with a view to influencing children at an earlier age. The Chief Constable confirmed that he would arrange to have further discussions with Dr M Somerville on this matter and in regard to the fact that successful high impact events in schools had been cancelled due to funding pressures, and in regard to any proposals for alternatives.

During further discussion it was suggested that there was a need for more transparency in how and where the public funding invested in drugs and alcohol was being spent. The view was also expressed that there was a need to encourage more responsible licensing so that licence holders did not continue to sell alcohol to customers when they were intoxicated, and to apply the law more strictly in this regard. It was also noted that in addition to targeting youngsters there was a need to challenge the behaviour of many adults in front of youngsters when under the influence of alcohol.

The Chief Constable advised that the blame for irresponsible drinking could not be laid solely at the door of licence holders, and that the availability of cheap alcohol in off sales and supermarkets represented a significant challenge. Responding to further points he indicated that there was a need to connect people to greater health interventions and access to services as an alternative to retaining those found to be drunk and incapable in custody and processing them through the criminal justice service.

Following further discussion the Board **NOTED** the presentation and that the Chief Constable would arrange to have further discussions with Dr M Foxley and Dr M Somerville on the issues raised above.

5. The Third Sector Interface - Business Plan and Operating Model

There was circulated report by Ms H Whiteside, Third Sector Interface, on the Highland Third Sector Partnership (HTSP). The report advised that the Scottish Government had awarded the HTSP the Single Interface Grant for Highland in the sum of £683,000 for 2011/12, and that as a grant condition the Partnership would have to work with Voluntary Action Scotland and the other 31 Interfaces in developing and agreeing a new funding formula for the Interfaces. The report advised that Highland currently received the largest share of the funding for the interfaces and this was likely to come under pressure from other Interfaces in the Central Belt. The report also outlined the operating model for the Highland Interface, involving ten partner organisations, and set out its main functions, the governance arrangements which would apply, and the management arrangements and contact points for the HTSP. It also noted that it was proposed to hold an official launch of the Highland Interface later in the year.

Responding to questions Ms H Whiteside reported on her concerns regarding agreeing a new funding formula with the other Interfaces given the different models and remits that applied across Scotland. In regard to the focus on volunteering contained in the business plan she explained that new system was to be installed in the nine partner organisations which would enable volunteering activity and across the Highland to be collated and that she would arrange for this

information to be presented to a future meeting of the Board once it was available.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

6. Any Other Competent Business

Ms C McDiarmid reported that Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Local Government and Planning was to visit the Highlands on 16/17 August 2011 and that there was a slot on the afternoon of the 16th during which she wished to meet with the community planning partners. She advised that she would arrange for invitations to this meeting to be sent out electronically.

The Board **NOTED** the arrangements for the visit.

7. Dates of Next Meetings

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting dates scheduled were: Friday, 7 October 2011; Friday, 2 December 2011.

The meeting ended at 4.00 p.m.