



CAITHNESS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Location: Online
Date: 27th September 2024
Time: 10.00 - 12.00
Chair: Eann Sinclair

Agenda Items

1	Welcome and Apologies	Eann Sinclair (HIE)
2	Notes and actions from last meeting 14 th June 2024	Eann Sinclair (HIE)
3	Presentations: Emergency Liaison Group Whole Family Well Being Update Planet Youth Update	Stephen Mezals (Police) Ann Gillies (Highland Council) Vicki Clark (NHS)
4	Highland CPP	Eann Sinclair (HIE)
5	Caithness Cares/ Here for Caithness	Amanda Snashall (CVG)
6	Caithness Poverty Action Group	
7	Caithness Employability (LEP)	
8	Caithness Child's Plan	
10	AOCB	Eann Sinclair (HIE)
11	Date of next meeting 2024 Meeting Dates: <i>Friday 13/12/24</i>	Eann Sinclair (HIE)

Attendees: Eann Sinclair (HIE); Amanda Snashall (CVG); Alistair Jack (CVG); Catherine Patterson (Befrienders Highland); Jane MacIntosh (CAB); Vicki Clark (NHS); Fiona Webster (Highland Council); Laura Fisher (Highland Council); Helen Ross (Highland Council); Stephen Mezals (Police Scotland); Ann Gillies (Highland Council); Siobhan Leen (NHS); Toni Magee (Home Energy); Catherine Graham (Social Security); Alice Nicolson (DYW); Alexander Glasgow (TCC); Daniel Macleod (D&DC); Gillian Begg (Connecting Carers); Penny Gunn (CYC); Fiona Carlisle (Homestart); Jenny Bruce (Highland Council); Angus McInnes (CVG); Michael Simpson (CPAG); Allan Farquhar (WCC)

Apologies: J Baughan (Highland Council); C Nicholson (NHS); J McEwen (Councillor); B Dods (CVG); B Duggan (SDF); A Cowie (Advocacy); T Hamilton (MCR Pathways); M Hume (Highland Council); R Bremner (Councillor); M Johnstone (NHS); P Gibson (Sensory Centre);

M McDonald; M Reiss (Councillor); P Castle (HLH); P Pearson (Education North); L Broomfield (NHS); K Haden-Homer (Enable Works)

ES – welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave time for any comments on the minutes from the previous meeting held on 26th April 2024. Minutes approved. Apologies will be added to minutes of this meeting. (See above) No specific actions arising from the previous meeting.

Whole Family Well Being Team Update from Ann Gillies – presentation attached. Not had many applications until this week and now have received a lot – cannot say at the moment how many are from Caithness. The Family Types are set nationally by the Scottish Government. Funding closes on 30th September but may re-open again at the end of the year depending on funds. If you would like to be added to the fortnightly bulletin for continual updates please email Ann Ann.Gillies3@highland.gov.uk.

ES reiterated that he appreciated the updates which reminds people of what's happening and keeps them focussed moving forward.

Emergency Liaison Group – Stephen Mezals – presentation attached. Sits under the Highland Resilience Partnership which is split into 5 ELG's due to the size of the Highlands. It is generally locally based unless there is a bigger issue effecting across the whole of the Highlands and then sits with the larger Highland Resilience Partnership. The biggest response to an ELG is the weather and this is already pre-empted before the amber weather warnings begin, plans are put in place. At the beginning of the year that Caithness was cut off due to the snow, but BEAR was working hard to try and keep access open at least with one road, Wick airport was part of that ELG to ensure that we had at least an emergency response and was used for an ambulance evacuation. It was tested and did work, and the joint working is an effective way to keep the community safe. SM also gave an example around an unexploded device near a school in Invergordon and how that worked and smaller scale about utilising gritters to help get things moving.

HR endorsed what SM was saying and how things work well meeting regularly, keeping details and information up to date and getting to know those people in place which helps.

CP asked about the provision of 4 x 4 vehicles for Police – SM said that Caithness has one vehicle which at that time was in the garage however it was good to share resources etc with other agencies which is incredibly useful.

AG - Is this legislation Reserved or Devolved?

AM replied there is Scottish specific contingency legislation. However, depending on the nature and scale of the incident being dealt with there may be real time linkage with UK Government departments.

Planet Youth Update Vicki Clark – Vicki spoke about the 3 objectives and plans made by



those members of the Action Groups

Vicki spoke about the parent cafes that Lindsay was setting up to provide information and support and hoping to have talks around vaping and the organisation stay strong, safe and

free. Vicki stressed that PY is about working in partnership around planning diversions and reducing risk factors and requested further support particularly from parents and carers and community councillors who are in a unique position to make changes.



PY priorities are to ensure the sustainability of the work, to continue to raise awareness, to encourage parent and carer involvement and to continue partnership working, asking who else could we be working with to grow and develop. Please contact either Lindsay and Vicki if you have any ideas or questions for PY. Their emails are lindsay.broomfield@nhs.scot & victoria.clark5@nhs.scot

ES – it will be really interesting to see how the parent cafes go as it seems so crucial for their involvement in embedding the process.

AG stated the Thurso community cafe will be up and running soon. Also spoke about the process of disposing of Vapes.

FW spoke about her concerns that the young folk coming through are really not ready to go on their books for the employability service, and some of those that can't leave the house. It seems that their parents also have mental health problems, there seems a gap there – what about those that don't have parental support, is there a danger that they will slip through the net. Are you also linking in with Schools Development Scotland or Myfuture MySuccess – these are the ones that are working with some of these vulnerable kids who especially since COVID are being missed out.

VC confirmed that they were working with these groups and the good thing about PY is that they focus on 4 areas parents, school environment, peers and leisure time. It's certainly about having a multi-faceted approach in order to reach as many as we can in as many ways.

PG raised the point that the price of Vapes had plummeted which could be an indicator as to the increase in use in young people. The other concern is that there are far harder drugs being taken in the toilet in schools and this could be being missed. Believes that the college needs to play a critical link to this – also asked how will you advertise the cafes and ensure that they understand why this is taking place and lastly youth groups do a critical role but have no money – primary age is an important time and there is a need to identify them early and do intervention techniques at the younger age.

VC replied – mentioned harder drugs – we know that and that's why we have these resources for those that are involved with young people so that they can have these conversations. The vaping is something that the groups chose to focus on, but PY are not just limited to that, there is other work going on behind the scenes. Completely agree about going into the primary schools which is happening to sow the seeds. Totally agree about the college and will get Lindsay to speak to them. Spoke about the usual ways to advertise and any ideas that she had missed to let them know.

AG – Asked about vaping pouches that you stick on your gums

VC – no legislation about those at the moment and they are being endorsed by footballers so despite them being an issue there is not much they can do other than advise not to try them.

AG – County lines training which was so interesting so highly recommend that for any working with young people – and mentioned Nancy from CFSG that she may have some role models that would go into schools etc

LF – mentioned that there would be a further 4 training opportunities around County Lines and she would keep us posted re dates.

AG – mentioned about putting WD40 and astro turf on surfaces to disable the snorting of drugs etc

Highland CPP update from Eann Sinclair - met a week ago but unfortunately, he wasn't there but he does have an update from that meeting – the main thing is the fact that the HOIP has effectively been signed off. There is a delivery plan attached to that which he shall try to share with us all. It's still a work in progress and will go back to the board in December. The HOIP is the framework more than anything else, so the delivery plan is an important part of that and that there is a danger that we end up doing so many things that we don't do them well, so the delivery plan allows for focus. All CPP's will be doing a self-assessment which is coming out in the next few weeks and once out he will share it for us to complete when it comes through. Year 1 report of the development team is also out, and he will also be sharing that.

Employability update provided by Fiona Webster - who stated that Highland Council had received funding from the Government one of which was to tackle child poverty. She spoke about one of the areas was to identify parents with children and employers to potentially lift young families out of poverty. They have created a community engagement fund where we are trying to link in with communities and third sector groups who are already working with some of these groups. Funding is up to £10,000. Agreed to send over some of the guidelines and there were some examples of things that had been done before. Always looking for new ideas so please feel free to get in touch and have a chat about anything you are thinking of. Hoping that Worklife Highland website will go live next week – this is a website to cover multi agency approach to all the employability services in the Highland in the one area. So anyone looking for work, just left school, help with their CV, upskilling etc, its run by the Highland Council who will signpost that person to the relevant source of help. There is also a place for employers to put information around jobs, volunteering opportunities etc. There is also a number of employers that offer flexible working arrangements for people with families etc, hybrid, flexible hours, working from home etc.

AS asked about how we could do things differently to raise awareness of some of these jobs

FW spoke about employers being more flexible etc and is always willing to work with employers about how they can match up people with those jobs.

PG – spoke about her working for Klics which was 14 hrs a week, 3rd Sector and with her driving to Wick 30-mile round trip - just did not make it worth her while.

Caithness Cares & Here for Caithness update from Amanda Snashall Caithness Cares meeting is held every quarter, the last being in August. During this meeting we had presentations from The Military Liaison Group and MFR Cash for kids. MLG are looking for help to identify those from the military community to ensure that they are receiving the appropriate support available to them. They are a really useful contact to signpost you to the relevant organisations or departments. MFR Cash for Kids spoke about the art rooms that they fund in both Inverness and Elgin and that they would be very interested in doing something similar in Caithness. The art rooms are for children and young people who can be referred to them by schools for a period of time to support that individual in whatever capacity is required. This information has been shared across all of the networks and Lyth Centre supported by a number of other groups are to take this on working with MFR Cash for kids. HUG/Spirit Advocacy have the lived experience project and how this can be developed to support the community moving forward. There are a number of people who have volunteered to sit on the panel and there is one more session of information before it moves to more regular meets. ChangeMH are looking to add a DBI Co-Ordinator to

Caithness which would be a really useful resource for us here. 10-27th October sees the annual SMHAF and the LE Art Group, thanks to the generosity of Highlife Highland will be exhibiting for the festival in the exhibition room at North Coast Visitor Centre. Discovery College have a new manager Sue Lyons – hoping to see an expansion of services in Caithness. Encompass Caithness survey results are published Perhaps they or one of them could attend the next meeting to talk about the results and any actions as a result of it. They are putting on an event 7th November at Mackays in Wick showcasing what is available for families in Caithness and raising information in that community – anyone who wishes to attend this event – please get in touch Thriving families, an Inverness based charity supporting families with young children who have additional support needs have recently submitted an application for funding for a support worker to be based at Caithness to cover some of the obvious need outlined in the survey.

ACTIONS for AS moving forward

1. Volunteer Review of support and advertising campaign due to concerns within 3rd sector and other groups in the county.
2. Liaise with Pauline Pearson re. Child Plan

ES reiterated that both funding and volunteering remains an acute problem for the third sector.

CAB Update from Jane Macintosh – they are currently in the process of developing an outreach service whereby they will take the CAB out into the community into 16 rural areas on a weekly basis. Always looking for volunteers in both Wick and Thurso offices. Winter fuel and universal benefits are becoming an issue and they already seeing more people coming through looking for help and this is September. JM emphasised that we really need to pull together – it really is quite concerning some of the things that they are being told.

Helen Ross from the Highland Council team are chasing up the actions from the Child poverty Action Plan with NHS colleagues. Highland Council & NHS have recently updated their British sign language plan which is for 6 years. Basically, there is more engagement needed and to interpret those resources we have.

FW raised about BSL is not that much use to all, but alternatives would be more useful bearing in mind that 7 out of 10 have hearing difficulties.

HR stated that the BSL was a legislative requirement but happy to have further discussions around alternatives.

SM updated that Matthew Thain has now left the community engagement post and Police Scotland are not sure yet how that void will be filled as this post will no longer be available due to funding.

ES mentioned that indeed that was a huge void and is perhaps something that he will take back to the Highland CPP as it will be a big loss particularly if we don't learn any lessons from it.

Angus McInnes from CVG spoke about working alongside Bryan and discussing some of the CPAG work – discussions around winter support plans and the increasingly pressing issues of people being cold in their houses. Awaiting the Government announcement and watching the impact that will have on the most vulnerable in our communities. He also mentioned *Save the date* for a ½ hr day conference on Mon 28th Oct probably at PPP but Bryan will update once all is finalised.

Allan Farqhar – Wick Community Council pulling info together on Localised Plans and there seems to be a whole plethora of information and they are not really aware of the mechanism of how that's fed up to the Highland Council.

Jenny Bruce area place plan meeting next week and are looking to move this forward depending on that to form a stake holder group and would welcome community partnership

involvement. She described the difference between a Local Place Plan which is local to communities, villages, trust areas etc and focussed on the needs of that particular community.

An Area Place Plan became as a result of a full council and planning board deciding that each sub region in highland would have a place plan so Caithness will have a wide one. They also inform the LLP and the HOIP and lots of other plans and is more to look at what people want for a whole area.

AF confirmed that that was pretty much how they thought it was but were concerned about double counting – WCC are on it but conscious that they didn't want to double up on what else people already had in place.

Eann closed the meeting.