

LOCHABER COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

ACTION NOTE FROM THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 AUGUST 2020

MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT:

Emma Tayler (ET), Bryan Gregg (BG), Colin Robb (CR), Mark Richardson (MR), Isla Campbell (IC), Pol McLelland (PM), Dot Ferguson (DF), Scott Dingwall (SD) and Phil MacDonald (PM)

APOLOGIES: Flora McKee, Marie Law, Leona Jones and Derek Martin

Chaired by: Ross Nixon (RN)

Notes by: Diane MacKay

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION AGREED	ACTION
1.	WELCOME & INTRODUCTION TO NEW CHAIR	<p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Due to current events the meeting was taking place through Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>The Chair asked all participants to introduce themselves for the benefit of the group and new members.</p> <p>Bryan Gregg Development Officer for Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) Isla Campbell Police Scotland Inspector Colin Robb Station Commander with SFRS covering Fort William and Lochaber area Dot Ferguson Senior Ward Manager Highland Council, Lead on Community Planning Emma Tayler Assistant Ward Manager Highland Council Mark Richardson Principal Adult and Youth Services Manager, Highlife Highland Pol McLelland Children's Services Manager Scott Dingwall Head of Regional Development for Highlands & Islands Enterprise Phil MacDonald T/Station Commander SFRS Highland Central Diane MacKay Admin Assistant based at Inverness Fire Station</p>	

		<p>RN then gave an introduction as new Chair and gave a brief on his background and experience.</p> <p>RN is currently a Group Manager with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and is responsible for the Highland Central area. He is taking over from Derek Wilson, who is now the Local Senior Officer for the Highland area. RN was previously involved with Community Planning in the Badenoch & Strathspey area for several years and is the lead for the City of Inverness, Hilton Locality Plan. He stressed the Fire Service are strongly committed to partnership working and was delighted that SFRS had taken over as Chair of Lochaber and thanked all previous participants for their contribution.</p> <p>He thanked DF, ET, Leona Jones and Marie Law for their help in the handover. RN stated there will be some real challenges ahead but this meeting was an opportunity to refocus and to continue to identify and support existing groups in Lochaber and those others in need, emerging as a result of COVID.</p>	
2	APOLOGIES	<p>Marie Law, Leona Jones and Derek Martin sent apologies. Apologies also from Flora McKee who will no longer be attending meetings as she is now preparing to retire.</p>	
3.	PARTNERSHIP REVIEW	<p>COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE</p> <p>RN asked all to assist in answering 8 questions set by the Community Planning Board. The discussion and replies would give an indication as to where the group are at present and how they were to progress going forward. The Questionnaire had been received from the Community Planning Board as a tool to assess what impact COVID had had on partnerships and how it was likely to shape future activity.</p> <p>RN stated that the minutes of the previous meeting are noted and that these would be brought forward to November's meeting. Much of the proposed activity from the February partnership meeting had been postponed due to COVID.</p> <p>The CPB questionnaire was discussed as follows;</p>	

	<p><u>Question 1</u> Please list your pre Covid-19 priorities in order</p> <p>The core areas that had been focussed on were centred around locality planning at Caol, Kinlochleven and Fort William. In addition to this a Children’s plan had been taken forward by Police (IC) and an Adult plan was under consultation. Pre-Covid the group’s main concerns were health and wellbeing, inequalities between areas and trying to deliver outcomes to a wider geographic however the partnership were following guidance regarding a focus on locality plans, Adult/Children’s plan and focussing on these areas primarily.</p> <p><u>Question 2</u> Please list your current priorities in order if they have changed as a result of Covid 19</p> <p>Significant universal changes have occurred as a result of the pandemic and the LCPP have not met since February 20 due to the Pandemic. The vast majority of partnership work has been focused on navigating through the pandemic. Exploring reset and recovery options have been limited as the pandemic is still very much among us. Original priorities have understandably taken a back seat to deal with “war time” challenges faced during the pandemic. There is a slow re-emergence but it may be too early for planning as there is the potential for a second wave and new groups in need will emerge as a result of the pandemic.</p> <p>The Council Recovery Board have met twice and will continue to consult with communities. The overarching priorities are still health & wellbeing with a higher focus now on mental health and economic poverty consequences. Young Person issues and social isolation as a result of lockdown, lack of social interaction and access to facilities and activities are seen as rising priorities.</p> <p><u>Question 3</u> Identify any new priorities which have been realised as a result of Covid 19</p> <p>Priorities must now include economic poverty of new groups as furlough comes to an end and job losses are likely to rise. The hospitality sector, very important to the Lochaber area, is likely to be impacted severely.</p>	<p>BG/DF/ET/CR</p> <p>RN</p>
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		<p>As a result of Covid, a wide range of volunteers, small and large groups whose help has been invaluable have emerged.</p> <p>As an immediate priority, we should harness this resource and include them in future partnership communications. Public participation has been very good but “volunteer fatigue” and the return to work after furlough suggests we may lose volunteer numbers. Some of these groups are very small and localised and the Partnership needs to be nimble to ensure we use the groups to the best advantage. Local communication, so that groups are aware of issues and the partnership is aware of what a group can offer is essential.</p> <p>Action - RN asked BG, DF, ET, IC and CR to look at emerging small groups and identify any new ones that have emerged that could make a contribution to partnership outcomes and make a local contact in person or phone if necessary. ET advised all that there is a list available on database created in collaboration with Highland Council and Third Sector Interface. It is a comprehensive list and anyone can access this. Address is as follows:</p> <p><i>www.highlandtsi.org.uk/covid</i></p> <p>RN to look through this volunteer list and to look into the use of all aspects of social media in an effort to improve communications. RN will made amendments to the LCPP website following an update on Weebly from Leona Jones.</p> <p><u>Question 4</u> How has Covid 19 impacted on your ability to deliver outcomes</p> <p>Covid 19 has had a significant effect on child services and their ability to do home visits. As a result of lockdown, there was increased issues in homes of alcohol and drug misuse, domestic abuse and deprivation. A lot of work was done with digital technology and access to digital equipment and connectivity was well covered. Video links were arranged in place of visits. It is expected more serious issues may be uncovered when children return to school.</p>	<p>BG, DF, ET, IC and CR</p> <p>RN</p>
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		<p>PM advised that a hub was set up for the young and vulnerable which was working very well but it took almost 10 weeks to arrange. Based on the fact that it was very successful he would hope that there would be a quicker response to such a crisis in the future. Highlife Highland and the majority of Community facilities have been closed and planned community events cancelled</p> <p>Lack of Connectivity to households in poverty has prevented the most vulnerable and at need from engaging with support and partnership agencies.</p> <p>Social Interaction for Young people has be restricted and has led to isolation, anxiety and loneliness, particularly when coupled with digital poverty.</p> <p><u>Question 5</u> Has Covid 19 impacted upon your ability to access funding, and if so how</p> <p>Significant funding sources have been diverted to COVID related projects which has led to financial strain for CPP plans/project work.</p> <p>SSE Resilience funds which were a source for some community projects have been diverted</p> <p>ET also advised that prior to the Covid 19 crisis the CORRA Foundation were showing interest in the Fort William area. The CORRA Foundation has made almost 16,000 grants to charities across Scotland. These range from the well-known to small individual community groups receiving a few hundred pounds for a local project. It is believed that they are still keen to engage in a significant programme in Lochaber area.</p> <p>Some funding has been reallocated positively to allow for distribution of window boxes and garden materials to Upper Achintore</p> <p>BG stated that 3rd Sector funding was adversely affected across Highland.</p>	
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Question 6

Please rank the 5 HOIP outcomes in order of priority/focus as a result of Covid 19

The partnership discussed the HOIP outcomes and did not specifically list them in order. The overwhelming opinion was that Mental Health and Well Being is the highest priority and this is linked closely to Poverty Reduction. This is linked to the emergence of new groups who would find themselves in poverty due to COVID consequences post furlough – Unemployment, poorer health leading to reduced community participation, safety and resilience.

In Lochaber there was real concern regarding provision of Mental Health resources, Suicide support systems and post suicide support for families as highlighted by IC.

5 HOIP Actions

- Poverty reduction
- Community participation & dialogue
- Infrastructure
- Community safety & resilience
- Mental health & wellbeing

Question 7

Please rank your Partnerships 3 biggest risks as a result of Covid 19

The biggest risk to the partnerships community was felt to be from poverty increasing, mental health issues & wellbeing, potential suicides as a result of Covid were specifically highlighted by IC.

Secondary risk would be access to resources and services. There is an inequality of services throughout the large geographical area of Lochaber. The closer you are to the centre (Fort William) the more services there are available, however these are felt to be small when compared against Inverness.

		<p>Services for young people are particularly difficult to get although virtual means such as Zoom, social media is more readily available now and is providing a stop-gap measure</p> <p>Third risk would be support for resources. Some areas are very small and public participation can be a challenge. We cannot afford to lose the resilience groups that have sprung up in reaction to COVID as they will be valuable for community activity in the future.</p> <p>Question 8 Please identify any new network you have become aware of as a result of Covid 19 and provide a brief description of their activities</p> <p>As previously noted in question 3 ET has a list of groups, including emergency groups, held on a database and readily available for all in the Highland area. It contains names, contact numbers and what support they can provide. www.highlandtsi.org.uk/covid has details of volunteer 3rd sector groups.</p> <p>Previous action still stands as RN would like all to contact these people and see if they can continue to support us and for us in return to provide them with any contact details to make it easier for them to communicate with us. Any new resilience groups to be added to list.</p> <p>Ross thanked all for the assistance with the questions and advised the answers will be referred back to LSO Derek Wilson who will take them to next Community Planning Board meeting.</p>	<p>BG, DF, ET, IC and CR</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>LOCALITY PLAN UPDATES</p>	<p><u>Caol</u></p> <p>Action - IC and CR to review activity and report back to next meeting.</p> <p><u>Kinlochleven</u></p> <p>This is normally led by NHS and Marie but issues have arisen recently with Voluntary Action Support and for now BG will update and review for next meeting.</p>	<p>IC/CR</p> <p>BG</p>

		<p>to and how it will work. They will be in Lochaber area to discuss this and take back any feedback and any ideas are welcome.</p> <p>All partners are asked to consider best ways to communicate the groups messages. RN to look at the website and other traditional methods of communication and how each demographic and age group should be targeted. ET agreed that use of social media needs to be revisited and cautioned on the blanket engagement with all Social Media group who are active in and around Lochaber.</p> <p>RN apologised for running over time. He thanked all for their time and their input and to ET for facilitating the Teams meeting.</p> <p>RNs expectation is that by next meeting there will be more guidance and direction of travel from the CPB but would also appreciate any feedback from partners as to our own direction of travel.</p>	ALL
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