



Present: Rosalind Aitken (Voluntary Action Orkney), Clare Allison (Orkney Blide Trust), Gail Anderson (Voluntary Action Orkney / representative IJB), Tamsin Bailey (Relationships Scotland Orkney), Zelda Bradley (Orkney Rape and Sexual Assault Service), Ann Clark (Y People), Rebecca Crawford (VAO, Community Engagement Worker), Karen Mack (VAO, Connect Project), Pete McAndrew (VAO, Tech Peer Mentor), Margaret Rendall (Vital Talk), Gillian Skuse (Age Scotland Orkney), Debbie Tsotsi (Scottish Autism), Michelle Ward (Women's Aid Orkney)

In attendance: Cecily Cromby (minutes)

1 Welcome and apologies

Rosalind welcomed those present and thanked them for attending.

Apologies had been received from Sam Payne (Red Cross), Nicola Reed (Cruse Bereavement Care), Harry Johnson (VAO, Island Wellbeing Project)

2 Notes of previous meeting held on 16 July 2021

The notes were approved.

3 Matters arising not on the agenda

No matters arising

4 Partnership updates (members' partnerships)

See item 9.

5 IJB update

Ros advised that the IJB were beginning to identify priorities for the next strategic plan and asked members what they would like these priorities to be. Members discussed the need to address mental health provision and look at the structure of the CMHT. Members noted issues with staff shortages in all sectors. Members were encouraged to forward further thoughts to Gail who would pass to the IJB.

6 Community Planning update

Ros advised that the three new delivery groups had identified actions for their plans, and these had been incorporated into the draft Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The draft would be on the agenda for amendment or approval at the next Orkney Partnership board meeting on 4 October. The three groups are:

- Communication Delivery Group (transport/IT)
- Sustainable Recovery Delivery Group (incorporating Economic Steering Group)

- Community Wellbeing Delivery Group (incorporating Child Poverty Working Group)

7 National Care Service consultation

The document had been circulated and Gail noted that it contained some very important proposals that could lead to significant changes in the delivery of social care in Scotland. Gail asked members for their thoughts on the proposals.

Gail noted the proposals aimed to improve services for both staff and service users through improvement and regulation. There were questions as to whether existing regulatory bodies should be incorporated into the new body. Gail noted that the proposals were, in part, an attempt to regulate the independent care sector which would not have a significant impact in Orkney.

Karen noted that while improving standards and collaboration were positive, she was concerned about impacts on costs and increasing managerial roles rather than focussing on direct help for service users.

Gillian expressed her concerns regarding increasing centralisation taking away local control which would particularly impact isolated communities. She also noted that the consultation time was too short for such a large document. There was agreement from members on these points.

Tamsin highlighted differences in the way Orkney approach some issues compared to Scotland as a whole – ie in the distribution of Naloxone (a drug used to reverse an opioid overdose) – and expressed concern that the commissioning of services by the Orkney Alcohol and Drug Partnership could be affected.

Gail advised that the third sector would be asked to contribute a joint response to the consultation. Members agreed that a separate meeting to discuss the consultation should be held. Members unable to attend the meeting should submit their thoughts to Gail.

8 Children's Services Report

Ros noted that several members had attended a meeting where the Children's Services Report findings were discussed. She provided feedback from Erika who had expressed concern that not many changes had been felt on the ground and that confidence in statutory services remained low among colleagues and service users.

Zelda noted that the meeting felt as though the statutory services were addressing themselves rather than the third sector or community as a whole and that there was little opportunity to participate in the session. She advised that the issue of advocacy was not mentioned in the meeting although it was still a great concern. She noted that there were still significant issues to be address and lots of work was needed to make any actual difference on the ground. Members agreed.

Karen noted that the involvement of the third sector in establishing pathways seemed to have tailed off and was concerned that the statutory services would fall back into bad patterns regarding third sector involvement. She noted that it was important to have established pathways, especially considering high staff turnover.

Tamsin noted that high staff turnover in statutory services made it difficult for third sector staff to establish relationships with statutory partners. Ann noted that there was significant movement of staff between social work teams.

9 Members updates

Women's Aid Orkney – Michelle noted that Women's Aid continued to be busy and had received 55 referrals since 1 April 2021. Michelle advised that the refuge was full and that shortages of emergency housing in Orkney had an impact on the ability of clients to move on. Internal appointments had been made to the positions of Family Support Worker and Young Women's Support Worker, and replacement posts would be advertised shortly. Women's Aid would soon appoint a Domestic Abuse Forum Coordinator in partnership with Shetland and the Western Isles. Work was progressing for the 16 days of action campaign and a cervical screening partnership with NHS Orkney was planned.

Vital Talk – Margaret advised that Vital Talk had a waiting list for counselling. She noted that all counsellors were volunteers and the organisation was looking at options for paid counsellors.

Blide Trust – Clare advised that there was a 3 month waiting list for counselling at the Blide Trust. She noted that they had submitted a proposal for a support worker for care experienced young people and that outreach work would soon start on Eday. Clare noted that training would soon be held for the Distress Brief Intervention programme and reminded members that the Blide café and catering services were open.

Orkney Tech Peer Mentor Project – Pete gave a presentation on the work of the Tech Peer Mentor Project (circulated with minutes) and advised that the Tech Library was ready to start loaning items. Pete would circulate a library catalogue.

Action: Pete/Cecily

YPeople – Ann advised that support needs continued to rise and that the supported accommodation was full. She noted that more referrals had been received due to understaffing at CAMHS. Ann advised that YPeople would be in the Peedie Cubby shop for two weeks from 4 October.

RS Orkney – Tamsin advised that RS Orkney was also seeing the effects of understaffing at CAMHS, notably since a recent letter from CAMHS was sent to all their clients advising of their lack of capacity. Tamsin noted that RS Orkney had opened 99 new cases during the 5 months from 1 April to 31 August and that during the first quarter of this year, both the number of cases and sessions held were up 40% compared to the same period in 2019 (more representative than the first quarter of 2020). Tamsin advised that RS Orkney had appointed a new Substance Misuse Support and Outreach Worker who would start on 11 October. Tamsin highlighted the need to train more counsellors in Orkney and noted that the COSCA basic skills course (a preliminary course for people interested in training as a counsellor) would, after some uncertainty, be going ahead this year.

Age Scotland Orkney - Gillian advised that Orkney Library had joined 999 other community groups and organisations across the UK which are Help Points for Playlist for Life. It will work in partnership with Age Scotland Orkney to distribute Playlist for

Life's materials to people living with dementia in the community. Gillian noted that the Pier Arts Centre Culture Collective would offer creative writing session to members of the Age Scotland Orkney community, seeking to continue and expand the successful sessions developed in collaboration with the St Magnus International Festival in spring 2021. Gillian advised that Hub sessions had restarted at Age Scotland Orkney, running six times per week at the Hub in Victoria Street. Pre Covid, one weekly session took place, however as large numbers of people cannot meet there will be more frequent sessions with smaller numbers attending.

Gillian advised that the consultant psychiatrist had left NHS Orkney which meant that no dementia diagnosis service was available, and people would be unable to access support services that a diagnosis would enable. She noted that new referral pathways for diagnosis were desperately needed.

Gillian reported that Age Scotland Orkney had purchased their building at 46 Victoria Street from OHAL with funds from OIC and noted that this was a very positive partnership.

Scottish Autism – Debbie advised that Scottish Autism Orkney currently supported four people in housing and ten outreach clients and that they had good support in place from social work and the NHS. She noted that they were currently recruiting a senior support worker and were looking to arrange more group activities.

Orkney Rape and Sexual Assault Service – Zoom connection lost.

VAO – Gail noted that a new Community Link Practitioner had been appointed although it had not yet been decided which GP practice they would serve. Gail advised that there had been some delays to the Community Covid-19 testing service project with NHS, OIC and VAO but that staff had been employed. A central testing hub would be established in Kirkwall in addition to satellite centres and a mobile testing unit.

VAO Community Engagement – Rebecca had left the meeting at this point but provided notes to advise that the Your Community...Your Voice report was available to view on the VAO [website](#).

Cruse Bereavement Care – Nicola was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following written update:

Overall service levels: Calls to our helpline are at their busiest level ever; Helpline calls are continuing to be more complex and longer than they were pre Covid; Webchat (textbased messaging) being well used; Seeing clients with increased levels of distress and noticing the impact of increased mental health concerns.

Orkney sessions: Number of Early Support sessions (<6 months bereaved) are still a little lower than pre pandemic levels; Number of counselling sessions (>6 months bereaved) have returned to pre pandemic levels.

Waiting lists: low waiting lists for early support sessions (approx. 8 weeks for counselling support)

General: Recruitment for diploma placement students currently underway (details available through website / Facebook / email me); Soon to start recruitment for

Freelance Trainers to join our training team (details from me initially – not yet online); Continuing to look to increase volunteer numbers on Orkney; Would like to explore opportunities to work in partnership with local volunteers & organisations to see a bereavement support group established

10 AOCB

Ros advised that Growing up in Orkney was in the process of creating a new website for children, young people and families and that they would be in touch with local organisations regarding this. She noted that the website intended to highlight the work we all do, rather than just provide a directory of services.

Ros requested members contact her if they needed to access adult protection training.

Ros advised that concerns had been raised that the Royal Voluntary Service patient transport service was ending and that clarification on this was being sought.

Ros advised that vaccination numbers had been discussed at the Caring for People Group that there was a need to ensure that more people in Orkney received both vaccines. Gillian noted that main age group of concern was 40-49 year olds and advised that there had been a suggestion that the Blide Trust could act as a vaccine centre. Ros suggested that any organisations who may be able to help with the vaccine push get in touch with her and she would pass the information to Iain Gray at the vaccine centre.

11 Date of next meeting

12 November 2021