

**ROSS & CROMARTY AREA CHILDREN'S SERVICE FORUM**

**Core**

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2007**  
**1 pm – 4 pm**

**Boardroom, Maywood, Dingwall**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Maureen Keough (Chair)	Area Children's Service Manager
	Graham MacKenzie	Rector, Dingwall Academy
	Ian Goode	Childcare & Family Resource Officer
	Charles Stephen	Integration Manager
	Val Steele	Senior Education Officer
	Alison Phimister	Locality Manager, MHCHP
	Ann Brady	Chief Executive, CALA
	Karen Hamilton	Project Manager (Self Help Workers)
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Peter Hoffmann	Community Learning & Leisure Manager
	Catherine Zawalynski	Professional Adviser for Children & Families
	Cath Rosie	Acting Area Co-ordinator – Pupil Support Services
	John Ritchie	Area Education Manager
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Maggie Tytler	Administrative Assistant

<b>2.</b>	<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD – 23 January 2007</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Highland Family Resource Alliance Report - Val to discuss under AOB. Earlier discussion at ACSF prompted today's presentation from Ann Brady.</li><li>• Children's Service Workers, Easter Ross – posts have been filled till 31 March 2007.</li><li>• Joint Committee Seminar, GIRFEC – Graham had not intended going to Seminar therefore unable to feedback information to secondary schools. Presentation can be accessed through FHC web site. <a href="http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/htm/girfec/presentations/girfec-seminar-260107.pdf">http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/htm/girfec/presentations/girfec-seminar-260107.pdf</a></li><li>• Presentation to Residential Placement Group – with regard to Education Psychologist involvement. If they are having problems with RPG referrals they should take this up with Bill Alexander.</li><li>• FGC Steering Group – Charles stressed that if this service is not utilised it may be discontinued. It is up to those attending this group to make this more widely known.</li></ul>
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<p>3.</p>	<p><b>PRESENTATIONS</b></p> <p><b><u>Proposal to Develop West Ross Family Support Services by Care and Learning Alliance – Ann Brady</u></b></p> <p>Maureen explained that she had received a proposal from CALA and thought it would be useful for this to be discussed at the ACSF so as to prevent any overlap in services being developed.</p> <p>Ann explained that Highland Pre School Services expanded their remit in 2006 and was renamed CALA. The work with families with children 0 – 16 and 0-18 with special needs.</p> <p>To date CALA have been funded to deliver family support services on the West Coast through the auspices of Family First, for 5 years. One of the issues working in West Ross is retaining volunteers. Ann met with Maureen and Amelia looking at how best to take the support for families forward. Since this meeting Ian and the Manager on the West Coast and Health representatives looked at the ‘Proposal to Develop West Ross Family Support Services.’ (<i>see appendix 1</i>) They agreed that if the voluntary element could be retained they would value the proposal.</p> <p>There are concerns about the circumstances of the Toybox. The Committee are looking to the future and considering alternative premises. It is not sustainable in it’s present form.</p> <p>Val informed the group that education are looking at the relationship between Gairloch Primary, the Toybox, other agencies and the High School. Val welcomed the involvement of CALA and looked forward to inter agency working.</p> <p>Ann agreed the need to link with Education to progress. Val wants the Head Teacher in place, before discussions starts.</p> <p>Outreach Support - Maureen intimated that this aspect would be welcomed by the community. Regarding integrating day care - there is a lot more discussion to take place.</p> <p><b><u>Guided Self Help Workers – Karen Hamilton</u></b></p> <p>Karen explained that the Guided Self Help Worker project has come from a Scottish Executive funded project. It was a Scottish project for people with mild to moderate depression. It aims to reduce the use of anti depressants and provide an evidence based resource to use.</p> <p>Karen handed out the ‘Well Read’ leaflet which explains about the new scheme and how it works. Books which are suggested as aids can be accessed in libraries. <a href="http://www.highland.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/yourlocallibrary/">www.highland.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/yourlocallibrary/</a></p> <p>There are currently 12 Self Help Workers employed across Highland who deal with people suffering from mild to moderate depression. Referrals are made by GP’s who assess and screen the patient before suggesting this route. Health Visitors and District Nurses can direct patients to their GP’s. The Workers see people for 3 sessions and introduce them to guided self help material, which is a cognitive behavioural approach giving individuals the tools to help themselves. The Workers have been in place since November 2006 and the referrals started in January 2007 and cover all adult age groups.</p> <p>Graham asked why school age children couldn’t access this resource? Karen explained that other areas are looking at working with adolescents. The group agreed that this would be very useful to address adolescent mental health problems. Alison noted that the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service is undergoing a review at the moment. Charles wanted to know if there had been a problem with illiterate adults or adults whose first language is not English. Karen said that the materials used are based on a</p>
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	<p>reading age of 9. Web sites have audio tracks. There is not a lot of resources for those whose first language is not English. Although there is some material in Polish.</p> <p>There is a Guided Self Help Worker based in Lochcarron (Carol Mackenzie). Ann thought it would be useful to network. Karen agreed to e mail Ann with Carol's contact details.</p> <p>Karen informed the group that the youngest they work with is 18 or 16 if they have left school. CBT – Cognitive Behavioural Therapy would work well with adolescents. Charles asked if this was something the Children's Service Workers would be able to get involved with – they already use CBT. There are self-help materials available on <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/03/22091556/0">www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/03/22091556/0</a> <a href="http://www.livinglifetothefull.com/">http://www.livinglifetothefull.com/</a> is also another useful self help web site.</p> <p>Maureen thought it would be useful for School Liaison Group's to be aware of this service.</p> <p><b>Action</b> Charles to link Senior Family Liaison Officers with Karen.</p>
4.	<p><b>BUDGETS – Charles Stephen</b></p> <p>Charles explained that year end estimated balance will have an underspend of almost £21,000.00. This was due partly to vacancy slippage. There are still additional charges to be made – 2 new CSW's, agreed grants etc. Which will reduce the underspend to approximately £18,000.00 – Joint Committee will be claiming this.</p> <p>Charles has started forward planning basing 2007/08 figures on 2006/07 with no inflationary increase in the new Draft Development Plan.</p>
5.	<p><b>CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE – Ian Goode</b></p> <p>A second pre school nursery has been commissioned in Dingwall. There is now over capacity. Ian pointed out that there needs to be an additional 35 – 40 children to make both facilities viable.</p> <p>Ankerville, childcare facility in Tain, has been granted funding to develop a similar service in Alness – full day nursery - which will hopefully open in the Summer.</p> <p>Early Years – transfer of Culbokie and Resolis staff to Local Authority is under way.</p> <p>Cromarty Action for Young People – CALA are involved and looking at radical changes in service delivery which will impact on their funding gap.</p> <p>Ian has been informed that funding for 2007/08 will be likely to remain the same as 2006/07.</p>
6.	<p><b>PARENTING UPDATE – Ian Goode</b></p> <p>The Parenting Sub Group will be looking at drawing up the next financial year plan and link with Skye &amp; Lochaber as to how parenting should be delivered.</p> <p>Joy's is evaluating her post as Family Learning Co-ordinator – contract due to end June/July 2007. Unsure if this post will continue. The evaluation will assist with this decision.</p> <p>Webster Stratton – there is difficulty finding trained facilitators to deliver these courses.</p> <p><b>Action</b> Alison will raise the issue of facilitators.</p>

	Parents on the Ball – the last round failed and is no longer operating. Funding which was given to NCH has been set aside and will be used to deliver a course in the future.
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>EAST ROSS SFLO FEEDBACK – Maureen Keough</b></p> <p>Charles and Maureen met with Maggie Callachan, Senior Family Liaison Officer (AIness/Tain) to discuss her role and how it was working. This was prompted by Catherine Zawalnyski's concerns regarding inclusion of Health Visitors. Two Health Visitors attended the meeting and there was very positive feedback.</p> <p>The proposed meeting with Graham Mackenzie, Catriona Lowe and Alison Horner had to be cancelled due to sick leave.</p> <p>The role of SFLO is changing and it is important that everyone is aware of these developments.</p> <p>Maureen and Charles plan to visit the West Coast to review the situation there.</p>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Highland Family Resource Alliance – core group. Val handed out an update on current issues. (<i>see appendix 2</i>). Val's role is centred around the development of the Early Years policy. Val had met with Donnie MacDonald and Bill Alexander to discuss NCT (Nursery Cluster Teachers) where significant saving had to be made, while still sustaining the level of service. There has been no NCT for over 6 months in Gairloch. All the nursery assistants in the area have to undertake an element of her work to continue the service.</p>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>27 March 2007</p> <p>1 pm – 4 pm</p> <p>Boardroom, Maywood</p>

## **Proposal to Develop West Ross Family Support Services**

### **Background**

Following recent evaluation of voluntary led family support services in the West Ross area and as a result of consultation with funding partners a new approach to develop a range of family support services is proposed. Three areas of work will be developed over the next twelve months enabling an innovative network of tailored services to be offered to vulnerable families.

Within the second and third elements of the project it is planned to continue to support the key developments through targeted trained volunteer support. Given the geography and spread of demographics an additional volunteer element will enhance the support on offer to families and provide additional valuable resources in terms of one to one practical support, transport to and from hospital, family reviews etc and at the same time contribute a continual supply of future personnel for the staffbank. It should be noted that colleagues within the local health teams were very keen to retain this community voluntary capacity.

### **1 Staffbank**

The successful staffbank, operating within the Care and Learning Alliance (CALA) will recruit and train personnel to work in the area of family support. Linking closely with established Social Work and Health teams these staff will bring flexibility and short term targeted support to the most vulnerable families in three areas of West Ross:

- a) Lochcarron, Torridon and Applecross
- b) Gairloch, Aultbea and Poolewe
- c) Ullapool and Achiltibuie.

To develop this strand of skilled support will require targeted marketing and focused training using the expertise of the Family Support Manager working closely with the existing staffbank management team. It is anticipated that the current volunteers working within the Family First services will be among the first recruits to the service. Staff initially attracted to the work by the new social care element will be retained in the sector through additional employment opportunities in childcare, creche, sitter and early education services, thereby enhancing the opportunity for personal income generation.

## **2 Parent Support**

In collaboration with local health teams a parent/toddler facilitator (PTF) will be employed to offer support to vulnerable parents networks. Early discussion with Health Visitors and childcare professionals has identified needs in Aultbea, Ullapool, Poolewe, Torridon and Gairloch.

The PTF will offer fortnightly support to each of these areas, encouraging parent skills and confidence. Supportive initiatives such as Play @ Home, Top Tots (active toddler programmes) and the recent nutritional guidance can all be developed with parents through this regular group support work. Strong links with named health visitors at each group will develop the essential relationship between Health and Childcare Professionals required to support the new health “Hall 4” and “Girfec” frameworks. It is anticipated that once every six weeks each group will gain access to professional creche support, enabling health teams and support agencies deliver focused targeted support to parents.

## **3 Integrated/Outreach Support**

Negotiations have begun with the community in Gairloch to identify ways of enhancing support to the Toybox centre. Currently sustained by the Ross-shire Childcare Partnership, Toybox offers daycare to the youngest children in the area. Over the next twelve months CALA will gradually develop an extended support service at/from the Toybox, incorporating daycare, outreach family support, out of school care and through further negotiation with education colleagues, aim to consolidate the integrated service approach by combining the above with the delivery of early education services.

These three different but complimentary strands of support service will take forward and develop family support in the West Ross area. (appendix attached) All development will be supported by the Family Support Manager (West). Currently these management costs are met through central core funding.

**Targets**

Staffbank 10 support staff recruited

PTF 1 pt staff employed  
children

Outreach/Gairloch  
children

**Support to**

15 families

45 parents/50

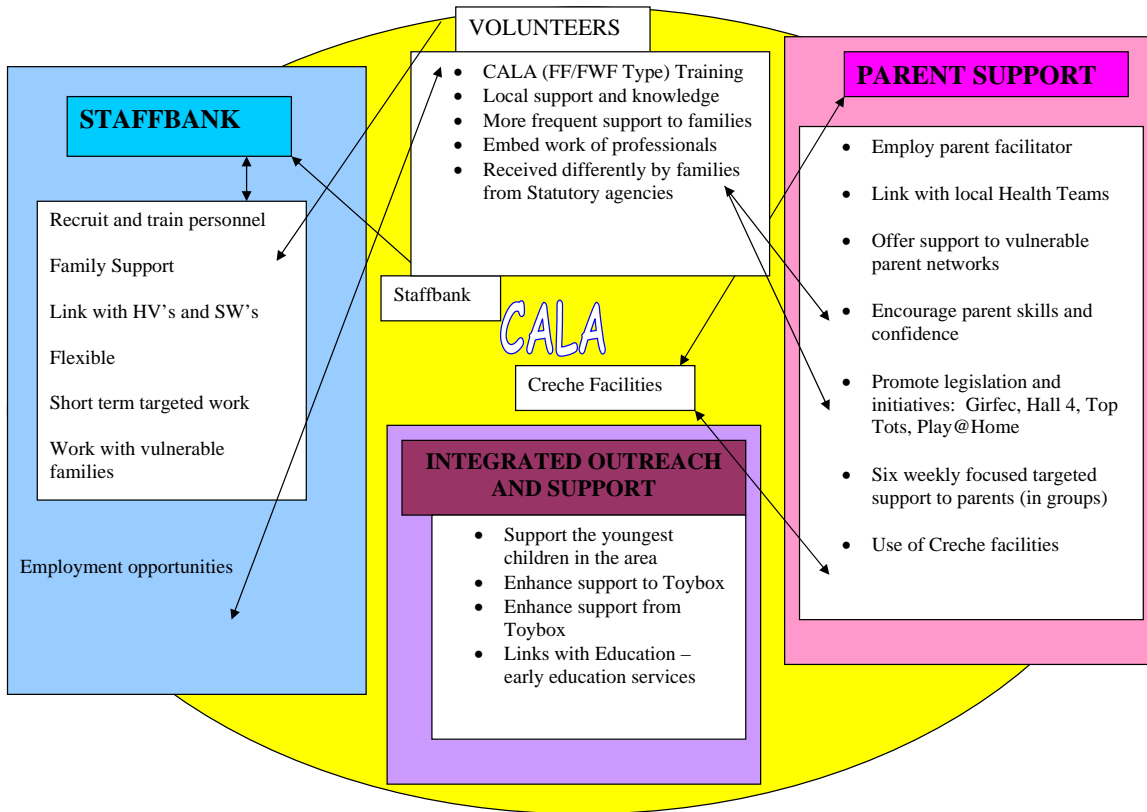
5 families/10

Ann Brady

Chief Executive

Care and Learning Alliance

February 2007



## Highland Family Resource Alliance – Core Group

### Update on current issues

#### Purpose and composition of Core Group

To discuss and plan strategic developments in relation to For Highland's Children 2. The membership of the core group is from a cross section of Alliance members taking into account remits and geographical responsibilities.

#### Early Years Review

##### Introduction

The rapid development of Early Years services across Highland has been a significant success story. However, pragmatic and rapid decisions were made to get services established quickly. The provision that evolved, does not always meet the needs expressed by families now, and there are major issues about ensuring that these services are sustainable into the future.

The Council has determined that it is necessary to reflect on these issues, and to endeavour to establish a sustainable network of quality services across the Authority. In particular, this network should meet the needs and aspiration of parents to have access to wraparound services, which integrate childcare and early education across the working day.

##### Wraparound Services

Early Years services include a variety of provision for 0 – 5 year olds. This includes:

- Early Education: 5 sessions/week of funded early education for every 3 and 4 year old, including both local authority and voluntary sector or private partner centre provision.
- Childcare: paid day care for 0 – 5 year olds which can be in centres or with childminders or the newly established mobile crèche and sitter services.
- Surestart: targeted health and social care support for the most vulnerable 0 – 3 year olds and their families.

There has been a rapid growth in Services which provide for 3 and 4 year olds which now total almost 250 centres providing early education (around 60 more than there are primary schools) with a total capacity of 5317 places for around 4000 children.

It has also become increasingly apparent through both consultations and actual decision making by parents that many families wish early education and childcare provision to be located together as a 'wraparound' service. This allows them to transport children to and from the same location and enables them to organise their daily and working lives between the hours of 8am and 6pm – rather than round the more limited programme timetables of the nursery classes.

The Council have agreed that in most communities this is best achieved by increased use of the facilities at local primary schools.

This offers both **opportunities** (eg meeting present and future needs of the community within the immediate locality, providing an enhanced service to communities, making optimum use of school/community facilities and ensuring at a time of falling school rolls the local school remains viable and remains at the heart of the community)

and **challenges** (eg rationalising current provision in its many forms, responding to the ever changing needs of the communities we service).

### **Planning the way ahead**

The agenda for change will take a number of years to address and will have to be managed in a planned and incremental way which involves a regular review of the changing local circumstances and family needs. In particular this needs to take into account the requirements of the communities within each of the Associated School Groups/Areas and to embed these within an operational framework.

The framework will involve a provisional contract with child care partners that commits the authority to:

- Undertake market research in relation to parental demand
- Undertake options appraisals to establish preferred providers
- Make school premises available (including adaptations to existing provision as required)
- Provide financial subsidy where appropriate

It will also make clear the management arrangements that are required between partner agencies at any location including the final management responsibility of the local authority through the Head Teacher.

It is also intended that the revised strategy will include:

- Provision for an enhanced childminding scheme, incorporating early education
- An updated policy on transport provision
- An updated policy on Gaelic-medium provision including relation to childcare
- Clarity for Head Teachers on their responsibilities including in relation to the interface of management of the interface between early education and childcare
- A restatement of the policy on deferred entry

Incremental change will be stepped up from August 2007 and August 2008 supported by Family Resource Officers working to both Area Service Managers.

A draft Preschool Education and Childcare Framework is currently being prepared by the Core Group with staff charged to take forward specific aspects.