

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE HIGHLAND SENIOR CITIZENS NETWORK HELD AT INSHES CHURCH,
INVERNESS AND VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 26 AUGUST 2024 AT 10:00**

Present: Ian McNamara, Chair
Isla Cuthbert (Zoom)
David Hannah
Robert Kay
Ann McKay
Joan Philip
Irene Robertson

In

Attendance: Jo Cowan, Coordinator (Zoom)
Anne McDonald, Coordinator
Councillor Isabelle MacKenzie

Apologies – Linda Bailey, Brian Devlin, Lesley McDade, Brenda Nicolson, Rob Polson and Councillor Morven Reid

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were as noted above.

2 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were none declared.

3 MINUTE OF 24 JUNE 2024

The Minute of 24 June 2024 was approved.

Proposer: Joan Philip
Seconder: Isla Cuthbert

4 MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA

(a) Morrison Construction

Linda and Anne reported on their discussions with Morrison Construction regarding potential volunteering opportunities for members of the company's staff to help older people in the community. It was agreed to invite the company to produce an article for the next news-sheet letting HSCN's membership know about the work they do and the kind of assistance they could offer to local groups.

5 HSCN Membership

The Board noted the updated membership figures.

6 TRUSTEES

There were no new Trustees. HSCN had a standing advertisement with Highland Third Sector Interface for the recruitment of Trustees, however the impact of Covid was still being felt and fewer volunteers were coming forward.

7 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Policies and Procedures

The Board noted that all the policies had been finalised, there remained a few forms and documents to be produced/updated.

(b) 'Time Out' Meeting 10 May 2024

Having agreed that the Coordinators would attend every third Board meeting to free up time for their core engagement and involvement work, the Trustees discussed the Zoom arrangements for which Anne currently took responsibility. It was suggested that advice be sought from Red Chair on how to operate the system and deal with any technical issues that arose. A successor to Anne also needed to be identified to run the tea-breaks; Anne would write up a procedure detailing what was involved in this activity.

(c) AGM & Gathering 12 September 2024

The final arrangements for the AGM & Gathering which would be held at Inshes Church, Inverness were discussed and agreed.

8 REGULAR REVIEWS

(a) Risk Register

No new issues had arisen, funding and succession planning remained the major risks.

9 NEWS-SHEET

The dates for the production and distribution of the next news-sheet were agreed.

10 THREE YEAR PLANNING - FUNDING UPDATE

The Chair was pleased to report that a meeting with NHS Highland to discuss continuing funding beyond March 2025 had now been arranged for 27 August 2024. He spoke to the report prepared by the Coordinators in response to NHS Highland's request for information about the links that HSCN had had specifically with NHS Highland over the last three years with regard to engagement work. He also highlighted the involvement activity being undertaken, and the community connections being developed, by the Coordinators.

11 OLDER PEOPLE'S CHAMPIONS – ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Councillor MacKenzie reported on the Age Friendly Community Strategy and gave details of meetings and forthcoming events, including a SOPA workshop in Inverness on 13 November 2024, to promote Age Friendly Communities. She also highlighted 'Silver Sunday' to be held in Inverness on Sunday 6 October 2024. It was agreed to publicise this event in the next news-sheet. The Board welcomed the news that the Inverness Access Panel was up and running again and would let HSCN's membership know via the news-sheet.

Jo took the opportunity to raise concerns expressed by local groups about the closure of Highland Council's service points and the difficulties this caused for people who needed to contact the Council but who were not online. It was important to ensure that a readily accessible and responsive general enquiries telephone service was in place, it would also be helpful to have the number to ring published on the Council's website.

12 COORDINATORS' REPORTS

The Board received the Coordinators' circulated activity reports for July and August. Anne reported on the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust Community Café lunch, a weekly, very well attended event. She also referred to the Inverness Sunday Lunch Club which was looking for a replacement for its current Coordinator who would shortly be stepping down from the role. It was suggested that an article in the local press might encourage volunteers to come forward. Anne mentioned that she had received a number of calls from members saying how much they valued the news-sheets.

Jo gave details of an event planned by a local history group to gather the social history of the "lost village" where many of them had grown up, in order to keep the memories alive. She was now working with the group on the project which was generating considerable enthusiasm among the people involved in it. The positive benefits of such activities to people's health and wellbeing were acknowledged.

13 MEETINGS ATTENDED

Reports were received on the following meetings:-

- Joint Monitoring Committee 22 August 2024 (Chair). Discussion had taken place on delayed discharges. It was noted that Highland had the highest figure per head of population in Scotland,

reflecting the rurality and remoteness of the region. More resources were required to ensure the viability of care homes and provision of care at home services, and to aid staff retention.

14 COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

The circulated minute of the meeting held on 19 August 2024 was noted.

15 SCAMS AWARENESS PEER SPEAKING PILOT

Joan advised that no presentations were planned at the present time but she was in touch with various groups with a view to organising further talks later in the year.

16 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board received and noted the circulated financial statements for June and July 2024. The Chair informed the Board that the annual accounts had been examined and signed off by Voluntary Action Lochaber.

17 AOCB

(a) Great Wilderness Challenge 17 August 2024

The Chair gave a brief report on what had been another very successful event.

(b) Reports/Issues raised by Trustees

- Joan raised a concern about the lack of statutory funding for services for visually impaired and blind people which it was acknowledged was a national issue. The Coordinators agreed to look into the position.

(c) Care Home Olympics

The Board had agreed that HSCN should support this event by awarding three prizes in the category "Best photograph of a care home activity". The Coordinators circulated the photos in the running for a prize and asked the Trustees present to rank them in order of preference. The entrants would be notified of the outcome in due course.

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board meeting will be held at Inshes Church, Inverness on Monday 30 September 2024. The Zoom facility will be available for members who cannot attend in person.