

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

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

In

Attendance: Jo Cowan, Coordinator
Anne McDonald, Coordinator
Councillor Isabelle MacKenzie

Apologies – Brian Devlin, David Hannah, Lesley McDade, Brenda Nicolson and Rob Polson

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 29 JANUARY 2024

The Minute of 29 January 2024 was approved.

Proposer: Joan Philip
Secunder: Robert Kay

4 NEW MEMBERS

No new membership applications had been received in the past month. Discussion followed on membership numbers and how these were reported. Currently a global figure was produced, however, while the overall total might remain much the same year on year, the position was not static. It was therefore proposed that the numbers be broken down to identify both gains and losses, and the reasons for leaving, during the course of each year. The Chair would discuss the work that this would entail with Donna. As HSCN's core membership comprised of individuals over the age of 55 living in the Highlands, it was suggested that the opportunity be taken to ask members to confirm/update their age and area of residence when the annual GDPR review was being undertaken in April. A brief questionnaire could be included in the next news-sheet for this purpose. The membership application form could also be amended to ascertain whether people were joining in an individual capacity or as part of an organisation. Work needed to be done to develop an application form that could be completed online and to have a donate button on our website. It was noted that the issue around gift aid re-registration had been resolved. The matter of non-members on the database was still under review.

5 TRUSTEES

There were no new Trustee applications.

6 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Members' Survey

Anne gave a brief report of the findings of the survey which had been issued with the latest news-sheet, noting that there had been a reasonable response rate from the membership, both online and in hard copy. She would provide a detailed analysis of the results at the next meeting. Non-members' views had been sought

via SurveyMonkey, and it was suggested that another survey for stakeholders might perhaps be undertaken in September.

(b) Trustees' Next of Kin

The Chair advised that almost all the relevant information had now been provided.

7 REGULAR REVIEWS

(a) Risk Register

Taking the Board through the items on the risk register, Robert highlighted succession planning and funding limitations as the two most significant risks on which the Board needed to focus. With regard to growing the membership, it was felt that this risk could be downgraded/removed from the register in due course depending on the outcome of the proposed work detailed at Item 4. While gaining new members was important the organisation needed to be realistic about what it could deliver. Taking into account the impact of Covid on the way in which HSCN worked, and the fact that it was now 30 years old, the Board agreed that it would be timely to review the organisation's aims and objectives and consider where it would like to be in, say, 5 years. To this end it was proposed to hold a special meeting to discuss the organisation's vision for the future and develop a longer term plan to achieve its goals. It was suggested that a potential development of HSCN's role would be to undertake work in an area of deprivation. Securing funding was key and it was felt that having a clear mission statement was important to support bids. The Chair agreed to approach NHS Highland to enquire about continued statutory funding from April 2025. Other sources of funding would also be explored.

(b) Policies and Procedures

The review of policies and procedures was almost complete and could be removed from the risk register once the outstanding issues had been resolved.

8 NEWS-SHEET

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

9 FUNDING UPDATE

The Chair regretted to inform the Board that the application for funding which had been submitted to the Fore Trust had been unsuccessful. The feedback received from the Trust explaining why the bid had failed was noted.

10 OLDER PEOPLE'S CHAMPIONS – ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Councillor MacKenzie referred to the forthcoming meeting of the Highland Council on 29 February 2024 to discuss its budget proposals and the potential implications for services. Redesign of adult social care and improved use of technology in care at home provision were significant issues. Councillor MacKenzie also highlighted dropped kerbs and the need to improve access and safety for people with mobility issues.

11 COORDINATORS' REPORTS

The Coordinators' activity reports for the month were received. Anne referred to the requests for information that she and Jo regularly received from individuals and organisations. Wherever possible they signposted the callers to the relevant service. Guest speakers at the February tea-breaks had generated interesting and helpful discussions on a wide range of topics including the switchover from analogue to digital telephones, power of attorney and guardianship, the Remembering Together Covid Memorial Project, and the UHI/NHS Past, Present and Future research project. Anne had attended a meeting of the Inverness Openarts Steering Group to discuss funding for a Refugee Art Project, and she had taken part in a round table discussion about the Right to Palliative Care Bill. She had circulated for the Board's information a draft report on Highland Truacanta's activities and a list of creative resources it had produced for Care Home Activities Workers. The Kurling equipment purchased by the Coordinators was continuing to be used and enjoyed by various groups.

Jo reported on the Age Friendly Communities seminar she had attended on 14 March 2024 in Perth which had looked at rural Age Friendly Communities. On the point raised at the last Board meeting about reports and

consultation documents not being available in hard copy for people who were unable to access the material online, Jo confirmed that she had forwarded the issue to SOPA's Age Friendly Communities Officer and to Age Scotland's Policy Team who would be following it up. She updated the Board on the position regarding the NHS redesign project in Lochaber. She had been invited to join the new locality planning groups that were being set up and would keep the Board informed of developments. She had also been involved in meetings to discuss safety on public transport. With regard to planning get-togethers, Jo noted that, post-Covid, people were reluctant to travel to events and would prefer local venues. Making arrangements for get-togethers, for example, catering, setting up community halls, etc was also more challenging now, and so holding smaller, more local get-togethers would seem to be the way forward.

12 MEETINGS ATTENDED

Reports were received on the following meetings:-

- Strategic Planning Group 20 February 2024 (Chair)

13 COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

The Board noted the circulated minute of the Communications Group meeting held on 19 February 2024.

14 SCAMS AWARENESS PEER SPEAKING PILOT

Joan confirmed that one scams awareness talk had been arranged for next week, and the falls prevention presentation was ready for delivery. A meeting would also be taking place with the police to discuss doorstep crime.

15 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board received and noted the circulated financial statement for January 2024.

16 AOCB

(a) Frontier Science Scotland

Robert reported on an approach by Frontier Science Scotland, a Highland-based, independent, not-for-profit contract research organisation working with academic partners and health services and specialising in designing, running and analysing the results of clinical trials. The organisation had expressed an interest in attending one of our Board meetings to discuss a project to create a community of practice that connected each part of the patient's journey. It was agreed to extend an invitation to attend the next meeting in March.

17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board meeting will be held at Inshes Church, Inverness on Monday 25 March 2024. The Zoom facility will be available for members who cannot attend in person.

The meeting closed at 11:45