

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE HIGHLAND SENIOR CITIZENS NETWORK HELD AT INSHES CHURCH,
INVERNESS AND VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 10:00**

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

In

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

Apologies – Councillor Bill Boyd, Brian Devlin 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 30 OCTOBER 2023

The Minute of 30 October 2023 was approved, proposed by David Hannah and seconded by Joan Philip.

4 MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA

(a) Scottish Dementia Arts Festival, Eden Court Theatre, Inverness

Anne reported on this successful and inspirational event, the first of its kind to be held in Scotland, which had been planned and facilitated by people with dementia and their carers and had showcased a range of different art forms.

(b) Safeguarding Course

Jo would report back in due course once she had had an opportunity to look into the online safeguarding course.

5 HSCN MEMBERSHIP

Two new membership applications had been received. The Board discussed the position regarding organisations and individuals on HSCN's database who, while not members, were on the mailing list for the news-sheet. It was agreed that a letter would be sent to them inviting them to become members of HSCN. Should they not wish to become members but would like to continue to receive the news-sheet, they would be directed to our website where the news-sheet and other information could be accessed.

6 TRUSTEES

There were no new Trustees.

7 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Policy Review

The review was almost complete, a few points in two of the policies requiring further clarification. Work was ongoing to develop/finalise the various report forms and registers that HSCN required to maintain. The Coordinators undertook risk assessments for all the gatherings and other events they organised and kept the completed risk assessment forms in their files. The Board agreed that these forms should be held in a central location.

(b) Members Survey

Jo was exploring the possibility of completing the survey online.

(c) Trustees' Next-of-Kin

The Chair asked those Trustees who had not yet provided next-of-kin details to forward the relevant information to him.

8 REGULAR REVIEWS

(a) Risk Register

Updating the Board on the current position, Robert reported that several of the identified risks had been addressed and could now be removed from the Register. Work was ongoing to resolve the remaining areas of risk which included succession planning, funding, marketing strategy and membership numbers. Robert asked the Trustees to notify him of any new issues for inclusion in the Register as and when they arose.

(b) Highlights and Success Stories

The scams presentations continued to be well received, and the tea breaks were proving very successful with a wide range of topics covered. It was noted that a recent SOPA newsletter had carried an article about HSCN and its role, helping to raise our profile.

9 NEWS-SHEET

Dates for the production and distribution of the next and following news-sheets were agreed. David referred to the HI-Scot Credit Union, formerly the Western Isles Credit Union but now serving all of the Highlands and Islands, which was run for the benefit of its members only. He would provide Anne with further details about the organisation for inclusion in the next news-sheet.

10 FUNDING UPDATE

Robert referred to the Fore Trust which had invited applications for its Spring 2024 funding round. It was agreed to explore this further. David drew the Board's attention to another potential source of funding, namely Foundation Scotland which allocated funding to support communities.

11 OLDER PEOPLE'S CHAMPIONS – ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

The following issues were raised:-

- Proposals for improving Academy Street. There was a need to ensure that older people's voices were heard and their views and concerns taken into account in the planning process.
- Age Friendly Communities – how plans and policies impacted on older people.
- Adult social care – concerns about inadequate provision of care services.
- End of Life Care Together. A new model of care was being piloted in Highland arising from the Truacanta Project which had been set up to support local communities in Scotland to improve people's experiences around death, dying and bereavement. David informed the Board that he was taking part as a volunteer patient in a clinical skills training exercise around an end of life case study.

- Warm Hubs. There was considerable community work being done but services were patchy and there was a lack of information about where and how they could be accessed. Councillor MacKenzie agreed to raise this issue with Highland Council with a view to achieving more joined up activity and improving signposting of services. It was also agreed to include any available information on warm hubs in the news-sheets.

12 COORDINATORS' REPORTS

The Coordinators reported on their activities during November, detailing the various events and gatherings that had been held. It was noted with regret that several lunch clubs had not started up again post-Covid. Jo referred to the Skye & Lochalsh Older People's Groups Get-together held in Portree on 24 November 2023 which had been a well attended and enjoyable event. Anne highlighted ongoing intergenerational work with primary school children. With regard to the tea breaks she confirmed the topics and speakers for December. Concerns had been raised at one of the tea breaks about the switch-over from analogue to digital phones. It was felt the switch-over needed to be publicised more widely to raise awareness of the change and its implications, and Councillor MacKenzie undertook to take this concern up with the Council. Anne advised that the evaluation report of the Truacanta Project was now available. The Highland arm of the project had involved HSCN working in partnership with Creativity in Care and Highland Hospice, and Anne was currently delivering the EASE (End-of-Life Aid Skills for Everyone) course, as well as providing training to members of the community to enable them to deliver the course themselves.

The Board offered its congratulations to Badenoch and Strathspey Community Connections on winning the national Community Transport Provider of the Year Award.

13 MEETINGS ATTENDED

There were no meetings attended during November.

14 COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

The Board noted the circulated minute of the Communications Group meeting held on 14 November 2023. With regard to arrangements for 2024's Annual General Meeting, it was suggested that this take place on Wednesday 11 September, the venue to be confirmed. Consideration would be given in due course as to whether to hold an annual conference or a more informal gathering.

15 SCAMS AWARENESS PEER SPEAKING PILOT

Joan reported on the further presentations that she and Robert had given and the positive feedback they had received. Discussion followed on extending the pilot to cover other topics, for example doorstep crime and falls prevention, and the possibility of working in partnership with other organisations to develop presentations.

16 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board received and noted the circulated financial statement for October 2023. The second tranche of funding from NHS Highland had been received, and a generous grant from the Great Wilderness Challenge was acknowledged.

17 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE 8 NOVEMBER 2023

The Chair fed back on this event which had been attended by representatives from a wide range of organisations and individuals involved in community support.

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board meeting will be held at Inshes Church, Inverness on Monday 29 January 2024. The Zoom facility will be available for members who cannot attend in person.