



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL ON 23 AUGUST 2023

SUBJECT: DRAFT STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC HEALTH SCOTLAND

BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Council approved for the signing off of a Strategic Partnership Agreement between Public Health Scotland (PHS) and Moray Council, as one of nine organisations comprising the North East Population Health Alliance (NEPHA).
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Council in terms of Section II(19) any new policy matter which does not fall within the terms of reference of any Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Council/Committee:-

- i) Authorise the Chief Executive to sign the Strategic Partnership Agreement on behalf of Moray Council; and**
- ii) Request North East Population Health Alliance to provide the Council with a progress report on the Strategic Partnership Agreement in March 2024.**

3. BACKGROUND

Public Health Scotland (PHS)

- 3.1 Formed in April 2020, PHS is a NHS Board sponsored by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) on behalf of local government.
- 3.2 As Scotland's national public health board, PHS supports work across Scotland to prevent disease, prolong health life and promote health and wellbeing.
- 3.3 PHS works closely with local authorities to enhance their understanding of communities and shape priorities working to create health neighbourhoods.

- 3.4 PHS' overarching ambition is to increase healthy life expectancy and reduce health inequalities.
- 3.5 PHS has a clear commitment to collaborative working in recognition that no one organisation can address Scotland's public health challenge and key public health priorities.

North East Population Health Alliance

- 3.6 The North East Population Health Alliance is a forum currently comprising of nine partners. Through bringing their collective knowledge together with data and evidence, the partnership is a forum for exploring these health challenges together, testing solutions and "what works" over the next three years.
- 3.7 The partners are NHS Grampian; Aberdeen City Council; Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership; Aberdeenshire Council; Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership; Moray Council; Health & Social Care Moray, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Police Scotland.
- 3.8 The aim of this collaboration with PHS is for PHS to provide expertise, data and evidence, as well as facilitating access to networks and partners.
- 3.9 Proposed areas of collaborative work are set out in **Appendix 1** to the Memorandum of Understanding.

Strategic Partnership Agreement

- 3.10 The aim and purpose of the strategic partnership agreement is to develop a learning system to improve population health and reduce health inequalities across the North East of Scotland.
- 3.11 The draft agreement (Appendix 1) outlines a shared vision, values of the partnership, how the organisations will work together within the remit of the agreement, and high-level objectives which give an indication of areas the agreement will focus on.
- 3.12 Scotland continues to face significant population health challenges: stalling (and in some groups falling) health life expectancy, and pre-pandemic widening levels of inequality, further exacerbated by Covid-19. Additionally, the pandemic has further increased demand on health and care services. Improving health requires improved system sustainability and, even more critically, improved outcomes in the wider factors that create health – good early years, learning, jobs, income and supportive communities.
- 3.13 The recent Health Foundation report 'Leave no one behind' emphasises the need for collective action. Specifically, to effect impactful change to tackle inequalities will require practical up and downstream collaboration and action across all parts of the delivery system, and from the public.
- 3.14 We are fortunate to have strong partnerships across public agencies, private and third sectors and communities in the North East. However, as set out above, some of the population health challenges we are grappling with are significant and worsening.

- 3.15 The Director of Public Health (DPH) Annual report 2022 sets out the following four key threats to population health and action we can collectively take together to break the cycle of widening health inequalities:-
- higher cost of living;
 - increase in need in demand for health, social care and community support services;
 - infectious diseases; and
 - climate change

The report recognises the strength of our partnerships and highlights where we are already working well together to tackle these challenges. However, greater action is required.

- 3.16 In response to these significant population health challenges and to reverse current trends, public sector leaders from across the North East have considered how we can create a system of public health learning to reverse current trends. This is referred to as the North East Population Health Alliance (NEPHA). Recognising that systems of governance are firmly embedded within and across our organisations already, the NEPHA is instead intended as an action learning forum for exploring challenges together, testing solutions, and bringing together our collective knowledge with data and evidence to enable more powerful conversations and effective action.
- 3.17 Public Health Scotland has a leadership role in, and contributes to, all of Scotland's public health priorities and will focus on three areas: preventing disease, prolonging healthy life, and promoting health and wellbeing.
- 3.18 Public Health Scotland's Strategic Plan sets out a clear commitment to collaborative working in recognition that no one organisation or profession can address Scotland's public health challenge.

4. ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The aim of this agreement is to share expertise and collaborate where there is added value to doing so, for the benefit of the people of the North East of Scotland. The agreement provides an opportunity to align the collective ambition of the NEPHA with the strategic aims of Public Health Scotland.
- 4.2 The agreement aims to facilitate collaboration between PHS and the NEPHA (comprising the nine respective organisations) to share and learn about key issues to build on our collective knowledge, share insights and use our collective capacity to improve population health outcomes. Specifically, the shared objective of the agreement is to *improve population health and reduce inequalities across the North East of Scotland*.
- 4.3 As the partnership matures, our work together will inevitably change. Following assessment of need, PHS and NEPHA (comprising the respective nine organisations) will agree shared priorities. In year one, six high-level themes will be explored with a view to developing more detailed objectives over the life of the strategic agreement. These are:

1. Develop a learning system that explores the challenges faced by the North East of Scotland, tests solutions, and implements what works at scale and pace.
 2. Form collective knowledge, data, and evidence to shape more powerful collective conversations and action to achieve the vision of thriving communities living fulfilled lives.
 3. Developing common data governance and system models to enable findable, accessible, interoperability and reusable data to support research, policy development and operational delivery such as the Persons at Risk Database (PARD) and local use of common identifiers, including CHI.
 4. Collaboration on the commissioning and conduct of research on the wider determinants of health across the north east and the application of knowledge to practice locally and nationally.
 5. Development of a baseline of prevention activity within the region with a view to establishing some targets for growth in activity.
 6. Child poverty, the Drugs Mission and the eradication of homelessness will appear in detailed work plans because the commitment is established at a national and local level, and therefore we can maximise the tripartite collaboration on the achievement of these commitments.
- 4.4 The agreement is currently out for review and sign off by late summer 2023 across the respective governance structures of the organisations comprising the NEPHA. During this time the agreement is subject to minor amendments as it moved through organisational approval processes. A final version comprising all feedback will be shared with all organisations once the process of signing off has concluded.

5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

- (a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**
Working closely with PHS to enhance the understanding of communities and shape priorities to increase healthy life expectations and reduce health and inequalities is consistent with three out of four of the current Corporate Plan and all three of the priorities of the LOIP.
- (b) **Policy and Legal**
As identified in this report Scotland faces a continued and significant population health challenges. This collaboration is to provide supporting data and evidence to assist the respective partners in their collective endeavour to respond to national policy commitments to improve the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities; support children and young people and the most vulnerable in our communities.
- (c) **Financial implications**
None.
- (d) **Risk Implications**
None

(e) Staffing Implications

The aim of the Agreement is to facilitate collaboration to share and learn about key issues to build a collective knowledge, share in-sights and use collective capacity to improve health outcomes which should be in the scope and remit of most of the staff of the nine partners involved in this collaboration. There may be other staff of where collaboration may have a marginal impact in terms of their current roles and remits.

(f) Property

None

(g) Equalities/Socio-economic impact

The aim of this collaboration is to provide data and evidence with the objective of improving health and wellbeing and reducing health and inequalities across the North East of Scotland.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

None

Consultations

This report has been prepared in consultation with the Depute Chief Executives and Heads of Service.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The Strategic Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a commitment between the North East Population Health and PHS to work together with the objective of developing improved population health and reduce health inequalities across the North East of Scotland. The attached MOU sets out the terms of the Agreement, including the background to PHS and the North East Alliance. This presents an opportunity not only to continue working with a common purpose across the North East, but to work alongside PHS in a much more integrated way. The draft MOU may be subject to minor changes and the Chief Executive will advise the Council Leader and Depute Leader of any changes prior to signing. If the changes are substantial, then a further draft will be brought back to a formal Council/Committee meeting prior to any decision agreeing it.

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Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-1108985784-885
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