

NORTH SKYE OPTION APPRAISAL: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Option Appraisal

Option appraisal is a formal component of Scottish Govt. planning and a key means of involving lots of interested parties (or stakeholders) in the development of answers to often very difficult questions. Participants are expected to score a range of options based on the information and evidence available rather than on their own personal preferences or feelings. It is important that the people participating in the process are able to attend all of the planned sessions in order to be fully aware of all of the relevant data, discussion and debate that will ultimately inform their decision.

Because the option appraisal process is complicated and needs time to support information gathering and widespread discussion, the North Skye process has been divided into 4 separate sessions that will each pose different questions that are core to decision making.

These questions are:

- What is the problem or challenge we are trying to address?
- What are the “benefits criteria” (measures) we should use to agree what a good (or bad) option looks like?
- How important are each of these measures to us?
- What are the options that we need to choose between?
- How well does each of these options perform (score) against our agreed measures?
- Overall, which option seems to come out best and why?

It is important to point out that the Option Appraisal process is a not final decision, but that it will play a key role in and have a significant influence over the overall decision-making process, which will also include a detailed analysis of the costs associated with different options. This will be explained more during the first session.

The Earlier North Skye Option Appraisal Process (March 2020)

The North Skye option appraisal process previously started just before the COVID-19 lockdown, although only one session was held before the process was suspended. This session considered the first two option appraisal questions only. What is the challenge and what are the “benefits criteria” we might use to determine how good alternative future options would be at addressing this.

The following sections summarise the outputs from these previous discussions in the understanding that they represent the starting point for our re-commenced process.

These elements will be reviewed and tested at the first session of the new process to see if they remain valid or need to be changed in any way – especially given the last 9 months and impact of COVID – which will be summarised at the start of the first session.

The Challenge

It is important that we all understand and agree the problem that we are trying to address. At the previous workshop (before COVID stopped the process) participants saw “the challenge” as the need to:

- Understand what the different elements of the required health and social care system are. (Some may already exist but some may be completely new!)
- Determine the different ways these elements could come together in future to meet changing needs. (The different “options” we need to consider)
- Agree which of these options appears to be preferred and why.
- To understand why one option was preferred and how it might grow and develop further over time.

Overall, they summarised the challenge as:

“To suggest the “preferred way forward” for services across North Skye, where “North Skye” includes all of the areas and communities in the North of the island and “services” specifically refers to those 12 beds identified in Portree Hospital or those services that represent a credible alternative to them”.

Benefits Criteria

Benefits Criteria are measures that will help us to compare different future options. It’s important that they reflect what is important to us as they are what we will use to decide why one option may be better than another.

The benefits criteria proposed by participants at the previous workshop are presented in the following table. Again, we will review these at the first session to agree whether they are still appropriate or need to change.

Benefit Criteria	Description of key supporting characteristics
Accessibility and the Minimisation of Social Costs	E.g. The ability of an option to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver/maintain care as close to home as possible• Locate/deliver services and facilities where they are most accessible• Be supported by/have a positive impact on transport links• Deliver facilities that are accessible/easier to access internally (Get around in!)• Minimise the need to travel out with North Skye for health/social care• Minimise the financial and non-financial costs associated with travelling to receive healthcare for patients and significant others E.g. Travel, accommodation and meals• Minimise the trauma and risks associated with travel• Minimise the need for emergency transfer• Keep families physically together for as long as possible

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise the opportunities for families to actively participate in care delivery • Deliver a consistent access to services, E.g. Eqpt loan • Give ready access to training • Promote equity of access to all services • Respond to the geographical and socio-economic reality of North Skye (See Needs Assessment data) • ...
Connectivity, Communication & integration	<p>E.g. The ability of an option to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve/enhance internal communication • Support “joined-up” working • Make effective and efficient use of all available resources • Support service continuity • Co-locate integrated health and social care teams • Deliver integrated and co-ordinated (seamless) health and social care • Increase awareness of those services that are available and how to access them • Support “relationship-centred” care • Support “pre-hab”; in-patient beds; and “re-hab” • Support the development of anticipatory care plans • ...
Deliverability	<p>E.g. The ability of an option to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure the support and approval required from all stakeholders to proceed • Meet baseline demand • Meet the demographic challenge both in terms of demand (patients) and supply (staff) • Support relevant national and local service strategies • Secure any necessary spaces/land • Deliver the physical spaces required now and in future • Be consistent with Highland Council’s “local plan” from a land/planning perspective • Retain buildings that are “functionally suitable” and in good repair • Dis-invest in buildings that are not functionally suitable and in a poor state of repair • Reduce the impact/mitigate the risk of planning and business case considerations • Reduce the likelihood/impact of legal implications • ...
Environmental Sustainability	<p>E.g. The ability of an option to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase/optimize opportunities to walk/cycle to services • Create a more efficient/“green” estate • Deliver environmentally sustainable facilities • Reduce our overall carbon footprint

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support good “corporate citizenship” • ...
Flexibility	<p>E.g. The ability of an option to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically change, grow or retract to meet future needs • Flex operationally and strategically (over days/over decades) • Support a flexible and adaptable workforce • Realise an economy of scope and scale • Deal with future challenging situations – as yet unknown • Support the management of uncertainty • ...
Personal experience	<p>E.g. The ability of an option to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver an experience that everyone would choose • Support patient choice in the care journey • Deliver a positive staff experience on a day to day basis • Support “one stop” services • Promote dignity • Keep people at home as long as possible • Deliver the right care by the right person at the right time • Support prevention of ill-health and early intervention • Better integrates mental and physical health • ...
Service Sustainability	<p>E.g. The ability of an option to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make best use of all available resources • Attract and retain an appropriately skilled workforce • Support and enhance the proposed multi-stakeholder-led Centre of Excellence • Eliminate the need for goodwill to sustain safe services • Consolidate the overall local skill base and competencies • Make appropriate use of the 3rd sector • Reduce “single points of failure” • Reduce/remove the need for locums • ...
“Value-adding”	<p>E.g. The ability of an option to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make North Skye attractive to people as a place to live • Make North Skye attractive to people as a place to invest • Attract specific additional partner/stakeholder interest and investment • Present Skye as innovative and forward thinking • Brings wider community benefits, e.g. Jobs, opportunities • Deliver opportunities for community involvement/contribution • Present potential additional benefits/opportunities as yet unknown • ...

The Relative Importance of Benefits Criteria

After we have agreed the benefits criteria that we will use to assess future options, we must agree how relatively important they are, i.e. those that are the most and least important to us.

Although we started this process at the earlier workshops in January that were subsequently cancelled, we did not have a chance to finish it or agree on priorities. So we will have to do this again, either at the first or second planned workshop depending on time.

The New North Skye Option Appraisal Process

The process is starting again because it is still important to agree what services in North Skye will look like moving forward. Unfortunately, because of the on-going COVID situation, we need to do this differently. Instead of all meeting in a large venue on the island, we have to meet “virtually” using our computers, tablets, and other connected devices.

Many of us will now be a little more familiar with this technology as a result of the last 9 months, but it can still be a little daunting. We will try and make this as easy as possible by explaining what is happening at all stages and giving people the time they need to feel comfortable, both with the discussion and the technology.

We will be using a digital platform called Zoom for the meetings. This will allow everyone to join the meeting, hear what is going on and contribute. It also allows us to break the large group into smaller discussion sessions, so that conversations are more meaningful before feeding back to everyone when required.

The facilitators will explain how all of this will work during the meeting, with many more facilitators on hand than were available during previous sessions to help the process move forward and to support people to take part.

As with the previously planned meetings, not everyone will be able to take part and participants who do, will be encouraged to share and discuss information with the groups they represent in-between each of the meetings.

Higher Ground Health + Care Planning

The Options Appraisal process is being facilitated by Norman Sutherland from Higher Ground Health + Care Planning Ltd (HGHCP). Norman has been involved in the process since January and supported the earlier workshop in March of this year.

Higher Ground was not involved in the original Skye, Lochlash and South West Ross redesign Options Appraisal process (2013/14) or wider public consultation (2014). Nor were they involved with the Sir Lewis Ritchie Review.

HGHCP have publicly highlighted their absolute independence in the process and have made it clear that they will not allow this to be compromised by any of the individuals or groups involved in the process.

As well as Norman, HGHCP will be providing a number of facilitators to support discussion at the planned events all of whom are extremely experienced and completely independent.