

NHS Highland submission of 24 October 2023

PE1902/G: To allow an appeal process for Community Participation Requests

Thank you for your letter dated 6 October 2023 regarding the above, in which you said: “The Committee would like to ask whether NHS Highland plans to reconsider Caithness Health Action Team’s participation request, so that it can be recognised as an organisation and participate in future decision making.”

Please can I respond as follows.

In response, NHS Highland would reiterate its original position regarding Caithness Health Action Team’s (CHAT) Public Participation Request of June 2021.

There were two reasons why NHS Highland could not take forward CHAT’s application in 2021 and these are:

- 1) their constitution raised concerns about the organisation not being open and inclusive; and
- 2) their ask of the Board was too vague and did not set out any improvement outcomes

NHS Highland explained this in the Decision Notice issued to CHAT in July 2021 and encouraged their further engagement with the board.

Under the legislation, it is not in NHS Highland’s gift to waive the requirement that CHAT qualifies as a community-controlled body. However, we have maintained engagement with them since 2021 and our door remains open to them, whether through a resubmission or through continued informal engagement.

It may be of assistance to CHAT to liaise with the Scottish Community Development Centre who work with community groups on the Public Participation request process. Their advice and support are free and can be accessed through the following link: [Contact | SCDC - We believe communities matter](#)

We are very keen to hear from CHAT, whether in a resubmission or informally, since we share their aim in working together for the good of all people across Highland.

Pamela Dudek
Chief Executive